Here, There And Everywhere

Lord Frederic Hamilton

Table of Contents

Here, There And Everywhere **1**
Lord Frederic Hamilton 1
FOREWORD 1
CHAPTER I 1
CHAPTER II 10
CHAPTER III 19
CHAPTER IV 29
CHAPTER V 39
CHAPTER VI 48
CHAPTER VII 58
CHAPTER VIII 68
CHAPTER IX 78
CHAPTER X 88
CHAPTER XI 96

Here, There And Everywhere

Lord Frederic Hamilton

This page copyright © 2002 Blackmask Online.

http://www.blackmask.com

- FOREWORD
- CHAPTER I
- CHAPTER II
- CHAPTER III
- CHAPTER IV
- CHAPTER V
- CHAPTER VI
- CHAPTER VII
- CHAPTER VIII
- CHAPTER IX
- CHAPTER X
- CHAPTER XI

Produced by Karen Fabrizius, Juliet Sutherland, Charles Franks
and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team.

TO MY GALLANT CANADIAN FRIEND GERALD RUTHERFORD, M.C. OF WINNIPEG

FOREWORD

So kindly a reception have the public accorded to The Days Before Yesterday that I have ventured into print yet again.

This is less a book of reminiscences than a recapitulation of various personal experiences in many lands, some of which may be viewed from unaccustomed angles.

The descriptions in Chapter VIII of cattle−working and of horse−breaking on an Argentine estancia have already appeared in slightly different form in an earlier book of mine, now out of print.

F. H.

London, 1921.

CHAPTER I

An ideal form of travel for the elderly A claim to roam at will in print An invitation to a big−game shoot Details of journey to Cooch Behar The commercial magnate and the station−master An outbreak of cholera Arrival at Cooch Behar Palace Our Australian Jehu The Shooting Camp Its gigantic scale The daily routine Chota Begum, my confidential elephant Her well−meant attentions My first tiger Another lucky shot The leopard and the orchestra The Maharanee of Cooch Behar An evening in the jungle The buns and the bear Jungle pictures A charging rhinoceros Another rhinoceros incident The amateur mahouts Circumstances

preventing a second visit to Cooch Behar.

The drawbacks of advancing years are so painfully obvious to those who have to shoulder the burden of a long tale of summers, that there is no need to enlarge upon them.

The elderly have one compensation, however; they have well−filled store−houses of reminiscences, chests of memories which are the resting−place of so many recollections that their owner can at will re−travel in one second as much of the surface of this globe as it has been his good fortune to visit, and this, too, under the most comfortable conditions imaginable.

Not for him the rattle of the wheels of the train as they grind the interminable miles away; not for him the insistent thump of the engines as they relentlessly drive the great liner through angry Atlantic surges to her far−off destination in smiling Southern seas. The muffled echoes of London traffic, filtering through the drawn curtains, are undisturbed by such grossly material reminders of modern engineering triumphs, for the elderly traveller journeys in a comfortable easy−chair before a glowing fire, a cigar in his mouth, and a long tumbler conveniently accessible to his hand.

The street outside is shrouded in November fog; under the steady drizzle, the dripping pavements reflect with clammy insistence the flickering gas−lamps, and everything, as Mr. Mantalini would have put it, is demnition moist and unpleasant, whilst a few feet away, a grey−haired traveller is basking in the hot sunshine of a white coral strand, with the cocoa−nut palms overhead whispering their endless secrets to each other as they toss their emerald−green fronds in the strong Trade winds, the little blue wavelets of the Caribbean Sea lap−lapping as they pretend to break on the gleaming milk−white beach.

It is really an ideal form of travel! No discomforts, no hurryings to catch connections, no passports required, no passage money, and no hotel bills! What more could any one ask? The journeys can be varied indefinitely, provided that the owner of the storehouse has been careful to keep its shelves tidily arranged. India? The second shelf on the left. South Africa? The one immediately below it. Canada? South America? The West Indies? There they all are, each one in its proper place!

This private Thomas Cook &Son's office has the further advantage of being eminently portable. Wherever its owner goes, it goes, too. For the elderly this seems the most practical form of Travel Bureau, and it is incontestably the most economical one in these days when prices soar sky−high.

There is so much to see in this world of ours, and just one short lifetime in which to see it! I am fully conscious of the difficulty of conveying to others impressions which remain intensely vivid to myself, and am also acutely alive to the fact that matters which appear most interesting to one person, drive others to martyrdoms of boredom.

In attempting to reproduce various personal experiences on paper, I shall claim the roaming freedom of the fireside muser, for he can in one second skip from Continent to Continent and vault over gaps of thirty years and more, just as the spirit moves him; indeed, to change the metaphor, before one record has played itself out, he can turn on a totally different one without rising from his chair, adjusting a new needle, or troubling to re−wind the machine, for this convenient mental apparatus reproduces automatically from its repertory whatever air is required.

Having claimed the privilege of roaming at will far from my subject, I may say that ever since my boyhood I had longed to take part in a big−game shoot, so when the late Maharajah of Cooch Behar invited me in 1891 to one of his famous shooting−parties, I accepted with alacrity, for the Cooch Behar shoots were justly famed throughout India. The rhinoceros was found there, tigers, as Mrs. O'Dowd of *Vanity Fair* would have remarked, were as plentiful as cabbages ; there were bears, too, leopards and water buffaloes, everything, in short, that the heart of man could desire. It was no invitation to travel five hundred miles for two days' shooting only, there were to be

five solid weeks of it in camp, and few people entertained on so princely a scale as the Maharajah. It was distinctly an invitation to be treasured and gratefully accepted.

The five−hundred−mile journey between Calcutta and Cooch Behar was unquestionably a varied one. There were four hours' train on the broad−gauge railway, an hour's steamer to cross the Ganges, ten hours' train on a narrow−gauge railway, three hours' propelling by poles in a native house−boat down a branch of the Brahmaputra, six miles of swamp to traverse on elephants, thirty miles to travel on the Maharajah's private two−and−a−half−feet−gauge toy railway, and, to conclude with, a twenty−five−mile drive.

Cooch Behar is now, I believe, directly linked up with Calcutta by rail.

We left Calcutta a party of four. My nephew, General Sir Henry Streatfeild, and his wife, another of the Viceroy's aides−de−camp, myself, and a certain genial Calcutta business magnate, most popular of Anglo−Indians. As we had a connection to catch at a junction on the narrow−gauge railway, an interminable wait at a big station in the early morning was disconcerting, for the connection would probably be missed. The jovial, burly Englishman occupied the second sleeping−berth in my compartment. As the delay lengthened, he, having some official connection with the East Bengal State Railway, jumped out of bed and went on to the platform in Anglo−Indian fashion, clad merely in pyjamas and slippers. Approaching the immensely pompous native station−master he upbraided him in no measured terms for the long halt. Through the window I could hear every word of their dialogue. This delay is perfectly scandalous, station−master. I shall certainly report it in Calcutta. Would you care, sir, to enter offeecial complaint in book kept for that purpose? By George! I will! answered the man of jute and indigo, hot with indignation. He was conducted through long passages to the station−master's office at the back of the building, where a strongly worded complaint was entered in the book. And now, may I ask, questioned the irate business man, when you mean to start this infernal train? Oh, the terain, sir, has already deeparted these five minutes, answered the bland native. Fortunately there was a goods train immediately following the mail, and some four hours afterwards our big friend alighted from a goods brake−van in a furious temper. He had had nothing whatever to eat, and was still in pyjamas, bare feet and slippers at ten in the morning. We had delayed the branch train as no one seemed in any particular hurry, so all was well.

During a subsequent journey over the same line, we had an awful experience. Through the Alipore suburb of Calcutta there runs a little affluent of the Hooghly known as Tolly Gunge. For some reason this insignificant stream is regarded as peculiarly sacred by Hindoos, and every five years vast numbers of pilgrims come to bathe in and drink Tolly Gunge. The stream is nothing now but an open sewer, but no warnings of the doctors, and no Government edicts can prevent natives from regarding this as a place of pilgrimage, rank poison though the waters of Tolly Gunge must be.

A party of us left Calcutta on a shooting expedition during one of these quinquennial pilgrimages. We found the huge Sealdah station packed with dense crowds of home−going pilgrims. The station−master was at his wits' end to provide accommodation, for every third−class carriage was already full to overflowing, and still endless hordes of devotees kept arriving. He finally had a number of covered trucks coupled on to the train, into which the pilgrims were wedged as tightly as possible, a second engine was attached, and we started. Next morning I was awakened by a nephew of mine, who cried with an awestruck face, My God! It is perfectly awful! Look out of the window! It was a fearful sight. The waters of Tolly Gunge had done their work, and cholera had broken out during the night amongst the densely packed pilgrims. Men were carrying out dead bodies from the train; there were already at least fifty corpses laid on the platform, and the tale of dead increased every minute. Others, stricken with the fell disease, were lying on the platform, still alive, but in a state of collapse, or in the agonising cramps of this swift−slaying scourge. There happened to be two white doctors in the train, who did all that was possible for the sufferers, but, beyond the administration of opium, medical science is powerless in cholera cases. The horrors of that railway platform fixed themselves indelibly on my memory. I can never forget it.

The late Maharajah of Cooch Behar had had a long minority, the soil of his principality was very fertile and well−cultivated, and so efficiently was the little State administered by the British Resident that the Maharajah found himself at his majority the fortunate possessor of vast sums of ready money. The Government of India had erected him out of his surplus revenues a gigantic palace of red−brick, a singularly infelicitous building material for that burning climate. Nor can it be said that the English architect had been very successful in his elevation. He had apparently anticipated the design of the Victoria and Albert Museum, and had managed to produce a building even less satisfactory to the eye than the vast pile at the corner of Cromwell Road. He had also crowned his edifice with a great dome. The one practical feature of the building was that it was only one room thick, and that every room was protected by a broad double verandah on both sides. The direct rays of the sun were, therefore, powerless to penetrate to the interior, and with the double verandahs the faintest breath of air sent a draught through every room in the house.

We reached Cooch Behar after dark, and it was somewhat of a surprise to find the Maharajah and his entire family roller−skating in the great central domed hall of the palace, to the strains of a really excellent string band. The Maharajah having a great liking for European music, had a private orchestra of thirty−five natives who, under the skilled tuition of a Viennese conductor, had learnt to play with all the fire and vim of one of those unapproachable Austrian bands, which were formerly (I emphasise the *were*) the delight of every foreigner in Vienna. These native players had acquired in playing dance music the real Austrian broken time, and could make their violins wail out the characteristic thirds and sixths in the harmonies of little airy, light Wiener Couplets nearly as effectively as Johann Strauss' famous orchestra in the Volks−Garten in Vienna.

The whole scene was rather unexpected in the home of a native prince in the wilds of East Bengal.

The Maharajah had fixed on a great tract of jungle in Assam, over the frontier of India proper, as the field of operations for his big−game shoot of 1891, on account of the rhinoceros and buffaloes that frequented the swamps there. As he did not do things by halves, he had had a rough road made connecting Cooch Behar with his great camp, and had caused temporary bridges to be built over all the streams on the way. Owing to the convenient bamboo, this is fairly easy of achievement, for the bamboo is at the same time tough and pliable, and bamboo bridges, in spite of their flimsy appearance, can carry great weights, and can be run up in no time, and kindly Nature furnishes in Bengal an endless supply of this adaptable building material.

Our Calcutta party were driven out to the camp by the Maharajah's Australian trainer in a brake−and−four. I had heard before of the recklessness and skill of Australian stage−coach drivers, but had had no previous personal experience of it. Frankly, it is not an experience I should care to repeat indefinitely. I have my own suspicions that that big Australian was trying, if I may be pardoned a vulgarism, to put the wind up us. Bang! against a tree−trunk on the off−side. Crash! against another on the near−side; down a steep hill at full gallop, and over a creaking, swaying, loudly protesting bamboo bridge that seemed bound to collapse under the impact; up the corresponding ascent as hard as the four Walers could lay leg to the ground; off the track, tearing through the scrub on two wheels, righting again to shave a big tree by a mere hair's−breadth; it certainly was a fine exhibition of nerve and of recklessness redeemed by skill, but I do not think that elderly ladies would have preferred it to their customary jog−trot behind two fat and confidential old slugs. One wondered how the harness held together under our Australian Jehu's vagaries.

The Maharajah had chosen the site of his camp well. On a bare *maidan* overhanging a turbulent river a veritable city of white tents gleamed in the sunshine, all neatly ranged in streets and lanes. The river was not, as most Indian rivers in the dry season, a mere trickle of muddy water meandering through a broad expanse of stones and sand−spits, but a clear, rushing stream, tumbling and laughing on its way as gaily as any Scotch salmon river, and forming deep pools where great mahseer lurked under the waving fringes of water−weeds, fat fish who could be entrapped with a spoon in the early morning.

Each guest had a great Indian double tent, bigger than most London drawing−rooms. The one tent was pitched inside the other after the fashion of the country, with an air−space of about one foot between to keep out the fierce sun. Indeed, triple−tent would be a more fitting expression, for the inner tent had a lining dependent from it of that Indian cotton fabric printed in reds and blues which we use for bed quilts. Every tent was carpeted with cotton dhurees, and completely furnished with dressing−tables and chests of drawers, as well as writing−table, sofa and arm−chairs; whilst there was a little covered canvas porch outside, fitted with chairs in which to take the air, and a small attendant satellite of a tent served as a bath−room, with big tin tub and a little trench dug to carry the water away. Nothing could be more complete, but I found my watchful old bearer already at work raising all my trunks, gun−cases, and other possessions on little stilts of bamboo, for his quick eye had detected signs of white ants. By the end of our stay in camp I had reason to congratulate myself on my faithful bearer's foresight, for none of my own things were touched, whilst every one else was bemoaning the havoc the white ants had played with their belongings. The guest−tents formed three sides of a square facing the river, and in the centre of the open space stood a large *shamyanah*, or flat−roofed tent with open sides, which served as dining−room and general living−room. There are certainly distinct advantages in a climate so settled that periods of daily sunshine or of daily rain really form part of the calendar, and can be predicted with mathematical certainty.

It so happened that the Census of 1891 was taken whilst we were in camp, so I can give the exact number of retainers whom the Maharajah brought with him. It totalled 473, including mahouts and elephant−tenders, grooms, armourers, taxidermists, tailors, shoemakers, a native doctor and a dispenser, and boatmen, not to mention the Viennese conductor and the thirty−five members of the orchestra, cooks, bakers, and table−waiters. The Maharajah certainly did things on a grand scale. One of the English guests gave, with perfect truth, his place of birth as required in the Indian Census Return as a first−class carriage on the London and North−Western Railway, somewhere between Bletchley and Euston; the precise spot being unnoticed either by myself or the other person principally concerned.

The daily routine of life in the camp was something like this: We men all rose at daybreak, some going for a ride, others endeavouring with a spoon to lure the cunning mahseer in the swift−running river, or going for a three−mile walk through the jungle tracks. Then a bath, and breakfast followed at nine, when the various *shikaries* came in with their reports. Should a tiger have made a kill, he would be found, with any luck, during the heat of the day close to the body of his victim. The howdah elephants would all be sent on to the appointed rendezvous, the entire party going out to meet them on pad" elephants. I do not believe that more uncomfortable means of progression could possibly be devised. A pad elephant has a large mattress strapped on to its back, over which runs a network of stout cords. Four or five people half−sit, half−recline on this mattress, hanging on for dear life to the cord network. The European, being unused to this attitude, will soon feel violent cramps shooting through his limbs, added to which there is a disconcerting feeling of instability in spite of the tightly grasped cords. Nothing, on the other hand, can be more comfortable than a well−appointed howdah, where one is quite alone except for the mahout perched on the elephant's neck. The Maharajah's howdahs were all of cane−work, with a softly padded seat and a leather−strap back, which yielded to the motion of the great beast. In front was a gun−rack holding five guns and rifles, and large pockets at the side thoughtfully contained bottles of lemonade (the openers of which were *never* forgotten) and emergency packets of biscuits.

The Maharajah owned about sixty elephants, in which he took the greatest pride, and he was most careful in providing his guests with proved tiger−staunch animals. These were oddly enough invariably lady−elephants, the males being apt to lose their heads in the excitement of meeting their hereditary enemies, and consequently apt to run amok.

My particular elephant, which I rode daily for five weeks, was an elderly and highly respectable female named Chota Begum. Had she only happened to have been born without a tail, and with two legs instead of four, she would have worn silver−rimmed spectacles and a large cap with cherries in it; would have knitted stockings all day long and have taken a deep interest in the Church Missionary Society.

I soon got on very friendly terms with Chota Begum. She was inordinately fond of oranges, which, of course, were difficult to procure in the jungle, so I daily brought her a present of half−a−dozen of these delicacies, supplementing the gift at luncheon−time with a few bananas. Chota Begum was deeply touched by these attentions, and one morning my mahout informed me that she wished, out of gratitude, to lift me into the howdah with her trunk. I cannot conceive how he found this out, but I naturally was averse to wounding the elephant's feelings by refusing the proffered courtesy, though I should infinitely have preferred getting into the howdah in the ordinary manner. The mahout, after the mysterious manner of his kind, was giving his charge minute directions to be very careful with me, when I suddenly felt myself seized by Chota Begum's trunk, lifted into the air, and held upside down at the extreme length of that member, for, it seemed to me, at least five minutes. Rupees and small change rained from my pockets to the ground, cigar case, cigarette case, matches and cartridge extractor streamed down to earth in clattering showers from their abiding places; the blood rushed to my head till I was on the very verge of apoplexy, and still Chota Begum, remembering her instructions to be careful, held me up aloft, until slowly, very slowly indeed, she lowered me into the howdah, dizzy and stupid with blood to the head. The attention was well−meant, but it was distinctly not one to be repeated indefinitely. In my youth there was a popular song recounting the misfortunes of one Mr. Brown:

Old man Brown, upside down,
With his legs sticking up in the air ; but I never imagined that I should share his unpleasant experiences.

I never enquired too minutely as to how the kubber of the whereabouts of a tiger was obtained, but I have a strong suspicion that unhappy goats played a part in it, and that they were tethered in different parts of the jungle, for, as we all know, the bleating of the kid excites the tiger.

A tiger being thus located by his kill, the long line of beating elephants, riderless except for their mahouts, goes crashing through the burnt−up jungle−growth, until a trumpeting from one of the elephants announces the neighbourhood of stripes, for an elephant has an abnormally keen sense of smell. The various guns are posted on their elephants in any open spot where a good view of the beast can be obtained when he breaks cover. I have explained elsewhere how I personally always preferred an ordinary shot−gun loaded with a lead ball, to a rifle for either tigers or bears. The reason being that both these animals are usually shot at very close quarters whilst they are moving rapidly. Time is lost in getting the sights of a rifle on to a swift−moving objective, and there is so little time to lose, for it is most inadvisable to wound a tiger without killing him; whereas with a shot−gun one simply raises it, looks down the barrels and fires as one would do at a rabbit, and a solid lead bullet has enormous stopping power. I took with me daily in the howdah one shot−gun loaded with ball, another with No. 5 shot for birds, an Express rifle, and one of the Maharajah's terrific 4−bore elephant−rifles; this latter's charge was 14−1/2 drachms of black powder; the kick seemed to break every bone in one's shoulder, and I was frightened to death every time that I fired it off.

On that Assam shoot I was quite extraordinarily lucky, for on the very first day the beating elephants announced the presence of a tiger by trumpeting almost at once, and suddenly, with a roar, a great streak of orange and black leaped into the sunlight from the jungle straight in front of me. The tiger came straight for my elephant, who stood firm as a rock, and I waited with the smooth−bore till he got within twenty feet of me and I knew that I could not possibly miss him, and then fired at his shoulder. The tiger fell dead. This was a very easy shot, but it did me great service with my mahout. These men, perched as they are on the elephant's neck, carry their lives in their hand, for should the tiger be wounded only, he will certainly make a spring for the elephant's head, and then the mahout is a dead man. Incidentally the gun in the howdah will not fare much better in that case. The mahout, should he have but small confidence in his passenger's marksmanship, will make the elephant fidget so that it becomes impossible to fire.

Two days later we were beating a patch of jungle, when, through the thick undergrowth, I could just see four legs, moving very, very slowly amongst the reeds, the body above them being invisible. Bagh (tiger), whispered the mahout, turning round. I was so excited that I snatched up the heavy elephant−rifle instead of the Express, and fired just above those slow−slouching legs. The big rifle went off with a noise like an air−raid, and knocked me

with mangled shoulder−blades into the seat of the howdah. I was sure that I had missed altogether, and thought no more about it, but when the beat came up half an hour later, a huge tiger was lying there stone dead. That, of course, was an absolute piece of luck, a mere fluke, as I had never even seen the brute. As soon as the Maharajah and his men had examined the big tiger's teeth they at once pronounced him a man−eater, and there was great rejoicing, for a man−eating tiger had been taking toll of the villagers in one of the jungle clearings. I believe that tigers only take to eating men when they are growing old and their teeth begin to fail them, a man being easier to catch than a bullock or goat. The skins of these two tigers have lain on my drawing−room carpet for thirty years now.

On our second day the Maharajah shot a leopard. He was only wounded, and I have never seen an animal fight so fiercely or with such indomitable courage. Of course, the whole cat−tribe are very tenacious of life, but that leopard had five bullets in him, and still he roared and hissed and spat, though his life was ebbing from him fast. We must have worked round in a circle nearer to the camp, for whilst we were watching the leopard's furious fight the strains of the Maharajah's orchestra practising The Gondoliers, floated down−wind to us quite clearly. I remember it well, for as we dismounted to look at the dead beast the cornet solo, Take a pair of sparkling eyes, began. There was such a startling incongruity between an almost untrodden virgin jungle in Assam, with a dead leopard lying in the foreground, and that familiar strain of Sullivan's, so beloved of amateur tenors, that it gave a curious sense of unreality to the whole scene.

This admirable orchestra made the evenings very pleasant. We put on white ties and tail−coats every night for dinner in the open *shamyanah*, where the Maharajah provided us with an excellent European repast served on solid silver plates. As the endless resources of this wonderful camp included an ice−making machine, he also gave us iced champagne every evening. As an example of how thorough the Maharajah was in his arrangements, he had brought three of his *mallees*, or native gardeners, with him, their sole function being to gather wild jungle−flowers daily, and to decorate the tables and tents with them.

Neither the Maharajah nor his family ever touched any of the European food, though, as they were not Hindoos, but belonged to the Bramo−Somaj religion, there were no caste−laws to prevent their doing so. Half−way through dinner the servants brought in large square silver boxes, some of rice, others of various curries: hot curries, dry curries, Ceylon curries, and green vegetable curries; these constituted their dinner, and most excellent they were.

I really must pay a tribute to the graceful and delightful Maharanee, who presided with such dignity and charm at these gatherings. I had first met the Maharanee in London, in 1887, at the festivities in connection with Queen Victoria's Jubilee. The Maharanee, the daughter of a very ancient Bengal family, was then quite young. She had only emerged from behind the curtain, as natives of India say, for six months. In other words, she had just emancipated herself from the seclusion of the Zenana, where she had lived since her marriage. She had then very delicate features, and most lovely eyes, with exquisitely moulded hands and arms. Very wisely she had not adopted European fashions in their entirety, but had retained the becoming *saree* of gold or silver tissue or brocade, throwing the end of it over her head as a veil, and looking perfectly charming in it. Everything in England must have seemed strange to her, the climate, the habits, and the mode of living, and yet this little Princess behaved as though she had been used to it all her life, and still managed to retain the innate dignity of the high−caste native lady.

As one travels through life certain pictures remain vividly clear−cut in the memory. The evenings in that shooting−camp are amongst these. I can still imagine myself strolling with an extremely comely lady along the stretches of natural lawn that crowned the bluff above the river, the gurgle and splashing of the stream loud in our ears as we looked over the unending expanse of jungle below us, vast and full of mystery under the brilliant moonlight of India. In India the moonlight is golden, not silvery as with us. The great grey sea of scrub, with an occasional prominent tree catching this golden light on its clear−cut outline, had something awe−inspiring about it, for here one was face to face with real Nature. A faint and distant roar was also a reminder that the jungle had its inhabitants, and through it all came the quaintly incongruous strains of the orchestra playing a selection from

The Mikado :

My object all sublime, I shall achieve in time,
To make the punishment fit the crime,
The punishment fit the crime.

The moonlit jungle night−scene, and the familiar air with its London associations were such endless thousands of miles apart.

On the floor of my drawing−room, in Westminster, the skin of a bear reposes close to those of two tigers. This is how he came there: We were at breakfast when *kubber* of a bear only two miles away was brought in. The Maharajah at once ordered the howdah−elephants round. Opposite me on the breakfast−table stood a large plate of buns, which the camp baker made most admirably. Ever since my earliest childhood I had gone on every possible occasion to the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, and was therefore in a position to know what was the favourite food of the ursine race. That they did not exist on buns in the jungle was due to a lack of opportunity rather than to a lack of inclination, so I argued that the dainty would prove just as irresistible to a bear in the jungle as it did to his brethren in the big pit near the entrance to the Zoo, and ignoring the rather cheap gibes of the rest of the party, I provided myself with half−a−dozen buns, three of which I attached by long strings to the front of my howdah, where they swung about like an edible pawnbroker's sign. The bear was lying in a very small patch of bamboo, and broke cover at once. As I had anticipated, the three swinging buns proved absolutely irresistible to him. He came straight up to me, I shot him with a smooth−bore, and he is most decorative in his present position, but it was all due to the buns. The Maharajah told me, much to my surprise, that far more natives were killed by bears than by tigers in that part of India.

The jungle was very diversified: in places it consisted of flat tablelands of scrub, varied with broad open spaces broken by thick clumps (topes they are called by Anglo−Indians) of bamboo. In other parts there were rocky ravines covered with forest growth, and on the low ground far−stretching and evil−smelling swamps spread themselves, the home of the rhinoceros and water buffalo.

I had no idea of an elephant's climbing powers. These huge beasts make their way quite easily up rocky ascents no horse could negotiate. In coming down steep declivities, the wise creatures extend their hind−legs, using them as brakes. Cautious old Chota Begum would never ford any river without sounding the depth with her trunk at every step. On one occasion two of the Maharajah's fishermen were paddling native dug−outs down−stream as we approached a river. Chota Begum, who had never before seen a dug−out, took them for crocodiles, trumpeted loudly with alarm, and refused to enter the water until they were quite out of sight. The curious intelligence of the animal is seen when they are ordered to remove a tree which blocks the road. Chota Begum would place her right foot against the trunk and give a little tentative shove. Not satisfied with the leverage, she would shift her foot again and again until she had found the right spot, then, throwing her whole weight on to her foot, the tree would snap off like a wooden match.

There was a great amount of bird−life in the jungle. It abounded in peacocks, and these birds are a glorious sight sailing down−wind through the sunlight with their tails streaming behind them, at a pace which would leave any pheasant standing. As peacocks are regarded as sacred by Hindoos, the Maharajah had particularly begged us not to shoot any. There were plenty of other birds, snipe, partridges, florican and jungle−cocks, the two latter greatly esteemed for their flesh. I shot a jungle−cock, and was quite disappointed at finding him a facsimile of our barndoor game−cock, for I had imagined that he would have the velvety black wing starred with cream−coloured eyes, which we associate with the jungle−cock wing of salmon flies. The so−called jungle−cock in a Jock Scott fly is furnished by a bird found, I believe, only round Madras. An animal peculiar to this part of Assam is the pigmy hob, the smallest of the swine family. These little beasts, no larger than guinea−pigs, go about in droves of about fifty, and move through the grass with such incredible rapidity that the eye is unable to follow them. The elephants, oddly enough, are scared to death by the pigmy hogs, for the little creatures have tushes as sharp as

razors, and gash the elephants' feet with them as they run past them.

I think that we all regretted the Maharajah's keenness about water−buffalo and rhinos, for this entailed long days of plodding on elephants through steamy, fetid swamps, where the grass was twenty feet high and met over one's head, where the heat was intolerable, without one breath of air, and the mosquitoes maddening. A day in the swamps entailed, too, a big dose of quinine at bedtime. Between ourselves, I was terrified at the prospect of having to fire off the heavy four−bore elephant−rifle. The kick of fourteen−and−a−half drachms of black−powder is tremendous, and one's shoulder ached for two hours afterwards, though I do not regret the kick in surveying the water−buffalo which has hung now in my hall for thirty years. I have only seen two wild rhinoceroses in my life, and of the first one I had only a very brief glimpse. We were outside the swamp, when down a jungle−track came a charging rhinoceros, his head down and an evil look in his eye. One look was enough for Chota Begum. That most respectable of old ladies had quite evidently no love for rhinos. She lost her nerve completely, and ran away for two miles as hard as her ungainly limbs could lay leg to the ground. It is no joke to be on a runaway elephant maddened with fright, and it is extremely difficult to keep one's seat. The mahout and I hung on with both hands for dear life, the guns and rifles crashing together with a deafening clamour of ironmongery, and I was most thankful that there were no trees anywhere near, for the terrified animal's first impulse would have been to knock off both howdah and mahout under the overhanging branch of a tree. When Chota Begum at length pulled up, she had to listen to some terrible home−truths about her ancestry from the mahout, who was bitterly disappointed in his beloved charge. As to questions of lineage, and the morals of Chota Begum's immediate progenitors, I can only hope that the mahout exaggerated, for he certainly opened up appalling perspectives. Any old lady would have got scared at seeing so hideous a monster preparing to rip her open, and under the circumstances you and I would have run away just as fast as Chota Begum did.

The only other wild rhinoceros I ever saw was on the very last day of our stay in Assam. We were returning home on elephants, when they began to trumpet loudly, as we approached a little dip. My nephew, General Sir Henry Streatfeild, called out to me to be ready, as there was probably a bear in the hollow. Next moment a rhinoceros charged out and made straight for his elephant. Sir Henry fired with a heavy four−bore rifle, and by an extraordinary piece of good luck hit the rhino in the one little spot where he is vulnerable, otherwise he must have been killed. The huge beast rolled over like a shot hare, stone−dead.

One evening on our way back to camp, we thought that we would ride our elephants ourselves, and told the mahouts to get down. They had no fancy for walking two miles back to camp, and accordingly, in some mysterious manner of which they have the secret, gave their charges private but definite orders. I seated myself on Chota Begum's neck, put my feet in the string stirrups, and took the big *ankus* in my hand. The others did the same. I then ordered Chota Begum to go on, using the exact words the mahout did. Chota Begum commenced walking round and round in a small circle, and the eight other elephants all did the same. I tried cajoling her as the mahout did, and assured her that she was a Pearl and my Heart's Delight. Chota Begum continued walking round and round in a small circle, as did all the other elephants. I changed my tactics, and made the most unmerited insinuations as to her mother's personal character, at the same time giving her a slight hint with the blunt end of the *ankus*. Chota Begum continued stolidly walking round and round. Meanwhile language most unsuited to a Sunday School arose from other members of the party, who were also careering round and round in small circles. Finally an Irish A.D.C. summed up the situation by crying, These mahouts have us beat, whereupon we capitulated, and a simultaneous shout went up, Ohe, Mahout−log! It is but seldom that one sees a native of India laughing, but those mahouts, when they emerged from the cover of some bamboos, were simply bent double with laughter. How they had conveyed their wishes to the elephants beats me still.

The best of things must come to an end, and so did the Cooch Behar shoot. It is an experience that I would not have missed for anything, especially as I am now too old to hope to be able to repeat it.

The Maharajah was good enough to invite me again the next year, 1892, but by that time I was seated in an editorial chair, and could not leave London. In the place of the brilliant sunshine of Assam, the grimy, murky

London atmosphere; instead of the distant roars from the jungle, the low thunder of the big machines in the basement, as they began to revolve, grinding out fresh reading−matter for the insatiable British public.

The memories, however, remain. Blazing sunlight; splendid sport; endless tracts of khaki−coloured jungle; princely hospitality; pleasant fellowship; cheery company.

What more can any one ask?

CHAPTER II

Mighty Kinchinjanga The inconceivable splendours of a Himalayan sunrise The last Indian telegraph−office The irrepressible British Tommy An improvised garden An improvised Durbar Hall A splendid ceremony A native dinner The disguised Europeans Our shocking table−manners Incidents Two impersonations; one successful, the other reverse I come off badly Indian jugglers The rope−trick The juggler, the rope, and the boy An inexplicable incident A performing cobra scores a success Ceylon Devil Dancers Their performance The Temple of the Tooth The uncovering of the Tooth Details concerning An abominable libel Tea and coffee Peradeniya Gardens The upas tree of Java Colombo an Eastern Clapham Junction The French lady and the savages The small Bermudian and the inhabitants of England.

During our early morning walks through the jungle−tracts of Assam, on clear days we occasionally caught a brief glimpse of a glittering white cone on the horizon. This was mighty Kinchinjanga, the second highest mountain in the world, distant then from us I should be afraid to say how many miles.

To see Kinchinjanga to perfection, one must go to Darjeeling. What a godsend this cool hill−station is to Calcutta, for in twenty hours the par−boiled Europeans by the Hooghly can find themselves in a temperature like that of an English April. At Silliguri, where the East Bengal Railway ends, some humorist has erected, close to the station, a sign−post inscribed To Lhassa 359 miles. The sign−post has omitted to state that this entails an ascent of 16,500 feet. The Darjeeling−Himalayan Railway, an intrepid little mountain−climber, looks as though it had come out of a toy−shop, for the gauge is only two feet, and the diminutive engines and carriages could almost be pulled about with a string. As the little train pants its leisurely way up 6000 feet, it is worth while noticing how the type of the country people changes. The brown−skinned Aryan type of the plains is soon replaced by the yellow, flat−faced Mongolian type of the hills, and the women actually have a tinge of red in their cheeks.

The first time that I was at Darjeeling it was veiled in perpetual mists; on the last occasion, to compensate for this, there were ten days of continual clear weather. Then it is that it is worth while getting up at 5.30 a.m. and going down into a frost−nipped garden, there to wait patiently in the dark. In the eastern sky there is that faintest of jade−green glimmers, known as the false dawn ; below it the deep valleys are still wrapped in dark purple shadows, when quite suddenly Homer's rosy−fingered dawn, *rododachtulos Aeos*, (was ever more beautiful epithet coined?) lays one shy, tentative finger−tip of blazing, flaming crimson on a vast unseen bulk, towering up 28,000 feet into the air. Then quickly comes a second flaming finger−tip, and a third, until you are fronting a colossal pyramid of the most intensely vivid rose−colour imaginable. It is a glorious sight! Suddenly, in one minute, the crimson splendour is replaced by the most dazzling, intense white, and as much as the eye can grasp of the two−thousand−mile−long mountain−rampart springs into light, peak after peak, blazing with white radiance, whilst the world below is still slumbering in the half−shadows, and the valleys are filled with purple darkness. I do not believe that there is any more splendidly sublime sight to be seen in the whole world. For a while the eternal snows, unchanging in their calm majesty, dominate the puny world below, and then, because perhaps it would not be good to gaze for long on so magnificent a spectacle, the mists fall and the whole scene is blotted out, leaving in the memory a revelation of unspeakable grandeur. I saw this sunrise daily for a week, and its glories seemed greater every day. For some reason that I cannot explain it always recalled to me a passage in Job xxxviii, When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

No one has ever yet succeeded in scaling Kinchinjanga, and I do not suppose that any one ever will.

Darjeeling itself, in spite of its magnificent surroundings, looks like a portion of a transplanted London suburb, but there is a certain piquancy in reflecting that it is only fifteen miles from the borders of Tibet. The trim, smug villas of Dalhousie and Auckland Roads may have electric light, and neat gardens full of primroses; fifteen miles away civilisation, as we understand the term, ends. There are neither roads, post−offices, telegraphs nor policemen; these tidy commonplace Belle Vues, Claremonts and Montpeliers are on the very threshold of the mysterious Forbidden Land. An Army doctor told me that he had been up at the last frontier telegraph−office of India. It is well above the line of snows, and one would imagine it a terrible place of captivity for the Sergeant and four Privates (all white men) in charge of it, but the spirits of the British Tommy are unquenchable. The men had amused themselves by painting notices, and the perpetual snow round the telegraph−office was dotted with boards: this way to the swings and boats ; the public are requested not to walk on the newly sown grass ; try our famous shilling teas ; all season−tickets must be shown at the barrier, and many more like them. It takes a great deal to depress the average British soldier.

Natives of India are extraordinarily good at camouflaging" improvised surroundings, for they have been used to doing it for centuries. I was once talking to Lord Kitchener at his official house in Fort William, Calcutta, when he asked me to come and have a look at the garden. He informed me that he was giving a garden−party to fifteen hundred guests in three days' time, and wondered whether the space were sufficient for it. I told him that I was certain that it was not, and that I doubted whether half that number could get in. Very well, said Lord Kitchener, I shall have the whole of the Fort ditch turned into a garden to−morrow. Next day he had eight hundred coolies at work. They levelled the rough sand, marked out with pegs walks of pounded bricks, which they flattened, sowed the sand with mustard and cress and watered it abundantly to counterfeit lawns, and finally brought cartloads of growing flowers, shrubs and palms, which they plunged in the mustard−and−cress lawns, and in thirty−six hours there was a garden apparently established for years. It is true that the mustard−and−cress lawns did not bear close inspection, but, on the other hand, you could eat them, which you cannot do with ours. Lord Kitchener was fond of saying that he had never been intended for a soldier, but for an architect and house−decorator. Certainly the additions made to his official house, which were all carried out from his own designs, were very effective and in excellent taste.

In a country like India, where so much takes place out of doors, wonderful effects can be produced, as Lord Kitchener said, with some rupees, some native boys, and a good many yards of insulated wire. The boys are sent climbing up the trees; they drop long pieces of twine to which the electric wires are tied; they haul them up, and proceed to wire the trees and to fix coloured bulbs up to their very tops. Night comes; a switch is pressed, and every tree in the garden is a blaze of ruby, sapphire, or emerald, with the most admirable result.

Lord Minto was holding a large Investiture of the Star of India" the last time that I was in Calcutta. He wished to have at least two thousand people present, and large as are the rooms at Government House, not one of them would contain anything like that number, so Lord Minto had an immense canvas Durbar Hall constructed. Here again the useful factor comes in of knowing to a day when the earliest possible shower of rain is due. The tent, a huge flat−topped Shamyana, was, when finished, roughly paved with bricks, over which were spread priceless Persian and Indian carpets from the Tosho Khana or Treasury. The sides and roof were stretched at one end with sulphur−coloured Indian silk, at the other with pale blue silk, the yellow silk with a two−foot border of silver tinsel, the blue edged with gold tinsel. Cunning craftsmen from Agra fashioned camouflage" doorways and columns of plaster, coloured and gilt in the style of the arabesques in the Alhambra, and the thing was done; almost literally,

Out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation,

and it would be impossible to imagine a more splendid setting for a great pageant. Some one on the Viceroy's staff must have had a great gift for stage−management, for every detail had been carefully thought out. The scarlet and gold of the Troopers of the Body−guard, standing motionless as brown statues, the mace−men with their gilt standards, the entry of the Rajahs, all in full gala costume, with half the amount of our pre−war National Debt hanging round their necks in the shape of diamonds and of uncut rubies and emeralds, the Knights of the Star of India in their pale−blue mantles, the Viceroy seated on his silver−gilt throne at the top of a flight of steps, on which all the Durbar carpets of woven gold were displayed, made, under the blaze of electric light, an amazingly gorgeous spectacle only possible in the East, and it would be difficult for any European to have equalled the immense dignity of the Native Princes.

Custom forbids the Viceroy's wife to dine out, but it had been long agreed between Lady Lansdowne and the Maharanee of Cooch Behar, that should she ever return to India as a private person she should come to a dinner served native fashion, on the floor. My sister having returned to Calcutta for her son's marriage in 1909, the Maharanee reminded her of this promise. Upon arriving at the house, Lady Lansdowne and two other European ladies were conducted up−stairs to be arrayed in native garb, whilst the Maharajah's sons with great glee took charge of myself, of yet another nephew of mine, and of the Viceroy's head aide−de−camp. Although it can hardly be taken as a compliment, truth compels me to confess that the young Cooch Behars considered my figure reminiscent of that of a Bengalee gentleman. With some slight shock to my modesty, I was persuaded to discard my trousers, being draped in their place with over thirty yards of white muslin, wound round and round, and in and out of my lower limbs. A dark blue silk tunic, and a flat turban completed my transformation into a Bengalee country squire, or his equivalent. My nephew, being very slight and tall, was at once turned into a Sikh, with skin−tight trousers, a very high turban, and the tightest of cloth−of−gold tunics, whilst the other young man, a good−looking dark young fellow, became a Rajput prince, and shimmered with silver brocades. I must own that European ladies do not show up to advantage in the native *saree*. Their colouring looks all wrong, and they have not the knack of balancing their unaccustomed draperies. Our ladies all looked as though they were terrified that their voluminous folds would suddenly slip off (which, indeed, they owned was the case), leaving them most indelicately lightly clad. One could not help observing the contrast between the nervousness of the three European ladies, draped respectively in white and gold, pink and silver, and blue and gold, and the grace with which the Maharanee, with the ease of long practice, wore her becoming *saree* of brown and cloth of gold. As it had been agreed that strict native fashion was to be observed, we were all shoeless. The Maharanee, laughing like a child, sprinkled us with rose−water, and threw garlands of flowers and wreaths of tinsel round our necks. I felt like a walking Christmas−tree as we went down to dinner.

Round a large, empty, marble−paved room, twelve little red−silk beds were disposed, one for each guest. In front of each bed stood an assemblage of some thirty silver bowls, big and little, all grouped round a large silver platter, piled a foot high with a pyramid of rice. This was the entire dinner, and there were, of course, neither knives nor forks. No one who has not tried it can have any idea of the difficulty of plunging the right hand into a pile of rice, of attempting to form a ball of it, and then dipping it at haphazard into one of the silver bowls of mysterious preparations. Very little of my rice ever reached my mouth, for it insisted on spreading itself greasily over the marble floor, and I was gratified at noting that the European ladies managed no better than I did. Added to which, half−lying, half−reclining on the little silk beds, the unaccustomed European gets attacked by violent cramps; one is also conscious of the presence of bones in the most unexpected portions of one's anatomy, and these bones begin aching furiously in the novel position. Some native dishes are excellent; others must certainly be acquired tastes. For instance, after a long course of apprenticeship one might be in a position to appreciate snipe stewed in rose−water, and I am convinced that asafoetida as a dressing to chicken must be delicious to those trained to it from their infancy. A quaint sweet, compounded of cocoa−nut cream and rose−water, and gilded all over with gold−leaf, lingers in my memory. As hands naturally get greasy, eating in this novel fashion, two servants were constantly ready with a silver basin and a long−necked silver ewer, with which to pour water over soiled hands. This basin and ewer delighted me, for in shape they were exactly like the ones that the little captive maid was offering to Naaman's wife in a picture which hung in my nursery as a child, I liked watching the graceful play of the wrists and arms of the Maharanee and her daughters as they conveyed food to their mouths; it was a contrast

to the clumsy, ineffectual efforts of the Europeans.

The aide−de−camp looked so wonderfully natural as a Rajput prince (and that, too, without any brown make−up) that we wished him to dress−up in the same clothes next day and to go and write his name on the Viceroy, to see if he could avoid detection.

These sorts of impersonations have to be done very thoroughly if they are to succeed. I have recounted elsewhere how my father won the rowing championship of the Mediterranean with his four−oar, in 1866. The course being such a severe one, his crew had to train very rigorously. It occurred to my father, who was extremely fond of boxing himself, that a little daily practice with the gloves might with advantage form part of the training. He accordingly had four pairs of boxing−gloves sent out from England, and he and the crew had daily bouts in our coach−house. The Duc de Vallombrosa was a great friend of my family's, and used to watch this boxing with immense interest. The Duc was a huge man, very powerfully built, but had had no experience with the gloves. The present Sir David Erskine was the youngest member of the crew, and was very slender and light built, and it struck my father one day that it would be interesting to see this comparative stripling put on the gloves with the great burly Frenchman. Sir David realised that his only chance with his huge brawny opponent was to tire him out, for should this formidable Colossus once get home on him, he would be done. He made great play with his foot−work, skipping round his big opponent and pommelling every inch of his anatomy that he could reach, and successfully dodging the smashing blows that his slow−moving antagonist tried to deal him. Suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, the big Frenchman collapsed. The Duc de Vallombrosa took his defeat in the most sportsmanlike fashion, but he remembered who had originally proposed the match.

A week later my father was riding home from a picnic with some ladies. As their horses were tired, he proposed that they should save a long round by riding along the railway line and over a railway bridge. The Due de Vallombrosa heard of this. Some few nights later two gendarmes in full uniform appeared at our villa after dark, and the bigger of the two demanded in the most peremptory fashion to be taken in to my father at once, leaving the younger one to watch the front door, where we could all see him marching up and down. When ushered in to my father, the gendarme, a huge, fiercely bearded man, adopted the most truculent manner. It had come to the knowledge of the police, he said, that my father had ridden on horse−back over a railway bridge, and along the line. Did he admit it? My father at once owned that he had done so, but pleaded ignorance, should he have broken any rule. Ignorance was no excuse, retorted the gendarme, even foreigners were supposed to know the law. The big bearded gendarme, whose tone became more hectoring and bullying every moment, went on to say that my father had broken Article 382 of the French Penal Code, a very serious offence indeed, punishable with from three to six months' imprisonment. My father smiled, and drawing out his pocket−book, said that he imagined that the offence could be compounded. The stern officer of the law grew absolutely furious; did my father suppose that a French gendarme could be bribed into forgetting his duty? He would now take my father to the lock−up to pass the night there until the *proces verbal* should be drawn up, and though he regretted it, his orders in similar cases were always to handcuff his prisoners. The family, who had gathered together on hearing the loud altercation, were struck with consternation. The idea of our parent being led in fetters through a French town, and then flung into a French dungeon, was so unspeakably painful to us that we were nearly throwing ourselves at the big policeman's feet to implore him to spare our progenitor, when the burly gendarme suddenly pulled off his false beard, revealing the extensive but familiar features of the Duc de Vallombrosa. The second slight−built gendarme at the door, proved to be General Sir George Higginson, most admirably made up. My father insisted on the two gendarmes dining with us. As our servants were not in the secret, the presence of two French policemen in uniform at the family dinner−table must have rather surprised them.

I must plead guilty myself to another attempt at impersonation. During my father's second term of office as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, my mother had a severe nervous breakdown, due to the unexpected death of a very favourite sister of mine. One of the principal duties of a Lord Lieutenant is (or rather was) to entertain ceaselessly, and private mourning was not supposed to interfere with this all−important task. So, after a respite of four months, the endless round of dinners, dances, and balls recommenced, but my mother could not forget her loss, and had no

heart for any festivities, nor did she wish to meet strangers. My father took a house for her on the sea−coast near Dublin, to which she retired, and my only remaining unmarried sister took, with Queen Victoria's permission, my mother's place as Lady Lieutenant for two years.

A brother cannot be an impartial judge of his sister's personal appearance, but I have always understood that my seven sisters were regarded by most people as ranking only second to the peerless Moncrieffe sisters as regards beauty. Certainly I thought this particular sister, the late Lady Winterton, surpassed the others in outward appearance, for she had beautiful and very refined features, and the most exquisite skin and complexion. I thought her a most lovely apparition when covered with my mother's jewels.

In those days (how far off they seem!) one of the great events of the Dublin Season was the Gala−night at the theatre, or Command Night" as it was called, when all the men wore uniform or Court dress, and the ladies their very best clothes. When the Lord and Lady Lieutenant entered the State box, attended by the various members of their Household, the audience stood up, the band playing God Save the Queen! (yes, that was in Dublin in 1875!), and the Viceregal pair then bowed their acknowledgments to the house from their box.

On the Command Night in 1875 my sister took my mother's place, and, as I have already said, diamonds were exceedingly becoming to her. According to custom, she went to the front of the box, and made a low sweeping curtsey to the audience. Ten days later she received a letter from an unknown correspondent, together with a photograph of a portly elderly man with large grey whiskers. He had been taken in an unusual position, for he was making a low bow and holding his high hat at arm's length from him. The writer explained that on the Command Night my sister had bowed to him in the most marked way. So taken aback was he, that he had not acknowledged it. He, therefore, to make amends, had had himself photographed in an attitude of perpetual salutation. Other letters rained in on my sister from the eccentric individual, and he sent her almost weekly fresh presentments of his unprepossessing exterior, but always in a bowing attitude. We made, naturally, inquiries about this person, and found that he was an elderly widower, a hatter by trade, who had retired from business after making a considerable fortune, and was living in Rathmines, a South Dublin suburb. The hatter was undoubtedly mad, a mental infirmity for which there is, of course, ample precedent in the case of gentlemen of his profession.

On one occasion, when my sister was leaving for England, the hatter, having purchased a number of fireworks, chartered a rowing−boat, and as the mail−steamer cleared the Kingstown pier−heads, a *bouquet* of rockets and Roman candles coruscated before the eyes of the astonished passengers. I was then eighteen, and as none of us had set eyes on the hatter, it occurred to me that it would be rather fun to impersonate him, so, taking a photograph with me as guide, I got his bald grey head and long grey whiskers accurately copied by a Dublin theatrical wig−maker. It would have been difficult to carry out my idea at the Viceregal Lodge, for in the hall there, in addition to the regular hall−porter, there was always a constable in uniform and a plain−clothes man on duty, to prevent the entry of unauthorised persons, so I waited until we had moved to Baron's Court. Here I made careful preparations, and arranged to dress and makeup at the house of the Head−Keeper, a great ally of mine. I was met here by a hack−car ordered from the neighbouring town, and drove up to the front door armed with a nosegay the size of a cart−wheel, composed of dahlias, hollyhocks and sunflowers. I gave the hatter's name at the door, and was ushered by the unsuspecting footman into a library, where I waited an interminable time with my gigantic bouquet in my hand. At length the door opened, but instead of my sister, as I had anticipated, it admitted my father, and my father had a hunting−crop in his hand, and to the crop was attached a heavy thong. His first words left me in no doubt as to his attitude. So, sir, he thundered, you are the individual who has had the impertinence to pester my daughter with your attentions. I am going to give you, sir, a lesson that you will remember to the end of your life, and the crop was lifted. Fortunately the room was crowded with furniture, so, crouching between tables, and dodging behind sofas, I was able to elude the thong until I had tugged my wig off. The spirit−gum manufactured in those days must have been vastly superior to that made now, for nothing would induce my whiskers to part company with my face. Yelling out my identity, in spite of the hatter's tactlessly adhesive whiskers, I made one bolt for the open window, having successfully evaded the whirling crop every time, but it was a lamentably tame ending to a carefully planned drama.

Remembering these family incidents, we decided that it would be as well to abandon the idea of a visit to Government House by a distinguished Rajput nobleman.

I may possibly have been unfortunate in my personal experiences of Indian jugglers, but I have never seen them perform any trick that was difficult of explanation. For instance, the greatly over−rated Mango trick, as I have seen it, was an almost childish performance. Having made his heap of sand, inserted the mango−stone, and watered it, the juggler covered it with a large basket, and *put his hands under the basket*. He did this between each stage of the growth of the tree. The plants in their various stages of growth were, of course, twisted round the inside of the basket, and he merely substituted one for another.

Colonel Barnard, at one time Chief of Police in Calcutta, told me a most curious story. We have all heard of the Indian rope−trick, but none of us have met a person who actually saw it with his own eyes: the story never reaches us at first−hand, but always at second−or third−hand, exactly like the accounts one heard from credulous people in 1914 of the passage of the 75,000 Russian soldiers through England. No one had actually seen them, but every one knew somebody else whose wife's cousin had actually conversed with these mysterious Muscovites, or had seen trains with closely veiled windows rushing at dead of night towards London, crammed to overflowing with Russian warriors.

In the same way Colonel Barnard had never met an eye−witness of the rope−trick, but his policemen had received orders to report to him the arrival in Calcutta of any juggler professing to do it. At length one of the police informed him that a man able to perform the trick had reached Calcutta. He would show it on one condition: that Colonel Barnard should be accompanied by one friend only. The Colonel took with him one of his English subordinates; he also took with him his Kodak, into which he had inserted a new roll of films. They arrived at a poor house in the native quarter, where they were ushered into a small courtyard thick with the dense smoke arising from two braziers burning mysterious compounds. The juggler, naked except for his loin−cloth, appeared and commenced salaaming profoundly, continuing his exaggerated salaams for some little while. Eventually he produced a long coil of rope. To Colonel Barnard's inexpressible surprise, the rope began paying away, as sailors would say, out of the juggler's hand of its own accord, and went straight up into the air. Colonel Barnard kodaked it. It went up and up, till their eyes could no longer follow it. Colonel Barnard kodaked it again. Then a small boy, standing by the juggler, commenced climbing up this rope, suspended to nothing, supported by nothing. He was kodaked. The boy went up and up, till he disappeared from view. The smoke from the herbs smouldering in the braziers seemed almost to blot out the courtyard from view. The juggler, professing himself angry with the boy for his dilatoriness, started in pursuit of him up this rope, hanging on nothing. He was kodaked, too. Finally the man descended the rope, and wiped a blood−stained knife, explaining that he had killed the boy for disobeying his orders. He then pulled the rope down and coiled it up, and suddenly the boy reappeared, and together with his master, began salaaming profoundly. The trick was over.

The two Europeans returned home absolutely mystified. With their own eyes they had seen the impossible, the incredible. Then Colonel Barnard went into his dark room and developed his negatives, with an astounding result. *Neither the juggler, nor the boy, nor the rope had moved at all*. The photographs of the ascending rope, of the boy climbing it, and of the man following him, were simply blanks, showing the details of the courtyard and nothing else. Nothing whatever had happened, but how, in the name of all that is wonderful had the impression been conveyed to two hard−headed, matter−of−fact Englishmen? Possibly the braziers contained cunning preparations of hemp or opium, unknown to European science, or may have been burning some more subtle brain−stealer; possibly the deep salaams of the juggler masked hypnotic passes, but somehow he had forced two Europeans to see what he wished them to see.

On one occasion in Colombo, in Ceylon, there was an unrehearsed episode in a juggler's performance. I was seated on the verandah of the Grand Oriental Hotel which was crowded with French passengers from an outward−bound Messageries boat which had arrived that morning. A snake−charmer was showing off his tricks and reaping a rich harvest. The juggler went round with his collecting bowl, leaving his performing cobras in their

basket. One cobra, probably devoid of the artistic temperament, or finding stage−life uncongenial to him, hungered for freedom, and, leaving his basket, glided swiftly on to the crowded verandah. He certainly occupied the middle of the stage at that moment and had the spot−light full on him, for every eye was riveted on the snake, and never was such a scene of consternation witnessed. Every one jumped on to the tables, women fainted and screamed, and the Frenchmen, for some unknown reason, all drew their revolvers. It turned out afterwards that the performing cobras had all had their poison−fangs drawn, and were consequently harmless.

Its inhabitants declare that Ceylon is the most beautiful island in the world. Those who have seen Jamaica will, I think, dispute this claim, though Kandy, nestling round its pretty little lake, and surrounded by low hills, is one of the loveliest spots imaginable. It is also the most snake−infested spot I ever set foot in.

The Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Clifford, whom I had previously met in Trinidad, had succeeded with some difficulty in persuading a band of Devil Dancers to leave their jungle fastnesses, and to give an exhibition of their uncanny dances in his garden; for, as a rule, these people dislike any Europeans seeing them engaged in their mysterious rites. The Colonial Secretary's dining−room was as picturesque in its setting as any stage scene. The room was surrounded with open arches, through which peeped the blue−velvet night sky and dim silhouettes of unfamiliar tropical growths; in the place of electric or mechanical punkahs, a tall red−and−gold clad Cingalee stood behind every guest waving continuously a long−handled, painted palm−leaf fan. The simultaneous rhythmic motion of the fans recalled the temple scene at the end of the first Act of *Aida*. We found the Devil Dancers" grouped in the garden, some thirty in number. The men were all short and very dark−skinned; they wore a species of kilt made of narrow strips of some white metal, which clashed furiously when they moved. Their legs and chests were naked except for festoons of white shells worn necklace−wise. On their heads they had curious helmets of white metal, branching into antlers, and these headdresses were covered with loose, jangling, metallic strips. The men had their faces, limbs, and bodies painted in white arabesques, which, against the dark skins, effectually destroyed any likeness to human beings. It would be difficult to conceive of anything more uncanny and less human than the appearance of these Devil Dancers as they stood against a background of palms in the black night, their painted faces lit up by the flickering glare of smoky torches. As soon as the raucous horns blared out and the tom−toms began throbbing in their maddening, syncopated rhythm, the pandemonium that ensued, when thirty men, whirling themselves in circles with a prodigious clatter of metals, began shrieking like devils possessed, as they leaped into the air, was quite sufficient to account for the terror of the Cingalee servants, who ran and hid themselves, convinced that they were face to face with real demons escaped from the Pit.

Like all Oriental performances it was far too long. The dancers shrieked and whirled themselves into a state of hysteria, and would have continued dancing all night, had they not been summarily dismissed. As far as I could make out, this was less of an attempt to propitiate local devils than an endeavour to frighten them away by sheer terror. It was unquestionably a horribly uncanny performance, what with the white streaked faces and limbs, and the clang of the metal dresses; the surroundings, too, added to the weird, unearthly effect, the dark moonless night, the dim masses of forest closing in on the garden, and the uncertain flare of the resinous torches.

Amongst others invited to see the Devil Dancers was a French traveller, a M. Des Etangs, a singularly cultivated man, who had just made a tour of all the French possessions in India. M. Des Etangs was full of curiosity about the so−called Sacred Tooth of Buddha, which is enshrined in the Temple of the Tooth, and makes Kandy a peculiarly sacred place to the Buddhist world.

The temple, a small but very picturesque building, overhangs the lake, and is surrounded by a moat, full of the fattest carp and tortoises I ever saw. Every pilgrim to the shrine throws rice to these carp, and the unfortunate fish have grown to such aldermanic amplitude of outline that they can only just waddle, rather than swim, through the water.

The Buddhist community must be of a most accommodating temperament. The original tooth of Buddha was brought to Ceylon in A.D. 411. It was captured about 1315 and taken to India, but was eventually restored to

Kandy. The Portuguese captured it again in 1560, burnt it, and ground it to powder, but the resourceful Vikrama Bahu at once manufactured a new tooth out of a piece of ivory, and the Buddhists readily accepted this false tooth as a worthy successor to the real one, extended the same veneration to it as they did to its predecessor, and, more important than all, increased rather than diminished their offerings to the Temple of the Tooth.

M. Des Etangs had the whole history of the tooth at his fingers' end, and Sir Hugh Clifford, who as Colonial Secretary was the official protector of the tooth, very kindly offered to have it uncovered for us in two days' time. He added that the priests were by no means averse to receiving such an official order, for they would telegraph the news all over the island, and thousands of pilgrims would arrive to view the exposed tooth, each one, of course, leaving an offering, to the great benefit of the temple.

Sir Hugh invited M. Des Etangs, the late General Oliphant and myself to be present at the uncovering, which had to take place at seven in the morning, in order to afford a sufficiently long day for the exposition. He implored us all, in view of the immense veneration with which the Buddhists regarded the ceremony of the uncovering, to keep perfectly serious, and to adopt a becoming attitude of respect, and he begged us all to give a slight bow when the Buddhists made their prostrations.

Accordingly, two days later at 7 a.m., M. Des Etangs, General Oliphant and I found ourselves in a lower room of the temple, the actual sanctuary of the tooth itself, into which Christians are not generally admitted. We were, of course, the only Europeans present.

Never have I felt anything like the heat of that sanctuary. We dripped and poured with perspiration. The room was entirely lined with copper, walls and roof alike, and the closed shutters were also copper−sheathed. Every scrap of light and air was excluded; there must have been at least two hundred candles alight, the place was thick with incense and heavy with the overpowering scent of the frangipani, or temple−flower as it is called in Ceylon, which lay in piled white heaps on silver dishes all round the room. The place was crowded with priests and leading Buddhists, and we Europeans panted and gasped for air in that stifling, over−scented atmosphere. Presently the Hereditary Keeper of the Tooth, who was not a priest but the lineal descendant of the old Kings of Kandy, knelt down and recited a long prayer. At its conclusion eight men staggered across the room, bearing a vast bell−shaped shrine of copper about seven feet high. This was the outer case of the tooth. The Hereditary Keeper produced an archaic key, and the outer case was unlocked. The eight men shuffled off with their heavy burden, and the next covering, a much smaller, bell−shaped case of gold, stood revealed. All the natives present prostrated themselves, and we, in accordance with our orders, bowed our heads. This was repeated six times, the cases growing richer and more heavily jewelled as we approached the final one. The seventh case was composed entirely of cut rubies and diamonds, a shimmering and beautiful piece of work, presented by the Buddhists of Burmah, but made, oddly enough, in Bond Street, W.1.

When opened, this disclosed the largest emerald known, carved into the shape of a Buddha, and this emerald Buddha held the tooth in his hand. After prolonged prostrations, the Hereditary Keeper took a lotus−flower, beautifully fashioned out of pure gold without alloy, and placed the tooth in it, on a little altar heaped with frangipani flowers. The uncovering was over; we three Europeans left the room in a half−fainting condition, gasping for air, suffocated with the terrific heat, and stifled with the heavy perfumes.

The octagonal tower over the lake, familiar to all visitors to Kandy, contains the finest Buddhist theological library in the world. The books are all in manuscript, each one encased in a lacquer box, though the bookcases themselves containing these treasures were supplied by a well−known firm in the Tottenham Court Road.

A singularly intelligent young priest, speaking English perfectly, showed me the most exquisitely illuminated old Chinese manuscripts, as well as treatises in ten other Oriental languages, which only made me deplore my ignorance, since I was unable to read a word of any of them. The illuminations, though, struck me as fully equal to the finest fourteenth−century European work in their extreme minuteness and wonderful delicacy of detail. The

young priest, whom I should suspect of being what is termed in ecclesiastical circles a spike, was evidently very familiar with the Liturgy of the Church of England, but it came with somewhat of a shock to hear him apply to Buddha terms which we are accustomed to use in a different connection.

The material prosperity of Ceylon is due to tea and rubber, and the admirable Public Works of the colony, roads, bridges and railways, seem to indicate that these two commodities produce a satisfactory budget. During the Kandy cricket week young planters trooped into the place by hundreds. Planters are divided locally into three categories: the managers, Peria Dorai, or big masters, spoken of as P. D.'s, the assistants, Sinna Dorai, or little masters, labelled S. D.'s, and the premium−pupils, known as creepers.

Personally I am inclined to discredit the local legend that all male children born of white parents in Ceylon come into the world with abnormal strength of the right wrist, and a slight inherited callosity of the left elbow. This is supposed to be due to their parents having rested their left elbows on bar−counters for so many hours of their lives; the development of the right wrist being attributed in the same way to the number of glasses their fathers have lifted with it. This, if authenticated by scientific evidence, would be an interesting example of heredity, but I suspect it to be an exaggeration. The bar−room in the hotel at Kandy was certainly of vast dimensions, and was continuously packed to overflowing during the cricket week, and an unusual notice conspicuously displayed, asking gentlemen to refrain from singing in the passages and bedrooms at night, seemed to hint that undue conviviality was not unknown in the hotel; but it must be remembered that these young fellows work very hard, and lead most solitary existences. An assistant−manager on a tea estate may see no white man for weeks except his own boss, or P. D., so it is perfectly natural that when they foregather with other young Englishmen of their own age during Colombo race week, or Kandy cricket week, they should grow a little uproarious, or even at times exceed the strict bounds of moderation, and small blame to them!

Ceylon was formerly a great coffee−producing island, and the introduction of tea culture only dates from about 1882. In 1870 a fungus began attacking the coffee plantations, and in ten years this fungus killed practically all the coffee bushes, and reduced the planters to ruin. Instead of whining helplessly over their misfortunes, the planters had the energy and enterprise to replace their ruined coffee bushes with tea shrubs, and Ceylon is now one of the most important sources of the world's tea−supply. Tea−making by which I do not imply the throwing of three spoonfuls of dried leaves into a teapot, but the transformation of the green leaf of a camellia into the familiar black spirals of our breakfast−tables is quite an art in itself. The tea−maker has to judge when the freshly gathered leaves are sufficiently withered for him to begin the process, into the complications of which I will not attempt to enter. I was much gratified, both in Ceylon and Assam, at noting how much of the tea−making machinery is manufactured in Belfast, for though Ulster enterprise is proverbial, I should never have anticipated it as taking this particular line. There is one peculiarly fascinating machine in which a mechanical pestle, moving in an eccentric orbit, twists the flat leaf into the familiar narrow crescents that we infuse daily. The tea−plant is a pretty little shrub, with its pale−primrose, cistus−like flowers, but in appearance it cannot compete with the coffee tree, with its beautiful dark glossy foliage, its waxy white flowers, and brilliant scarlet berries.

Peradeniya Botanical Gardens rank as the second finest in the world, being only surpassed by those at Buitenzorg in Java. I had the advantage of being shown their beauties by the curator himself, a most learned man, and what is by no means a synonymous term, a very interesting one, too. Holding the position he did, it is hardly necessary to insist on his nationality; his accent was still as marked as though he had only left his native Aberdeen a week before. He showed me a tall, graceful tree growing close to the entrance, with smooth, whitish bark, and a family resemblance to a beech. This was the ill−famed upas tree of Java, the subject of so many ridiculous legends. The curator told me that the upas (*Antiaris toxicaria*) was unquestionably intensely poisonous, juice and bark alike. A scratch made on the finger by the bark might have very serious results, and the emanations from a newly lopped−off branch would be strong enough to bring out a rash; equally, any one foolish enough to drink the sap would most certainly die. The stories of the tree giving out deadly fumes had no foundation, for the curator had himself sat for three hours under the tree without experiencing any bad effects whatever. All the legends of the upas tree are based on an account of it by a Dr. Foersch in 1783. This mendacious medico declared that no living

thing could exist within fifteen miles of the tree. The Peradeniya curator pointed out that Java was a volcanic island, and one valley where the upas flourishes is certainly fatal to all animal life owing to the emanations of carbonic acid gas escaping from fissures in the soil. It was impossible to look at this handsome tree without some respect for its powers of evil, though I doubt if it be more poisonous than the West Indian manchineel. This latter insignificant tree is so virulently toxic that rain−drops from its leaves will raise a blister on the skin.

Amongst the wonders of Peradeniya is a magnificent avenue of talipat palms, surely the most majestic of their family, though they require intense heat to develop their splendid crowns of leaves.

Colombo has been called the Clapham Junction of the East, for there steamship lines from Australia, China, Burmah, and the Dutch East Indies all meet, and the most unexpected friends turn up.

I recall one arrival at Colombo in a Messageries Maritimes boat. On board was a most agreeable French lady going out with her children to join her husband, a French officer in Cochin China. I was leaving the ship at Colombo, but induced the French lady to accompany me on shore, the children being bribed with the promise of a ride in a hackery or trotting−bull carriage. None of the party had ever left France before. As we approached the landing−stage, which was, as usual, black with baggage−coolies waiting for a job, the French children began howling at the top of their voices. The savages! the savages! We're frightened at the savages, they sobbed in French; we want to go back to France. Their mother asked me quite gravely whether the savages here were well−disposed, as she had heard that they sometimes met strangers with a shower of arrows. And this in up−to−date, electric−lighted Colombo! We might have been Captain Cook landing in Tahiti, instead of peaceful travellers making their quiet way to an hotel amidst a harmless crowd of tip−seeking coolies.

The unfamiliar is often unnecessarily alarming.

I remember a small ten−year−old white Bermudian boy who accompanied his father to England for King George's coronation. The boy had never before left his cedar−clad, sunlit native archipelago, and after the ship had passed the Needles, and was making her way up the Solent, he looked with immense interest at this strange land which had suddenly appeared after three thousand miles of water. All houses in Bermuda are whitewashed, and their owners are obliged by law to whitewash their coral roofs as well. Bermuda, too, is covered with low cedar−scrub of very sombre hue, and there are no tall trees. The boy, a very sharp little fellow, was astonished at the red−brick of the houses on the Isle of Wight, and at their red−tile or dark slate roofs, and was also much impressed by the big oaks and lofty elms. Finally he turned to his father as the ship was passing Cowes: Do you mean to tell me, Daddy, that the people living in these queer houses in this odd country are really human beings like us, and that they actually have human feelings like you and me?

CHAPTER III

Frenchmen pleasant travelling companions The limitations Vicomte de Vogue, the innkeeper and the Ikon An early oil−burning steamer A modern Bluebeard His Blue Chamber Dupleix His ambitious scheme A disastrous period for France A personal appreciation of the Emperor Nicholas II A learned but versatile Orientalist Pidgin English Hong−Kong An ancient Portuguese city in China Duck junks A comical Marathon race Canton Its fascination and its appalling smells The malevolent Chinese devils Precautions adopted against Foreign Devils The fortunate limitations of Chinese devils The City of the Dead A business interview.

M. Des Etangs, the French traveller to whom I have already alluded, agreed to accompany me to the Far East, an arrangement which I welcomed, for he was a very cultivated and interesting man. Unexpectedly he was detained in Ceylon by a business matter, so I went on alone.

I regretted this, for on two previous occasions I had found what a pleasant travelling companion an educated Frenchman can be. I do not think that the French, as a rule, are either acute or accurate observers. They are too apt to start with preconceived theories of their own; anything which clashes with the ideas that they have already formed is rejected as evidence, whilst the smallest scrap of corroborative testimony is enlarged and distorted so that they may be enabled to justify triumphantly their original proposition, added to which, Frenchmen are, as a rule, very poor linguists. This, of course, is speaking broadly, but I fancy that the French mind is very definite and clear−cut, yet rather lacking in receptivity. The French suffer from the excessive development of the logical faculty in them. This same definite quality in the French language, whilst delighting both my ear and my intelligence, rightly or wrongly prevents French poetry from making any appeal to me; it is too bright and sparkling, there is no mystery possible in so clear−cut a medium, added to which, every syllable in French having an equal value, no rhythm is possible, and French poetry has to rely on rhyme alone.

It is not on the cloudless summer day that familiar objects take on vague and fantastic shapes; to effect that, mists and a rain−veiled sky are wanted. Then distances are blotted out, and the values of nearer objects are transformed under the swirling drifts of vapour, and a new dream−world is created under one's very eyes. This is, perhaps, merely the point of view of a Northerner.

As far back as 1881, I had made a trip down the Volga to Southern Russia with that most delightful of men, the late Vicomte Eugene Melchior de Vogue, the French Academician and man−of−letters. I absolve Vogue from the accusation of being unable to observe like the majority of his compatriots, nor, like them, was he a poor linguist. He had married a Russian, the sister of General Anenkoff of Central Asian fame; spoke Russian fluently, and very few things escaped his notice. Though he was much older than me, no more charming companion could be imagined. A little incident at Kazan, on the Volga, amused me enormously. We were staying at a most indifferent hotel kept by a Frenchman. The French proprietor explained to us that July was the month during which the miraculous Ikon of the Kazan Madonna was carried from house to house by the priests. The fees for this varied from 25 roubles (then 2 pounds 10s.) for a short visit from the Ikon of five minutes, to 200 roubles (20 pounds) for the privilege of sheltering the miracle−working picture for an entire night. I must add that the original Ikon was supposed to have been dug up in Kazan in 1597. In 1612 it was removed to Moscow, and was transferred again in 1710 to Petrograd, where a large and pretentious cathedral was built for its reception. In 1812, when Napoleon captured Moscow, the Kazan Madonna was hastily summoned from Petrograd, and many Russians implicitly believe that the rout of the French was solely due to this wonder−working Ikon. In the meanwhile the inhabitants of Kazan realised that a considerable financial asset had left their midst, so with commendable enterprise they had a replica made of the Ikon, which every one accepted as a perfectly satisfactory substitute, much as the Cingalees regarded their Ersatz Buddha's tooth at Kandy as fully equal to the original. The French landlord told us that in view of the strong local feeling, he was obliged, in the interests of his business, to pay for a visit from the Ikon, afin de faire marcher mon commerce, and he invited Vogue and myself to be present at the ceremony.

Next day we stood at the foot of a small back−staircase which had been prepared in Russian fashion for the reception of the Madonna. Both the steps and banisters of the stairs were entirely draped in clean white sheets, to which little sprigs of fir branches had been attached. On a landing, also draped with sheets, a little white−covered table with two lighted candles was to serve as a *reposoir* for the Ikon. The whole of the hotel staff all Russians were present, as well as the frock−coated landlord. The Madonna arrived in a gilt coach−and−four, a good deal the worse for wear, with a coachman and two shaggy−headed footmen, all bareheaded. The priests carried the Madonna up to the temporary altar, and the landlord advanced to pay his devotions.

Now as a Roman Catholic he had little respect for an Ikon of the Eastern Church, nor as a Frenchman could he be expected to entertain lively feelings of gratitude to a miracle−working picture which was supposed by Russians to have brought about the terrible disasters to his countrymen in 1812. Confident in his knowledge that no one present, with the exception of Vogue and myself, understood one word of French, the landlord fairly let himself go.

Crossing himself many times after the Orthodox fashion, and making the low prostrations of the Eastern Church, he began: Ah! vieille planche peinte, tu n'as pas d'idee comme je me fiche de toi. More low prostrations, and then, Et c'est toi vieille croute qui imagines que tu as Chasse les Francais de ce pays en 1812? More strenuous crossings, Ah! Zut alors! et re−zut, et re−re zut! sale planche! which may be Englished very freely as Ah! you old painted board, you can have no conception of what I think of you! Are you really swollen−headed enough to imagine that it was you who drove the French out of Russia in 1812? Yah! then, you ugly old daub, and yah! again! The Russian staff, not understanding one word of this, were much impressed by their master's devotional behaviour, but Vogue and I had to go into the street and laugh for ten minutes.

The wife of a prominent official boarded the steamer at some stopping−place, with her two daughters. They were pretentious folk, talking French, and giving themselves tremendous airs. When they heard Vogue and me talking the same language, she looked at us, gave a sniff, and observed in a loud voice, Evidently two French commercial travellers! Next morning she ignored our salutations. During the great heat of the day she read French aloud to her daughters, and to my great joy the book was one of Vogue's. She enlarged on the beauty of the style and language, so I could not help saying, The author will much appreciate your compliment, madame, for he is sitting opposite you. This is M. de Vogue himself. I need hardly say that the under−bred woman overwhelmed us with civilities after that.

The Volga steamers were then built after the type of Mississippi boats, with immense superstructures; they were the first oil−burning steamers I had ever seen, so I got the Captain's permission to go down to the engine−room. Instead of a grimy stokehole full of perspiring firemen and piles of coal, I found a clean, white−painted place with one solitary but clean man regulating polished taps. The Chief Engineer, a burly, red−headed, red−bearded man, came up and began explaining things to me. I could then talk Russian quite fluently, but the technicalities of marine engineering were rather beyond me, and I had not the faintest idea of the Russian equivalents for, say, intermediate cylinder, or slide−valve. I stumbled lamely along somehow until a small red−haired boy came in and cried in the strongest of Glasgow accents, Your tea is waiting on ye, feyther.

It appeared that the Glasgow man had been Head Engineer of the river steamboat company for ten years, but we had neither of us detected the other's nationality.

On another occasion, whilst proceeding to India in a Messageries Maritimes boat, I made the acquaintance of an M. Bayol, a native of Marseilles, who had been for twenty−five years in business at Pondicherry, the French colony some 150 miles south of Madras. M. Bayol was a typical Marius, or Marseillais: short, bald, bearded and rotund of stomach. It is unnecessary to add that he talked twenty to the dozen, with an immense amount of gesticulation, and that he could work himself into a frantic state of excitement over anything in two minutes. I heard on board that he had the reputation of being the shrewdest business man in Southern India. He was most capital company, rolling out perpetual jokes and *calembour*, and bubbling over with exuberant *joie de vivre*. I think M. Bayol took a fancy to me on account of my understanding his Provencale patois, for, as a boy, I had learnt French in a Provencale−speaking district.

All Englishmen are supposed in France to suffer from a mysterious disease known as le spleen. I have not the faintest idea of what this means. The spleen is, I believe, an internal organ whose functions are very imperfectly understood, still it is an accepted article of faith in France that every Briton is devore de spleen, and that this lamentable state of things embitters his whole outlook on life, and casts a black shadow over his existence. When I got to know M. Bayol better during our evening tramps up and down the deck, he asked me confidentially what remedies I adopted when ronge de spleen, and how I combated the attacks of this deplorable but peculiarly insular disease, and was clearly incredulous when I failed to understand him. This amazing man also told me that he had been married five times. Not one of his first four wives had been able to withstand the unhealthy climate of Pondicherry for more than eighteen months, so, after the demise of his fourth French wife, he had married a native, ne pouvant vivre seul, j'ai tout bonnement epouse une indigene.

M. Bayol insisted on showing me the glories of Pondicherry himself, an offer which I, anxious to see a Franco−Indian town, readily accepted. There is no harbour there, and owing to the heavy surf, the landing must be made in a surf−boat, a curious keel−less craft built of thin pliant planks *sewn* together with copper wire, which bobs about on the surface of the water like a cork. At Pondicherry, as in all French Colonial possessions, an attempt has been made to reproduce a little piece of France. There was the dusty Grande Place, surrounded with even dustier trees and numerous cafes; the Cafe du Progres ; the Cafe de l'Union, and other stereotyped names familiar from a hundred French towns, and pale−faced civilians, with a few officers in uniform, were seated at the usual little tables in front of them. Everything was as different as possible from an average Anglo−Indian cantonment: even the natives spoke French, or what was intended to be French, amongst themselves. The whole place had a rather dejected, out−at−elbows appearance, but it atoned for its diminishing trade by its amazing number of officials. That little town seemed to contain more bureaucrats than Calcutta, and almost eclipsed our own post−war gigantic official establishments. On arriving at my French friend's house, the fifth Madame Bayol, a lady of dark chocolate complexion, and numerous little pale coffee−coloured Bayols greeted their spouse and father with rapturous shouts of delight. Later in the day, M. Bayol, drawing me on one side, said, We have become friends on the voyage; I will now show you the room which enshrines my most sacred memories, and drawing a key from his pocket, he unlocked a door, admitting me to a very large room perfectly bare and empty except for four stripped bedsteads standing in the centre. These, mon ami, are the beds on which my four French wives breathed their last, and this room is very dear to me in consequence, and the fat little Marseillais burst into tears. I have no wish to be unfeeling, but I really felt as though I had stumbled undesignedly upon some of the more intimate details connected with Bluebeard's matrimonial difficulties, and when M. Bayol began, the tears streaming down his cheeks, to give me a brief account of his first wife's last moments, the influence of this Bluebeard chamber began asserting itself, and it was all I could do to refrain from singing (of course very sympathetically) the lines from Offenbach's *Barbe−Bleue* beginning:

Ma premiere femme est morte
Que le diable l'emporte!

but on second thoughts I refrained.

M. Bayol's garden reminded me of that of the immortal Tartarin of Tarascon, for the only green things in it grew in pots, and nothing was over four inches high. The rest of the garden consisted of bare, sun−baked tracts of clay, intersected by gravel walks. I felt certain that amongst these seedlings there must have been a two−inch high specimen of the Baobab l'arbre geant, the pride of Tartarin's heart, the tree which, as he explained, might under favourable conditions grow 200 feet high. After all, Marseilles and Tarascon are not far apart, and their inhabitants are very similar in temperament.

I was pleased to see a fine statue of Dupleix at Pondicherry, for he was a man to whom scant justice has been done by his compatriots. Few people seem to realise how very nearly Dupleix succeeded in his design of building up a great French empire in India. He arrived in India in 1715, at the age of eighteen, and amassed a large fortune in legitimate trade; he became Administrator of Chandernagore, in Bengal, in 1730, and displayed such remarkable ability in this post that in 1741 he was appointed Governor−General of the French Indies. In 1742 war broke out between France and Britain, and at the outset the French arms were triumphant. Madras surrendered in 1746 to a powerful French fleet under La Bourdonnais, the Governor of the Island of Reunion, and a counterattack on Pondicherry by Admiral Boscawen's fleet in 1748 failed utterly, though the defence was conducted by Dupleix, a civilian. These easy French successes inspired Dupleix with the idea of establishing a vast French empire in India on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy, but here he was frustrated by the military genius of Clive, who, it must be remembered, started life as a civilian writer in the East India Company's service. Dupleix encountered his first check by Clive's dashing capture of Arcot in 1751. From that time the fortunes of war inclined with ever−increasing bias to the British side, and the decisive battle of Plassey in 1757 (three years after Dupleix's return to France) was a death−blow to the French aspirations to become the preponderant power in India.

Dupleix was shabbily treated by France. He received but little support from the mother country; the vast sums he had expended from his private resources in prosecuting the war were never refunded to him; he was consistently maligned by the jealous and treacherous La Bourdonnais, and after his recall to France in 1754 his services to his country were never recognised, and he died in poverty.

G. B. Malleson's *Dupleix* is a most impartial and interesting account of this remarkable man's life: it has been translated into French and is accepted by the French as an accurate text−book.

The whole reign of Louis XV. was a supremely disastrous period for French Colonial aspirations. Not only did the dream of a great French empire in the East crumble away just as it seemed on the very point of realisation, but after Wolfe's victory on the Heights of Abraham at Quebec, Canada was formally ceded by France to Britain in 1763, by the Treaty of Paris.

This ill fortune pursued France into the succeeding reign of Louis XVI., for in April, 1782, Rodney's great victory over Count de Grasse off Dominica transferred the Lesser Antilles from French to British suzerainty.

The same sort of blight seemed to hang over France during Louis XV.'s reign, as overshadowed the Russia of the ill−starred Nicholas II. Nothing could possibly go right with either of them, and it may be that the prime causes were the same: the assumption of absolute power by an irresolute monarch, lacking the intellectual equipment which alone would enable him to justify his claims to supreme power though I hasten to disclaim any comparison between these two rulers.

Between Louis XV., vicious, selfish and incapable, always tied to the petticoat and caprices of some new mistress, and the unfortunate Nicholas II., well−intentioned, and almost fanatically religious, the affectionate father and the devoted husband, no comparison is possible, except as regards their limitations for the supreme positions they occupied.

I have recounted elsewhere how, when Nicholas II. visited India as Heir Apparent in 1890, I saw a great deal of him, for he stayed ten days with my brother−in−law, Lord Lansdowne, at Calcutta and Barrackpore, and I was brought into daily contact with him. The Czarevitch, as he then was, had a very high standard of duty, though his intellectual equipment was but moderate. He had a perfect craze about railway development, and it must not be forgotten that that stupendous undertaking, the Trans−Siberian Railway, was entirely due to his initiative. At the time of his visit to India, Nicholas II. was obsessed with the idea that the relations between Great Britain and Russia would never really improve until the Russian railways were linked up with the British−Indian system, a proposition which responsible Indian Officials viewed with a marked lack of enthusiasm. The Czarevitch was courteous, gentle and sincere, but though full of good intentions, he was fatally inconstant of purpose, and his mental endowments were insufficient for the tremendous responsibilities to which he was to succeed, and in that one fact lies the pathos of the story of this most unfortunate of monarchs.

To return from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, and from the disastrous collapse of the French Colonial Empire to my own infinitely trivial personal experiences, I regretted the business which had detained M. Des Etangs in Ceylon, and deprived me of the company of so agreeable and cultivated a man−of−the−world.

There was a Dr. Munro on board the liner. Dr. Munro, at that time Principal of a Calcutta College is, I believe, one of the greatest Oriental scholars living. On going into the smoking−room of the steamer one morning, I found the genial rotund little Professor at work with an exquisitely illuminated Chinese manuscript before him. He explained to me that it was a very interesting Chinese document of the twelfth century, and that he was translating it into Arabic for the benefit of his pupils. The amazing erudition of a man who could translate off−hand an ancient Chinese manuscript into Arabic, without the aid of dictionaries or of any works of reference, amidst all the hubbub of the smoking−room of an ocean liner, left me fairly gasping. Dr. Munro had acquired his Oriental languages at the University of St. Petersburg, so, in addition to his other attainments, he spoke Russian as fluently

as English.

There was another side to this merry little Professor. We had on board the vivacious and tuneful Miss Grace Palotta, who was making a concert−tour round the world. Miss Palotta, whose charming personality will be remembered by the frequenters of the old Gaiety Theatre, was a Viennese by birth, and she sang those tuneful, airy little Viennese songs, known as Wiener Couplets, to perfection. She readily consented to give a concert on board, but said she must be sustained by a chorus. Dr. Munro himself selected, trained and led the chorus; whilst I had to replace Miss Palotta's accompanist who was prostrate with sea−sickness.

And so the big liner crept on slowly into steaming, oily, pale−green seas, gliding between vividly green islands in the orchid−house temperature of the Malay Peninsula, a part of the world worth visiting, if only to eat the supremely delicious mangosteen, though even an unlimited diet of this luscious fruit would hardly reconcile the average person to a perpetual steam bath, and to an intensely enervating atmosphere. Nature must have been in a sportive mood when she evolved the durian. This singular Malay fruit smells like all the concentrated drains of a town seasoned with onions. One single durian can poison out a ship with its hideous odour, yet those able to overcome its revolting smell declare the flavour of the fruit to be absolutely delicious.

It is a little humiliating for a middle−aged gentleman to find that on arriving in China he is expected to revert to the language of the nursery, and that he must request his Chinese servant to go catchee me one piecee cuppee tea. On board the Admiral's yacht, it required a little reflection before the intimation that bleakfast belong leady top−side could be translated into the information that breakfast was ready on deck. Why adding ee to every word should render it more intelligible to the Celestial understanding, beats me. There are people who think that by tacking O on to every English word they render themselves perfectly clear to Italians and Spaniards, though this theory seems hardly justified by results. Pidgin English, of course, merely means business English, and has been evolved as an easy means of communication for business purposes between Europeans and Chinamen. The Governor of Hong−Kong's Chinese secretary prided himself on his accurate and correct English. I heard the Governor ask this secretary one day where a certain report was. I placed it in the second *business*−hole on your Excellency's desk, answered Mr. Wung Ho, who evidently considered it very vulgar to use the term pigeon−hole.

Considering that eighty years ago, when it was first ceded to Britain, Hong−Kong was a barren, treeless, granite island, it really is an astonishing place. It is easily the handsomest modern city in Asia, has a population of 400,000, and is by a long way the busiest port in the world. It is an exceedingly pretty place, too, with its rows of fine European houses rising in terraces out of a sea of greenery, and it absolutely hums with prosperity. If Colombo is the Clapham Junction, Hong−Kong is certainly the Crewe of the East, for steamship lines to every part of the world are concentrated here. With the exception of racing ponies, there is not one horse on the island.

Macao, the old Portuguese colony, is only forty miles from Hong−Kong. The arrangements on the river steamers are rather peculiar, for only European passengers are allowed on the spar deck. All Chinese passengers, of whatever degree, have to descend to the lower decks, which are enclosed with strong steel bars. Before the ship starts the iron gates of communication are shut and padlocked, so that all Chinese passengers are literally enclosed in a steel cage, shut off alike from the upper deck and the engine−room. These precautions were absolutely necessary, for time and time again gangs of river−pirates have come on board these steamers in the guise of harmless passengers; at a pre−arranged signal they have overpowered and murdered the white officers, thrown the Chinese passengers overboard and then made off with the ship and her cargo. An arms−rack of rifles on the European deck told its own story.

Macao has belonged to Portugal since 1555. Its harbour has silted up, and its once flourishing trade has dwindled to nothing. Gambling houses are the only industry of the place. There are row and rows of these opposite the steamer landing, all kept by Chinamen, garish with coloured electric lights, each one clamorously proclaiming that it is the only first−class gambling house in Macao. A crowded special steamer leaves Hong−Kong every

Sunday morning for Macao, for the special purpose of affording the European community an opportunity to leave most of their excess profits in the pockets of the Chinese proprietors of these places. The Captain and Chief Engineer of the boat, who, it is almost superfluous to add, were of course both Clyde men, like good Scots deplored this Sabbath−breaking; but like equally good Scots they admitted how very lucrative the Sunday traffic was to the steamboat company, and I gathered that they both got a commission on this.

The old town of Macao is a piece of sixteenth and seventeenth century Portugal transplanted into China. It is wonderful to find a southern European town complete with cathedral, pracas, fountains, and statues, dumped down in the Far East. The place, too, is as picturesque as a scene from an opera, and China is the last spot where one would expect to find lingering traces of Gothic influence in carved doorways and other architectural details. As far as externals went Camoens, the great Portuguese poet, can scarcely have realised his exile during the two years, 1556−1558, of his banishment to Macao. He most creditably utilised this period of enforced rest by writing *The Lusiads*, a poem which his countrymen are inclined to over rate. All the familiar characteristics of an old Portuguese town are met with here, the blue and pink colour−washed houses, an ample sufficiency of ornate churches, public fountains everywhere, and every shop−sign and notice is written in Portuguese, including the interminable Portuguese street names. The only thing lacking seemed the inhabitants. I presume the town must have some inhabitants, but I did not see a single one. Possibly they were taking their siestas, or were shut up in their houses, meditating on the bygone glories of Portugal, tempered with regrets that they had neglected to dredge their harbour.

Admiral Sir Hedworth Meux, the Naval Commander−in−Chief in the Pacific, who happens to be my sister's son, told me that he was sending a destroyer for three or four days up the Canton River, on special service, and asked if I would care to go, and I naturally accepted the offer. The Admiral did not go up himself, but sent his Flag−Captain and Flag−Lieutenant. The marshy banks of the Canton River are lined with interminable paddy−fields, for, as every one knows, rice is a crop that must be grown under water. After the rice harvest, these swampy fields are naturally full of fallen grain, and thrifty John Chinaman feeds immense flocks of ducks on the stubbles of the paddy−fields. The ducks are brought down by thousands in junks, and quack and gobble to their hearts' content in the fields all day, waddling back over a plank to their junks at night. At sunset, one of the most comical sights in the world can be witnessed. A Chinese boy comes ashore from each junk with a horn, which he blows as a signal to the ducks that bedtime has arrived. In his other hand the boy has a rattan cane, with which he administers a tremendous thrashing to the last ten ducks to arrive on board. The ducks know this, and in that singular country their progenitors have probably been thrashed in the same way for a thousand years, so they all have an inherited sense of the dangers of the corporal punishment threatening them. As soon as the horn sounds, thousands of ducks start the maddest of Marathon races back to their respective junks, which they never mistake, with such a quacking and gobbling and pushing of each other aside, as the ungainly fowls waddle along at the top of their speed, as must be witnessed to be credited. The duck has many advantages: in his wild state, his extreme wariness and his powerful flight make him a splendid sporting bird, and when dead he has most estimable qualities after a brief sojourn in the kitchen. Domesticated, though he can scarcely be classed as a dainty feeder, he makes a strong appeal to some people, especially after he has contracted an intimate alliance with sage and onions, but he was never intended by Nature for a sprinter, nor are his webbed feet adapted for rapid locomotion. Sufferers from chronic melancholia would, I am sure, benefit by witnessing the nightly football scrums and speed−contests of these Chinese ducks, for I defy any one to see them without becoming helpless with laughter.

The river in the neighbourhood of Canton is so covered with junks, sampans, and other craft, that, in comparison to it, the Thames at Henley during regatta week would look like a deserted waste of water. One misses at Canton the decorative war−junks of the Shanghai River. These war−junks, though perfectly useless either for defence or attack, are gorgeous objects to the eye, with their carving, their scarlet lacquer and profuse gilding. A Chinese stern−wheeler is a quaint craft, for her wheel is nothing but a treadmill, manned by some thirty half−naked coolies, who go through a regular treadmill drill, urging the boat along at perhaps three miles an hour. In addition to their deck passengers, these boats have rows of little covered niches for superior personages, and in every niche sits a grave, motionless Chinaman, looking for all the world like those carved Chinese cabinets we sometimes see,

with a little porcelain figure squatting in each carved compartment.

We had a naval interpreter on board, a jovial, hearty, immensely fat old Chinaman. Our destroyer had four funnels, but as we were going up the river under easy steam, only the forward boilers were going, so that whilst our two forward funnels, Matthew and Mark, were smoking bravely, the two after ones, Luke and John, were unsullied by the faintest wisp of a smoke pennant trailing from their black orifices. Our old interpreter was much distressed at this, for, as far as I could judge, his countrymen gauged a vessel's fighting power solely by the amount of smoke that she emitted, and he feared that we should be regarded with but scanty respect.

The British and French Consulate−Generals at Canton are situated on a large artificial island, known as Sha−mien. Here, too, the European business men live in the most comfortable Europe−like houses, surrounded with gardens and lawn−tennis courts. Here is the cricket−ground and the club. Being in the Far East, the latter is, of course, equipped with one of the most gigantic bar−rooms ever seen. The British Consul−General had ordered chairs for us in which to be carried through the city, as it would be derogatory to the dignity of a European to be seen walking on foot in a Chinese town. Our business with the Consul−General finished, we started on our tour of inspection, the party consisting of the Flag−Captain, the Flag−Lieutenant, the interpreter and myself, together with a small midshipman, who, being anxious to see Canton, had somehow managed to get three days' leave and to smuggle himself on board the destroyer. The Consul−General warned us that the smells in the native city would be unspeakably appalling, and advised us to smoke continuously, very kindly presenting each of us with a handful of mild Borneo cheroots.

The canal separating Sha−mien from the city is 100 feet broad, but I doubt if anywhere else in the world 100 feet separates the centuries as that canal does. On the one side, green lawns, gardens, trees, and a very fair imitation of Europe. A few steps over a fortified bridge, guarded by Indian soldiers and Indian policemen, and you are in the China of a thousand years ago, absolutely unchanged, except for the introduction of electric light and telephones. The English manager of the Canton Electric Co. told me that the natives were wonderfully adroit at stealing current. One would not imagine John Chinaman an expert electrician, yet these people managed somehow to tap the electric mains, and the manager estimated the weekly loss on stolen power as about 500 pounds.

No street in Canton is wider than eight feet, and many of them are only five feet broad. They are densely packed with yellow humanity, though there is no wheeled traffic whatever. There are countless miles of these narrow, stifling alleys, paved with rough granite slabs, under which festers the sewage of centuries. The smells are unbelievably hideous. Except for an occasional canal, a reeking open sewer, there are no open spaces whatever. And yet these narrow alleys of two−storied houses are marvellously picturesque, with coloured streamers and coloured lanterns drooping from every house and shop, and the shops themselves are a joy to the eye. They are entirely open to the street in front, but in the far dim recesses of every one there is a species of carved reredos, over which dragons, lacquered black, or lacquered red, gilded or silvered, sprawl artistically. In front of this screen there is always a red−covered joss table, where red lights burn, and incense−sticks smoulder, all of which, as shall be explained later, are precautions to thwart the machinations of the peculiarly malevolent local devils. In food shops, hideous and obscene entrails of unknown animals gape repellently on the stranger, together with strings and strings of dried rats, and other horrible comestibles; in every street the yellow population seems denser and denser, the colour more brilliant and the smells more sickening. We could not have stood it but for the thoughtful Consul−General's Borneo cigars, though the small midshipman, being still of tender years, was brought to public and ignominious disaster by his second cheroot. After two hours of slow progress in carrying−chairs, through this congeries of narrow, unsavoury alleys, now jostled by coolies carrying bales of merchandise suspended from long bamboos resting on their shoulders (exactly as they did in the pictures of a book, called *Far Off*, which I had as a child), now pushed on one side by the palanquin of a mandarin, we hungered for fresh air and open spaces, less crowded by yellow oblique−eyed Mongolians; still, though we all felt as though we were in a nightmare, we had none of us ever seen anything like it, and in spite of our declarations that we never wished to see this evil−smelling warren of humanity again, somehow its uncanny fascination laid

hold of us, and we started again over the same route next morning. The small midshipman had to be restrained from indulging in his yearning to dine off puppy−dog in a Chinese restaurant, in spite of the gastric disturbances occasioned by his precocious experiments with cheroots.

I imagine that every Chinaman liable to zymotic diseases died thousands of years ago, and that by the law of the survival of the fittest all Chinamen born now are immune from filth diseases; that they can drink sewage−water with impunity, and thrive under conditions which would kill any Europeans in a week.

The inhabitants of Canton are, I believe, mostly Taoists by religion, but their lives are embittered by their constant struggles with the local devils. Most fortunately Chinese devils have their marked limitations; for instance, they cannot go round a corner, and most mercifully they suffer from constitutional timidity, and can be easily frightened away by fire−crackers. Human beings inhabiting countries subject to pests, have usually managed to cope with them by adopting counter−measures. In mosquito−ridden countries people sleep under mosquito−nets, thus baffling those nocturnal blood−suckers; in parts of Ceylon infested with snakes, sharpened zig−zag snake−boards are fastened to the window−sills, which prove extremely painful to intruding reptiles. The Chinese, as a safeguard against their devils, have adopted the peculiar cocked hat corner to their roofs, which we see reproduced in so much of Chippendale's work. It is obvious that, with an ordinary roof, any ill−disposed devil would summon some of his fellows, and they would fly up, get their shoulders under the corner of the eaves, and prise the roof off in no time. With the peculiar Chinese upward curve of the corners, the devils are unable to get sufficient leverage, and so retire discomfited. Most luckily, too, they detest the smell of incense−sticks, and cannot abide the colour red, which is as distasteful to them as it is to a bull, but though it moves the latter to fury, it only inspires the devils with an abject terror. Accordingly, any prudent man can, by an abundant display of red silk streamers, and a plentiful burning of joss−sticks, keep his house practically free from these pests. A rich Chinaman who has built himself a new house, will at once erect a high wall immediately in front of it. It obstructs the light and keeps out the air, but owing to the inability of Chinese devils to go round corners it renders the house as good as devil−proof.

We returned after dark from our second visit to the city. However much the narrow streets may have offended the nose, they unquestionably gratified the eye with the endless vista of paper lanterns, all softly aglow with crimson, green, and blue, as the place reverberated with the incessant banging of firecrackers. The families of the shopkeepers were all seated at their supper−tables (for the Chinese are the only Orientals who use chairs and tables as we do) in the front portions of the shop. As women are segregated in China, only the fathers and sons were present at this simple evening meal of sewage−fed fish, stewed rat and broiled dog, but never for one instant did they relax their vigilance against possible attacks by their invisible foes. It is clear that an intelligent devil would select this very moment, when every one was absorbed in the pleasures of the table, to penetrate into the shop, where he could play havoc with the stock before being discovered and ejected. Accordingly, little Ping Pong, the youngest son, had to wait for his supper, and was sent into the street with a large packet of fire−crackers to scare devils from the vicinity, and if little Ping Pong was like other small boys, he must have hugely enjoyed making such an appalling din. Every single shop had a stone pedestal before it, on which a lamp was burning, for experience has shown how useful a deterrent this is to any but the most abandoned devils; they will at once pass on to a shop unprotected by a guardian light.

We had been on the outskirts of the city that day, and I was much struck with an example of Chinese ingenuity. The suburban inhabitants all seem to keep poultry, and all these fowls were of the same breed small white bantams. So, to identify his own property, Ching Wan dyed all his chickens' tails orange, whilst Hung To's fowls scratched about with mauve tails, and Kyang Foo's hens gave themselves great airs on the strength of their crimson tail feathers.

It is curious that, in spite of its wealth and huge population, Canton should contain no fine temples. The much−talked−of Five−Storied Pagoda is really hardly worth visiting, except for the splendid panorama over the city obtained from its top floor. Canton here appears like one endless sea of brown roofs extending almost to the

horizon. The brown sea of roof appears to be quite unbroken, for, from that height, the narrow alleys of street disappear entirely. We were taken to a large temple on the outskirts of the city. It was certainly very big, also very dirty and ill−kept. Compared with the splendid temples of Nikko in Japan, glowing with scarlet and black lacquer, and gleaming with gold, temples on which cunning craftsmanship of wood−carving, enamels and bronze−work has been lavished in almost superfluous profusion, or even with the severer but dignified temples of unpainted cryptomeria wood at Kyoto, this Chinese pagoda was scarcely worth looking at. It had the usual three courts, an outer, middle, and inner one, and in the middle court a number of students were seated on benches. I am afraid that I rather puzzled our fat Chinese interpreter by inquiring of him whether these were the local Benchers of the Middle Temple.

The Chinese dislike to foreigners is well known, so is the term foreign devils, which is applied to them. Our small party met with a most hostile reception that day in one part of the city, and the crowd were very menacing until addressed by our fat old interpreter. The reason of this is very simple. Chinamen have invariably chocolate−coloured eyes, so the great distorted wooden figures of devils so commonly seen outside temple gates are always painted with light eyes, in order to give them an inhuman and unearthly appearance to Chinese minds. It so happened that the Flag−Captain, the Flag−Lieutenant, the midshipman and myself, had all four of us light−coloured eyes, either grey or blue, the colour associated with devils, in the Chinese intelligence. We were unquestionably foreigners, so the *prima facie* evidence of satanic origin against us was certainly strong. We ourselves would be prejudiced against an individual with bright magenta eyes, and we might be tempted to associate every kind of evil tendency with his abnormal colouring; to the Chinese, grey eyes must appear just as unnatural as magenta eyes would to us. We were inclined to attribute the hostile demonstration to the small snottie, who, in spite of warnings, had again experimented with cheroots. His unbecoming pallor would have naturally predisposed a Chinese crowd against us.

The feeling of utter helplessness in a country where one is unable to speak one word of the language is most exasperating. My youngest brother, who is chairman of a steamship company, had occasion to go to the Near East nine years ago on business connected with his company. The steamer called at the Piraus for eight hours, and my brother, who had never been in Athens, took a taxi and saw as much of the city of the violet crown as was possible in the time. He could speak no modern Greek, but when the taxi−man, on their return to the Piraus, demanded by signs 7 pounds as his fare, my brother, hot with indignation at such an imposition, summoned up all his memories of the Greek Testament, and addressed the chauffeur as follows: *o taxianthrope, mae geyito!* Stupefied at hearing the classic language of his country, the taxi−man at once became more reasonable in his demands. After this, who will dare to assert that there are no advantages in a classical education?

All the hillsides round Chinese cities are dotted with curious stone erections in the shape of horseshoes. These are the tombs of wealthy Chinamen; the points of the compass they face, and the period which must elapse before the deceased can be permanently buried, are all determined by the family astrologers, for Chinese devils can be as malignant to the dead as to the living, though they seem to reserve their animosities for the more opulent of the population.

It is to meet the delay of years which sometimes elapses between the death of a person and his permanent burial, that the City of the Dead" exists in Canton. This is not a cemetery, but a collection of nearly a thousand mortuary chapels. The City of the Dead is the pleasantest spot in that nightmare city. A place of great open sunlit spaces, and streets of clean white−washed mortuaries, sweet with masses of growing flowers. After the fetid stench of the narrow, airless streets, the fresh air and sunlight of this City of the Dead were most refreshing, and its absolute silence was welcome after the deafening turmoil of the town. We were there in spring−time, and hundreds of blue−and−white porcelain vases, of the sort we use as garden ornaments, were gorgeous with flowering azaleas of all hues, or fragrant with freesias. All the mortuaries, though of different sizes, were built on the same plan, in two compartments, separated by pillars with a carved wooden screen between them. Behind this screen the cylindrical lacquered coffin is placed, a most necessary precaution, for Chinese devils being fortunately unable to go round a corner, the occupant of the coffin is thus safe from molestation. Other elementary safeguards

are also adopted; a red−covered altar invariably stands in front of the screen, adorned with candles and artificial flowers, and incense−sticks are perpetually burning on it. What with the incense−sticks and abundant red silk streamers, an atmosphere is created which must be thoroughly uncongenial, even to the most irreclaimable devil. The outer chapel always contains two or four large chairs for the family to meditate in.

It must be remembered that the favourite recreation of the Chinese is to sit and meditate on the tombs of their ancestors, and though in these mortuaries this pastime cannot be carried out in its entirety, this modified form is universally regarded as a very satisfactory substitute. In one chapel containing the remains of the wife of the Chinese Ambassador in Rome, there was a curious blend of East and West. Amongst the red streamers and joss−sticks there were metal wreaths and dried palm wreaths inscribed, A notre chere collegue Madame Tsin−Kyow ; an unexpected echo of European diplomatic life to find in Canton.

The rent paid for these places is very high, and as the length of time which the body must rest there depends entirely upon the advice of the astrologers, it is not uncharitable to suppose that there must be some understanding between them and the proprietor of the City of the Dead.

We can even suppose some such conversation as the following between the managing−partner of a firm of long−established family astrologers and that same proprietor:

Good−morning, Mr. Chow Chung; I have come to you with the melancholy news of the death of our esteemed fellow−citizen, Hang Wang Kai. A fine man, and a great loss! What I liked about him was that he was such a thorough Chinaman of the good old stamp. A wealthy man, sir, a *very* wealthy man. The family are clients of mine, and they have just rung me up, asking me to cast a horoscope to ascertain the wishes of the stars with regard to the date of burial of our poor friend. How inscrutable are the decrees of the heavenly bodies! They may recommend the immediate interment of our friend: on the other hand, they may wish it deferred for two, five, ten, or even twenty years, in which case our friend would be one of the fortunate tenants of your delightful Garden of Repose. Quite so. Casting a horoscope is *very* laborious work, and I can but obey blindly the stars' behests. Exactly. Should the stars recommend our poor friend's temporary occupation of one of your attractive little Maisonettes, I should expect, to compensate me for my labours, a royalty of 20 per cent. on the gross (I emphasize the gross) rental paid by the family for the first two years. They, of course, would inform me of any little sum you did them the honour to accept from them. From two to five years, I should expect a royalty of 30 per cent.; from five to ten years, 40 per cent.; on any period over ten years 50 per cent. Yes, I said fifty. Surely I do not understand you to dissent? The stars may save us all trouble by advising Hang Wang Kai's immediate interment. Thank you. I thought that you would agree. These terms, of course, are only for the Chinese and Colonial rights; I must expressly reserve the American rights, for, as I need hardly remind you, the Philippine Islands are now United States territory, and the constellations *may* recommend the temporary transfer of our poor friend to American soil. Thank you; I thought that we should agree. It only remains for me to instruct my agents, Messrs. Ap Wang &Son, to draw up an agreement in the ordinary form on the royalty basis I have indicated, for our joint signature. The returns will, I presume, be made up as usual, to March 31 and September 30. As I am far too upset by the loss of our friend to be able to talk business, I will now, with your permission, withdraw.

Had I been born a citizen of Canton, I should unquestionably have articled my son to an astrologer, convinced that I was securing for him an assured and lucrative future.

CHAPTER IV

The glamour of the West Indies Captain Marryat and Michael Scott Deadly climate of the islands in the eighteenth century The West Indian planters Difference between East and West Indies Let us eat and drink, for to−morrow we die Training−school for British Navy A fruitless voyage Quarantine Distant view of Barbados Father Labat The last of the Emperors of Byzantium Delightful little Lady Nugent and her diary of

1802 Her impressions of Jamaica Wealthy planters Their hideous gormandising A simple morning meal An aldermanic dinner How the little Nugents were gorged Haiti Attempts of General Le Clerc to secure British intervention in Haiti Presents to Lady Nugent Her Paris dresses described Our arrival in Jamaica Its marvellous beauty The bewildered Guardsman Little trace of Spain left in Jamaica The Spaniards as builders British and Spanish Colonial methods contrasted.

Since the earliest days of my boyhood, the West Indies have exercised a quite irresistible fascination over me. This was probably due to my having read and re−read *Peter Simple* and *Tom Cringle's Log* over and over again, until I knew them almost by heart; indeed I will confess that even at the present day the glamour of these books is almost as strong as it used to be, and that hardly a year passes without my thumbing once again their familiar pages. Both Captain Marryat and Michael Scott knew their West Indies well, for Marryat had served on the station in either 1813 or 1814, and Michael Scott lived for sixteen years in Jamaica, from 1806 to 1822, at first as manager of a sugar estate, and then as a merchant in Kingston. Marryat and Scott were practically contemporaries, though the former was the younger by three years, being born in 1792. I am told that now−a−days boys care for neither of these books; if so, the loss is theirs. What attracted me in these authors' West Indian pictures was the fact that here was a community of British−born people living a reckless, rollicking, Charles Lever−like sort of life in a most deadly climate, thousands of miles from home, apparently equally indifferent to earthquakes, hurricanes, or yellow fever, for at the beginning of the twentieth century no one who has not read the Colonial records, or visited West Indian churches, can form the faintest idea of the awful ravages of yellow fever, nor of the vast amount of victims this appalling scourge claimed. Now, improved sanitation and the knowledge that the yellow death is carried by the Stegomyia mosquito, with the precautionary methods suggested by that knowledge, have almost entirely eliminated yellow fever from the West India islands; but in Marryat and Scott's time to be ordered to the West Indies was looked upon as equivalent to a death sentence. Yet every writer enlarges upon the exquisite beauty of these green, sun− kissed islands, and regrets bitterly that so enchanting an earthly paradise should be the very ante−room of death.

In spite of the unhealthy climate, in the days when King Sugar reigned undisputed, the owners of sugar estates, attracted by the enormous fortunes then to be made, and fully alive to the fact that in the case of absentee proprietors profits tended to go everywhere except into the owners' pockets, deliberately braved the climate, settled down for life (usually a brief one) in either Jamaica or Barbados, built themselves sumptuous houses, stocked with silver plate and rare wines, and held high and continual revel until such time as Yellow Jack should claim them. In the East Indies the soldiers and Civil Servants of John Company, and the merchant community, shook the pagoda tree until they had accumulated sufficient fortunes on which to retire, when they returned to England with yellow faces and torpid livers, grumbling like Jos Sedley to the ends of their lives about the cold, and the carelessness of English cooks in preparing curries, and harbouring unending regrets for the flesh−pots and comforts of life in Boggley Wollah, which in retrospect no doubt appeared more attractive than they had done in reality. The West Indian, on the other hand, settled down permanently with his wife and family in the island of his choice. Barbados and Jamaica are the only two tropical countries under the British flag where there was a resident white gentry born and bred in the country, with country places handed down from father to son. In these two islands not one word of any language but English was ever to be heard from either black or white. The English parochial system had been transplanted bodily, and successfully, with guardians and overseers complete; in a word, they were colonies in the strictest sense of the word; transplanted portions of the motherland, with most of its institutions, dumped down into the Caribbean Sea, but blighted until 1834 by the curse of negro slavery. It was this overseas England, set amidst the most enchanting tropical scenery and vegetation, that I was so anxious to see. Michael Scott, both in *Tom Cringle* and *The Cruise of the Midge*, gave the most alluring pictures of Creole society (a Creole does *not* mean a coloured person; any one born in the West Indies of pure white parents is a Creole); they certainly seemed to get drunk more than was necessary, yet the impression left on one's mind was not unlike that produced by the purely fictitious Ireland of Charles Lever's novels: one continual round of junketing, feasting, and practical jokes; and what gave the pictures additional piquancy was the knowledge that death was all the while peeping round the corner, and that Yellow Jack might at any moment touch one of these light−hearted revellers with his burning finger−tips.

Lady Nugent, wife of Sir George Nugent, Governor of Jamaica from 1801 to 1806, kept a voluminous diary during her stay in the island, and most excellent reading it makes. She was thus rather anterior in date to Michael Scott, but their descriptions tally very closely. I shall have a good deal to say about Lady Nugent.

The West Indies make an appeal of a different nature to all Britons. They were the training−ground and school of all the great British Admirals from Drake to Nelson. Benbow died of his wounds at Port Royal in Jamaica, and was buried in Kingston Parish Church in 1702, whilst Rodney's memory is still so cherished by West Indians, white and coloured alike, that serious riots broke out when his statue was removed from Spanish Town to Kingston, and his effigy had eventually to be placed in the memorial temple which grateful Spanish Town erected to commemorate his great victory over de Grasse off Dominica on April 12, 1782, as the result of which the Lesser Antilles remained British instead of French. For all these reasons I had experienced, since the age of thirteen, an intense longing to see these lovely islands with all their historic associations.

In 1884 I travelled from Buenos Ayres to Canada in a tramp steamer simply and solely because she was advertised to call at Barbados and Jamaica. Never shall I forget my first night in that tramp. I soon became conscious of uninvited guests in my bunk, so, striking a light (strictly against rules in the ships of those days), I discovered regiments and army corps of noisome, crawling vermin marching in serried ranks into my bunk under the impression that it was their parade ground. For the remainder of the voyage I slept on the saloon table, a hard but cleanly couch. We lay for a week at Rio de Janeiro loading coffee, and we touched at Bahia and at Pernambuco. At this latter place as at Rio an epidemic of yellow fever was raging, so we had not got a clean bill−of−health. As the blunt−nosed tramp pushed her leisurely way northward through the oily ultra−marine expanse of tropical seas, I thought longingly of the green island for which we were heading. We reached Carlisle Bay, Barbados, at daybreak on a glorious June morning, and waited impatiently in the roadstead (there is no harbour in Barbados) for the liberating visit of the medical officer from the shore. He arrived, gave one glance at our bill−of−health, and sternly refused *pratique*, so the hateful yellow flag remained fluttering at the fore in the Trade wind, announcing to all and sundry that we were cut off from all communication with the shore. Never was there a more aggravating situation! Barbados, all emerald green after the rainy season, looked deliciously enticing from the ship. The flamboyant trees, *Ponciana Regia*, were in full bloom, making great patches of vivid scarlet round the Savannah. The houses and villas peeping out of luxuriant tangles of tropical vegetation had a delightfully home−like look to eyes accustomed for two years to South American surroundings. Seen through a glass from the ship's deck, the Public Buildings in Trafalgar Square, solid and substantial, had all the unimaginative neatness of any prosaic provincial townhall at home. We were clearly no longer in a Latin−American country. It was really a piece of England translated to the Caribbean Sea, and we few passengers, some of whom had not seen England for many weary years, were forbidden to set foot on this outpost of home. It was most exasperating; for never did any island look more inviting, and surely such dazzling white houses, such glowing red roofs, such vivid greenery, and so absurdly blue a sea, had never been seen in conjunction before. Barbados is almost exactly the size of the Isle of Wight, but in spite of its restricted area, all the Barbadians, both white and coloured, have the most exalted opinion of their island, which in those days they lovingly termed Bimshire, white Barbadians being then known as Bims. Students of Marryat will remember how Mr. Apollo Johnson, at Miss Betty Austin's coloured Dignity ball, declared that All de world fight against England, but England nebber fear; King George nebber fear while Barbados 'tand 'tiff, and something of that sentiment persists still to−day. As a youngster I used to laugh till I cried at the rebuff administered to Peter Simple by Miss Minerva at the same Dignity ball. Peter was carving a turkey, and asked his swarthy partner whether he might send her a slice of the breast. Shocked at such coarseness, the dusky but delicate damsel simpered demurely, Sar, I take a lily piece turkey bosom, if you please. Dignity balls are still held in Barbados; they are rather trying to one of the senses. In the eighties it was a point of honour amongst Bims to wear on all and every occasion a high black silk hat. During our enforced quarantine we saw a number of white Bims sailing little yachts about the roadstead, every single man of them crowned with a high silk hat, about the most uncomfortable head−gear imaginable for sailing in. Another agreeable home−touch was to hear the negro boatmen all talking to each other in English. Their speech may not have been melodious, but it fell pleasantly enough on ears accustomed for so long to hear nothing but Spanish. From my intimate acquaintance with Marryat, even the jargon of the negro

boatmen struck me with a delightful sense of familiarity, as did the very place−names, Needham Point and Carlisle Bay. I was fated not to see Barbados again for twenty−two years.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a French missionary, one Father Labat, visited Barbados and gave the most glowing account of it to his countrymen. According to him the island was brimful of wealth, and the jewellers' and silversmiths' shops in Bridgetown rivalled those of Paris. I should be inclined to question Father Labat's strict veracity. This worthy priest declared that the planters lived in sumptuous houses, superbly furnished, that their dinners lasted four hours, and their tables were crowded with gold and silver plate. The statement as to the length of the planters' dinners is probably an accurate one, for I myself have been the recipient of Barbadian hospitality, and had never before even imagined such an endless procession of fish, flesh, and fowl, not to mention turtle, land−crabs, and pepper−pot. West Indian negresses seem to have a natural gift for cooking, though their *cuisine* is a very highly spiced and full−flavoured one.

Father Labat's motive in drawing so glorified a picture of Barbados peeps out at the end of his account, for he drily remarks that the fortifications of the island were most inadequate, and that it could easily be captured by the French; he was clearly making an appeal to his countrymen's cupidity.

Upon making the acquaintance of Bridgetown some twenty years after my first quarantine visit, I can hardly endorse Father Labat's opinion that the streets are strikingly handsome, for Bridgetown, like most British West Indian towns, looks as though all the houses were built of cards or paper. It is, however, a bright, cheery little spot, seems prosperous enough, and has its own Trafalgar Square, decorated with its own very fine statue of Nelson. Every house both in Jamaica and Barbados is fitted with sash−windows in the English style. This fidelity to the customs of the motherland is very touching but hardly practical, for in the burning climate of the West Indies every available breath of fresh air is welcome. With French windows, the entire window−space can be opened; with sashes, one−half of the window remains necessarily blocked.

Let strangers beware of Barbados Green Bitters. It is a most comforting local cocktail, apparently quite innocuous. It is not; under its silkiness it is abominably potent. One green bitter is food, two are dangerous.

In St. John's churchyard, some fourteen miles from Bridgetown, is to be seen one of the most striking examples of the vanity of human greatness. A stone reproduction of the porch of a Greek temple bears this inscription,

HERE LYETH YE BODY OF
FERDINANDO PALEOLOGOS
DESCENDED FROM YE IMPERIAL LYNE
OF YE LAST CHRISTIAN
EMPERORS OF GREECE
CHURCHWARDEN OF THIS PARISH
1655−1656
VESTRYMAN TWENTY YEARS
DIED OCTOBER 3, 1678.

Just think of it! The last descendant of Constantine, the last scion of the proud Emperors of Byzantium, commemorated as vestryman and churchwarden of a country parish in a little, unknown island in the Caribbean, only then settled for seventy−three years! Could any preacher quote a more striking instance of *sic transit gloria mundi* ?

Codrington College, not far from St. John's church, is rather a surprise. Few people would expect to come across a little piece of Oxford in a tropical island, or to find a college building over two hundred years old in Barbados, complete with hall and chapel. The facade of Codrington is modelled on either Queen's or the New Buildings at Magdalen, Oxford, and the college is affiliated to Durham University. Originally intended as a place of education

for the sons of white planters it is now wholly given over to coloured students. It can certainly claim the note of the unexpected, and the quiet eighteenth−century dignity of its architecture is enhanced by the broad lake which fronts it, and by the exceedingly pretty tropical park in which it stands. Codrington boasts some splendid specimens of the Royal palm, the *Palmiste* of the French, which is one of the glories of West Indian scenery.

Though Father Labat may have drawn the longbow intentionally, some of the country houses erected by the sugar planters in the heyday of the colony's riotous prosperity are really very fine indeed, although at present they have mostly changed hands, or been left derelict. Long Bay Castle, now unoccupied, is a most ambitious building, with marble stairs, beautiful plaster ceilings, and some of its original Chippendale furniture still remaining. A curious feature of all these Barbadian houses is the hurricane−wing, built of extra strength and fitted with iron shutters, into which all the family locked themselves when the fall of the barometer announced the approach of a hurricane. I was shown one hurricane−wing which had successfully withstood two centuries of these visitations.

Barbados is the only ugly island of the West Indian group, for every available foot is planted with sugar−cane, and the unbroken, undulating sea of green is monotonous. In the hilly portions, however, there are some very attractive bits of scenery.

On my first visit, as I have already said, I saw nothing of all this, except through glasses from the deck of a tramp. I was also to be denied a sight of Jamaica, for the Captain knew that he would be refused *pratique* there, and settled to steam direct to the Danish island of St. Thomas, where quarantine regulations were less strict, so all my voyage was for nothing.

Not for over twenty years after was I to make the acquaintance of Kingston and Port Royal and the Palisadoes, all very familiar names to me from my constant reading of Marryat and Michael Scott.

I suppose that every one draws mental pictures of places that they have constantly heard about, and that most people have noticed how invariably the real place is not only totally different from the fancy picture, but almost aggressively so.

I have already mentioned Lady Nugent's journal or Jamaica in 1801. I am persuaded that she must have been a most delightful little creature. She was very tiny, as she tells us herself, and had brown curly hair. She was a little coy about her age, which she confided to no one; by her own directions, it was omitted even from her tombstone, but from internal evidence we know that when her husband, Sir George Nugent, was appointed Governor of Jamaica on April 1, 1801 (how sceptical he must have been at first as to the genuineness of this appointment! One can almost hear him ejaculating Quite so. You don't make an April fool of me!), she was either thirty or thirty−one years old. Lady Nugent was as great an adept as Mrs. Fairchild, of revered memory, at composing long prayers, every one of which she enters *in extenso* in her diary, but not only was there a delightful note of feminine coquetry about her, but she also possessed a keen sense of humour, two engaging attributes in which, I fear, that poor Mrs. Fairchild was lamentably lacking.

Lady Nugent and her husband sailed out to Jamaica in a man−of−war, H.M.S. *Ambuscade*, in June, 1801. As Sir George Nugent had been from 1799 to 1801 Adjutant−General in Ireland, this name must have had quite a home−like sound to him. We read in Lady Nugent's diary of June 25, 1801, after a lengthy supplication for protection against the perils of the deep, the following charmingly feminine note: My nightcaps are so smart that I wear them all day, for to tell the truth I really think I look better in my nightcap than in my bonnet, and as I am surrounded by men who do not know a nightcap from a daycap, it is no matter what I do. Dear little thing! I am sure she looked too sweet in them. They sailed from Cork on June 5, and reached Barbados on July 17, which seems a quick voyage. They stayed one night at an inn in Bridgetown, and gave a dinner−party for which the bill was over sixty pounds. This strikes quite a modern note, and might really have been in post−war days instead of in 1801.

Lady Nugent found the society in Jamaica, both that of officials and of planters and their wives, intensely uncongenial to her. Nothing is ever talked of in this horrid island but the price of sugar. The only other topics of conversation are debt, disease and death. She was much shocked at the low standard of morality prevailing amongst the white men in the colony, and disgusted at the perpetual gormandising and drunkenness. The frequent deaths from yellow fever amongst her acquaintance, and the terrible rapidity with which Yellow Jack slew, depressed her dreadfully, and she was startled at the callous fashion in which people, hardened by many years' experience of the scourge, received the news of the death of their most intimate friends. She was perpetually complaining of the unbearable heat, to which she never got acclimatised; she suffered sadly from the mosquitoes, and never could get used to earthquakes, hurricanes, or scorpions.

With these exceptions, she seems to have liked Jamaica very well. It must have been an extraordinary community, and to understand it we must remember the conditions prevailing. Bryan Edwards, in his *History of the British West Indies*, published in 1793, called them the principal source of the national opulence and maritime power of England ; and without the stream of wealth pouring into Great Britain from Barbados and Jamaica, the long struggle with France would have been impossible.

The term as rich as a West Indian was proverbial, and in 1803 the West Indies were accountable for one−third of the imports and exports of Great Britain.

The price of sugar in 1803 was fifty−two shillings a hundredweight. Wealth was pouring into the island and into the pockets of the planters. Lady Nugent constantly alludes to sugar estates worth 20,000 or 30,000 pounds a year. These planters were six weeks distant from England, and, except during the two years' respite which followed the Treaty of Amiens, Great Britain had been intermittently at war with either France or Spain during the whole of the eighteenth century. The preliminary articles of peace between France and Britain were signed on October 1, 1801, the Peace of Amiens itself on March 27, 1802, but in July, 1803, hostilities between the two countries were again renewed. All this meant that communications between the colony and the motherland were very precarious. Nominally a mail−packet sailed from Jamaica once a month, but the seas were swarming with swift−sailing French and Spanish privateers, hanging about the trade−routes on the chance of capturing West Indiamen with their rich cargoes, so the mail−packets had to wait till a convoy assembled, and were then escorted home by men−of−war. This entailed the increasing isolation of the white community in Jamaica, who, in their outlook on life, retained the eighteenth−century standpoint. Now the eighteenth century was a thoroughly gross and material epoch. People had a pretty taste in clothes, and a nice feeling for good architecture, graceful furniture, and artistic house decoration, but this was a veneer only, and under the veneer lay an ingrained grossness of mind, just as the gorgeous satins and dainty brocades covered dirty, unwashed bodies. Even the complexions of the women were artificial to mask the defects of a sparing use of soap and water, and they drenched themselves with perfumes to hide the unpleasant effects of this lack of bodily cleanliness. On the surface hyper−refinement, glitter and show; beneath it a crude materialism and an ingrained grossness of temperament. What else could be expected when all the men got drunk as a matter of course almost every night of their lives? Over the coarsest description of wood lay a very highly polished veneer of satin−wood, which might possibly deceive the eye, but once scratch the paper−thin veneer and the ugly under−surface was at once apparent. Money rolled into the pockets of these Jamaican planters; there is but little sport possible in the island, and they had no intellectual pursuits, so they just built fine houses, filled them with rare china, Chippendale furniture, and silver plate, and found their amusements in eating, drinking and gambling.

Even to−day the climate of Jamaica is very enervating. Wise people know now that to keep in health in hot countries alcohol, and wine especially, must be avoided. Meat must be eaten very sparingly, and an abstemious regime will bring its own reward. In the eighteenth century, however, people apparently thought that vast quantities of food and drink would combat the debilitating effects of the climate, and that, too, at a time when yellow fever was endemic. There are still old−fashioned people who are obsessed with the idea that the more you eat the stronger you grow. The Creoles in Jamaica certainly put this theory into effect. Michael Scott, in *Tom Cringle*, describes many Gargantuan repasts amongst the Kingston merchants, and as he himself was one of them,

we can presume he knew what he was writing about. The men, too, habitually drank, of all beverages in the world to select in the scorching heat of Jamaica, hot brandy and water, and then they wondered that they died of yellow fever! Every white man and woman in the island seems to have been gorged with food. It was really a case of let us eat and drink, for to−morrow we die ; but if they hadn't eaten and drunk so enormously, presumably they would not have died so rapidly.

Lady Nugent was much disgusted with this gormandising. On page 78 of her journal she says, I don't wonder now at the fever the people suffer from here such eating and drinking I never saw! Such loads of rich and highly−seasoned things, and really the gallons of wine and mixed liquors that they drink! I observed some of our party to−day eat at breakfast as if they had never eaten before. A dish of tea, another of coffee, a bumper of claret, another large one of hock−negus; then Madeira, sangaree, hot and cold meats, stews and pies, hot and cold fish pickled and plain, peppers, ginger−sweetmeats, acid fruit, sweet jellies in short, it was all as astonishing as it was disgusting.

It really does seem a fair allowance for a simple morning meal.

The life of a Governor of Jamaica is now principally taken up with quiet administrative work, but in 1802 he was supposed to hold a succession of reviews, to give personal audiences, endless balls and dinners, to make tours of inspection round the island; and, in addition, as *ex officio* Chancellor of Jamaica, it was his duty to preside at all the sittings of the Court of Chancery. During their many tours of inspection poor little Lady Nugent complains that, with the best wishes in the world, she really could not eat five large meals a day. She continues (page 95), At the Moro to−day, our dinner at 6 was really so profuse that it is worth describing. The first course was of fish, with an entire jerked hog in the centre, and a black crab pepper−pot. The second course was of turtle, mutton, beef, turkey, goose, ducks, chicken, capons, ham, tongue, and crab patties. The third course was of sweets and fruits of all kinds. I felt quite sick, what with the heat and such a profusion of eatables.

One wonders what those planters' weekly bills would have amounted to at the present−day scale of prices, and can no longer feel surprised at their all running into debt, in spite of their huge incomes. The drinking, too, was on the same scale. Lady Nugent remarks (page 108), I am not astonished at the general ill−health of the men in this country, for they really eat like cormorants and drink like porpoises. All the men of our party got drunk to−night, even to a boy of fifteen, who was obliged to be carried home. Tom Cringle, in his account of a dinner−party in Cuba, remarks airily, We, the males of the party, had drunk little or nothing, a bottle of claret or so apiece, a dram of brandy, and a good deal of vin−de−grave (*sic*), and he really thinks that nothing: moderation itself in that sweltering climate!

In spite of her disgust at the immense amount of food devoured round her, Lady Nugent seems to have adopted a Jamaican scale of diet for her children, for when she returned to England with them in the *Augustus Caesar* in 1805, she gives the following account of the day's routine on board the ship. It must be observed that George, the elder child, was not yet three, and that Louisa was under two. When I awake, the old steward brings me a dish of ginger tea. I then dress, and breakfast with the children. At eleven the children have biscuits, and some port wine and water. George eats some chicken or mutton at twelve, and at two they each have a bowl of strong soup. At four we all dine; I go to my cabin at half−past seven, and soon after eight I am always in bed and the babies fast asleep. The old steward then comes to my bedside with a large tumbler of porter with a toast in it. I eat the toast, drink the porter, and usually rest well.

Those two unfortunate children must have landed in England two miniature Daniel Lamberts. It is pleasant to learn that little George lived to the age of ninety. Had he not been so stuffed with food in his youth, he would probably have been a centenarian.

During Nugent's term of office events in Haiti, or San Domingo, as it was still called then, occasioned him great anxiety. Before the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, Haiti had been the most prosperous and the most

highly civilised of the West Indian islands. But after the French National Assembly had, in 1791, decreed equal rights between whites and mulattoes, troubles began. The blacks rebelled; the French rescinded the decree of 1791 and, changing their minds again, re−affirmed it. The blacks began murdering and plundering the whites, and many planters emigrated to Jamaica and the United States. That most extraordinary man, Toussaint l'Ouverture, a pure negro, who had been born a slave, re−established some form of order in Haiti until Napoleon, when the preliminary articles of the Peace of Amiens had been signed between Britain and France, hit upon the idea of employing his soldiers in Haiti, and sent out his brother−in−law, General Le Clerc, with 25,000 French soldiers to re−conquer the island. It was a most ill−fated expedition; the soldiers could not withstand the climate, and died like flies; France losing, from first to last, no less than 40,000 men from yellow fever. In 1802, Le Clerc, who seems to have been a great scoundrel, died, and in 1804 Haiti declared her independence.

After the Peace of Amiens the French Government were exceedingly anxious to secure the cooperation of British troops from Jamaica, seasoned to the climate, in restoring order in Haiti, and even offered to cede them such portions of Haiti as were willing to come under the British flag. During the ten months of General Le Clerc's administration of Haiti he was perpetually sending envoys to General Nugent in Jamaica, and continually offering him presents. It is not uncharitable to suppose that these presents were proffered with a view of winning Nugent's support to the idea of a British expedition to Haiti. Nugent, however, sternly refused all these gifts. Madame Le Clerc, Napoleon's sister, who is better known as the beautiful Princess Pauline Borghese, a lady with an infinity of admirers, was far more subtle in her methods. Her presents to Lady Nugent took the irresistible form of dresses of the latest Parisian fashion, and were eagerly accepted by that volatile little lady. Indeed, for ten months she seems to have been entirely dressed by Madame Le Clerc, who even provided little George Nugent's christening robe of white muslin, heavily embroidered in gold. Ladies may be interested in Lady Nugent's account of her various dresses. Last night at the ball I wore a new dress of purple crape, embroidered and heavily spangled in gold, given me by Madame Le Clerc. The skirt rather short; the waist very high. On my head I wore a wreath of gilded bay−leaves, and must have looked like a Roman Empress. I think that purple suits me, for every one declared that they never saw me looking better. Dear little lady! I am sure that she never did, and that the piquant little face on the frontispiece, with its roguish eyes, looked charming under her gold wreath. Again, I wore a lovely dress of pink crape spangled in silver, sent me by Madame Le Clerc. She gives a fuller account of her dress at the great ball given her to celebrate her recovery after the birth of her son (Dec. 30, 1802).

For the benefit of posterity I will describe my dress on this grand occasion. A crape dress, embroidered in silver spangles, also sent me by Madame Le Clerc, but much richer than that which I wore at the last ball. Scarcely any sleeves to my dress, but a broad silver spangled border to the shoulder−straps. The body made very like a child's frock, tying behind, and the skirt round, with not much train. On my head a turban of spangled crape like the dress, looped−up with pearls. This dress, the admiration of all the world over, will, perhaps, fifty years hence, be laughed at, and considered as ridiculous as our grandmothers' hoops and brocades appear to us now.

In fairness it must be stated that General Nugent punctiliously returned all Madame Le Clerc's presents to his wife with gifts of English cut−glass, then apparently much appreciated by the French. He seems to have sent absolute cart−loads of cut−glass to Haiti, but in days when men habitually drank two bottles of wine apiece after dinner, there was presumably a fair amount of breakage of decanters and tumblers.

I notice that although Lady Nugent complains on almost every page of the appalling heat, the unbearable heat, the terrific heat, which gives me these sad headaches, she seems always ready to dance for hours at any time. Some idea of the ceremonious manners of the day is obtained from the perpetual entry went to bed with my knees aching from the hundreds of curtsies I have had to make to the company.

In 1811 Sir George Nugent was appointed Commander−in−Chief in Bengal, and their voyage from Portsmouth to Calcutta occupied exactly six months, yet there are people who grumble at the mails now taking eighteen days to traverse the distance between London and Calcutta.

Lady Nugent was much shocked at the universal habit of smoking amongst Europeans in the East Indies. She sternly refused to allow their two aides−de−camp to smoke, for as they are both only twenty−five, they are too young to begin so odious a custom, an idea which will amuse the fifteen−year−olds of today.

Not till 1906 did I find myself sailing into Kingston Harbour and actually set eyes on Port Royal, the Palisadoes, and Fort Augusta, all very familiar by name to me since my boyhood.

I had taken the trip to shake off a prolonged bronchial attack; a young Guardsman, a friend of mine, though my junior by many years, was convalescent after an illness, and was also recommended a sunbath, so we travelled together. The hotels being all full, we took up our quarters in a small boarding−house, standing in dense groves of orange trees, where each shiver of the night breeze sent the branches of the orange trees swish−swishing, and wafted great breaths of the delicious fragrance of orange blossom into our rooms. I was in bed, when the Guardsman, who had never been in the tropics before, rushed terror−stricken into my room. I have drunk nothing whatever, he faltered, but I must be either very drunk or else mad, for I keep fancying that my room is full of moving electric lights. I went into his room, where I found some half−dozen of the peculiarly brilliant Jamaican fireflies cruising about. The Guardsman refused at first to believe that any insect could produce so bright a light, and bemoaned the loss of his mental faculties, until I caught a firefly and showed him its two lamps gleaming like miniature motor head−lights.

Some pictures stand out startlingly clear−cut in the memory. Such a one is the recollection of our first morning in Jamaica. The Guardsman, full of curiosity to see something of the mysterious tropical island into which we had been deposited after nightfall, awoke me at daybreak. After landing from the mail−steamer in the dark, we had had merely impressions of oven−like heat, and of a long, dim−lit drive in endless suburbs of flimsily built, wooden houses, through the spice−scented, hot, black−velvet night, enlivened with almost indecently intimate glimpses into humble interiors, where swarthy dark forms jabbered and gesticulated, clustered round smoky oil−lamps; and as the suburbs gave place to the open country, the vast leaves of unfamiliar growths stood out, momentarily silhouetted against the blackness by the gleam of our carriage lamps.

It being so early, the Guardsman and I went out as we were, in pyjamas and slippers, with, of course, sufficient head protection against the fierce sun. Just a fortnight before we had left England under snow, in the grip of a black frost; London had been veiled in incessant thick fogs for ten days, and we had fallen straight into the most exquisitely beautiful island on the face of the globe, bathed in perpetual summer.

When we had traversed the grove of orange trees, we came upon a lovely little sunk−garden, where beds of cannas, orange, sulphur, and scarlet, blazed round a marble fountain, with a silvery jet splashing and leaping into the sunshine. The sunk−garden was surrounded on three sides by a pergola, heavily draped with yellow alamandas, drifts of wine−coloured bougainvillaa, and pale−blue solanums, the size of saucers. In the clear morning light it really looked entrancingly lovely. On the fourth side the garden ended in a terrace dominating the entire Liguanea plain, with the city of Kingston, Kingston Harbour, Port Royal, and the hills on the far side spread out below us like a map. Those hills are now marked on the Ordnance Survey as the Healthshire Hills. This is a modern euphemism, for the name originally given to those hills and the district round them by the soldiers stationed in the Apostles' Battery, was Hellshire, and any one who has had personal experience of the heat there, can hardly say that the title is inappropriate. From our heights, even Kingston itself looked inviting, an impression not confirmed by subsequent visits to that unlovely town. The long, sickle−shape sandspit of the Palisadoes separated Kingston Harbour on one side from the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea; on the other side the mangrove swamps of the Rio Cobre made unnaturally vivid patches of emerald green against the background of hills. On railways a green flag denotes that caution must be observed; the vivid green of the mangroves is Nature's caution−flag to the white man, for where the mangrove flourishes, there fever lurks.

The whole scene was so wonderfully beautiful under the blazing sunlight, and in the crystal−clear atmosphere, that the Guardsman refused to accept it as genuine. It can't be real! he cried, this is January. We have got

somehow into a pantomime transformation scene. In a minute it will go, and I shall wake up in Wellington Barracks to find it freezing like mad, with my owl of a servant telling me that I have to be on parade in five minutes. This lengthy warrior showed, too, a childish incredulity when I pointed out to him cocoa−nuts hanging on the palms; a field of growing pineapples below us, or great clusters of fruit on the banana trees. Pineapples, cocoanuts, and bananas were bought in shops; they did not grow on trees. He would insist that the great orange flowers, the size of cabbages, on the Brownea trees were artificial, as were the big blue trumpets of the Morning Glories. He was in reality quite intoxicated with the novelty and the glamour of his first peep into the tropics. By came fluttering a great, gorgeous butterfly, the size of a saucer, and after it rushed the Guardsman, shedding slippers around him as his long legs bent to their task. He might just as well have attempted to catch the Scotch Express; but, as he returned to me dripping, he began to realise what the heat of Jamaica can do. All the remainder of that day the Guardsman remained under the spell of the entrancing beauty of his new surroundings, and I was dragged on foot for miles and miles; along country lanes, through the Hope Botanical Gardens, down into the deep ravine of the Hope River, then back again, both of us dripping wet in the fierce heat, in spite of our white drill suits, larding the ground as we walked, oozing from every pore, but always urged on and on by my enthusiastic young friend, who, suffering from a paucity of epithets, kept up monotonous ejaculations of How absolutely d d lovely it all is! every two minutes.

I had to remain a full hour in the swimming−bath after my exertions; and the Guardsman had quite determined by night−time to send in his papers, and settle down as a coffee−planter in this enchanting island.

It is curious that although the Spaniards held Jamaica for one hundred and sixty−one years, no trace of the Spaniard in language, customs, or architecture is left in the island, for Spain has generally left her permanent impress on all countries occupied by her, and has planted her language and her customs definitely in them. The one exception as regards Jamaica is found in certain place−names such as Ocho Rios, Rio Grande, and Rio Cobre, but as these are all pronounced in the English fashion, the music of the Spanish names is lost. Not one word of any language but English (of a sort) is now heard in the colony. When Columbus discovered the island in 1494, he called it Santiago, St. James being the patron saint of Spain, but the native name of Xaymaca (which being interpreted means the land of springs") persisted somehow, and really there are enough Santiagos already dotted about in Spanish−speaking countries, without further additions to them. When Admiral Penn and General Venables were sent out by Cromwell to break the Spanish power in the West Indies, they succeeded in capturing Jamaica in 1655, and British the island has remained ever since. To this day the arms of Jamaica are Cromwell's arms slightly modified, and George V is not King, but Supreme Lord of Jamaica, the original title assumed by Cromwell. The fine statue of Queen Victoria in Kingston is inscribed Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and Supreme Lady of Jamaica.

Venables found that the Spaniards, craving for yet another Santiago, had called the capital of the island Santiago de la Vega, St. James of the Plain, and to this day the official name of Spanish Town, the old capital, is St. Jago de Vega, and as such is inscribed on all the milestones, only as it is pronounced in the English fashion, it is now one of the ugliest names imaginable. The wonderfully beautiful gorge of the Rio Cobre, above Spanish Town, was called by the conquistadores Spouting Waters, or Bocas de Agua. This has been Anglicised into the hideous name of Bog Walk, just as the High Waters, Agua Alta, on the north side of the island, has become the Wagwater River. The Spanish forms seem preferable to me.

Some one has truly said that the old Spaniards shared all the coral insect's mania for building. As soon as they had conquered a place, they set to work to build a great cathedral, and simultaneously, the church then being distinctly militant, a large and solid fort. They then proceeded to erect massive walls and ramparts round their new settlement, and most of these ramparts are surviving to−day. We, in true British haphazard style, did not build for posterity, but allowed ramshackle towns to spring up anyhow without any attempt at design or plan. There are many things we could learn from the Spanish. Their solid, dignified cities of massive stone houses with deep, heavy arcades into which the sun never penetrates; their broad plazas where cool fountains spout under great shade−trees; their imposing over−ornate churches, their general look of solid permanence, put to shame our

flimsy, ephemeral, planless British West Indian towns of match−boarding and white paint. We seldom look ahead: they always did. Added to which it would be, of course, too much trouble to lay out towns after definite designs; it is much easier to let them grow up anyhow. On the other hand, the British colonial towns have all good water supplies, and efficient systems of sewerage, which atones in some degree for their architectural shortcomings; whilst the Spaniard would never dream of bothering his head about sanitation, and would be content with a very inadequate water supply. Provided that he had sufficient water for the public fountains, the Spaniard would not trouble about a domestic supply. The Briton contrives an ugly town in which you can live in reasonable health and comfort; the Spaniard fashions a most picturesque city in which you are extremely like to die. Racial ideals differ.

CHAPTER V

An election meeting in Jamaica Two family experiences at contested elections Novel South African methods Unattractive Kingston A driving tour through the island The Guardsman as orchid hunter Derelict country houses An attempt to reconstruct the past The Fourth−Form Room at Harrow Elizabethan Harrovians I meet many friends of my youth The Sunday books of the 'sixties Black and White Arrival of the French Fleet Its inner meaning International courtesies A delicate attention Absent alligators The mangrove swamp A preposterous suggestion The swamps do their work Fever A very gallant apprentice What he did.

The Guardsman's enthusiasm about Jamaica remaining unabated, I determined to hire a buggy and pair and to make a fortnight's leisurely tour of the North Coast and centre of the island. Though not peculiarly expeditious, this is a very satisfactory mode of travel; no engine troubles, no burst tyres, and no worries about petrol supplies. A new country can be seen and absorbed far more easily from a horse−drawn vehicle than from a hurrying motor−car, and the little country inns in Jamaica, though very plainly equipped, are, as a rule, excellent, with surprisingly good if somewhat novel food.

As the member for St. Andrews in the local Legislative Council had just died, an election was being held in Kingston. Curious as to what an election−meeting in Jamaica might be like, we attended one. The hall was very small, and densely packed with people, and the suffocating heat drove us away after a quarter of an hour; but never have I, in so short a space of time, heard such violent personalities hurled from a public platform, although I have had a certain amount of experience of contested elections. In 1868, when I was eleven years old, I was in Londonderry City when my brother Claud, the sitting member, was opposed by Mr. Serjeant Dowse, afterwards Baron Dowse, the last of the Irish Barons of the Exchequer. Party feeling ran very high indeed; whenever a body of Dowse's supporters met my brother in the street, they commenced singing in chorus, to a popular tune of the day:

Dowse for iver! Claud in the river!
With a skiver through his liver.

Whilst my brother's adherents greeted Dowse in public with a sort of monotonous chant to these elegant words:

Dowse! Dowse! you're a dirty louse,
And ye'll niver sit in the Commons' House.

It will be noticed that this is in the same rhythm that Mark Twain made so popular some twenty years later in his conductor's song.

Punch, brothers, punch with care,
Punch in the presence of the passen−jare.

In spite of the confident predictions of my brother's followers, Dowse won the seat by a small majority, nor did my brother succeed in unseating him afterwards on Petition.

Another occasion on which feeling ran very high was in Middlesex during the 1874 election. Here my brother George was the Conservative candidate, and owing to his having played cricket for Harrow at Lord's, he was supported enthusiastically by the whole school, the Harrow masters being at that time Liberals almost to a man. My tutor, a prominent local Liberal, must have been enormously gratified at finding the exterior of his house literally plastered from top to bottom with crimson placards (crimson is the Conservative colour in Middlesex) all urging the electors to vote for Hamilton the proved Friend of the People. Possibly fraternal affection may have had something to do with this crimson outburst. My youngest brother took, as far as his limited opportunities allowed him, an energetic part in this election. He got indeed into some little trouble, for being only fifteen years old and not yet versed in the niceties of political controversy, he endeavoured to give weight and point to one of his arguments with the aid of the sharp end of a football goal−post. My brother George was returned by an enormous majority.

The most original electioneering poster I ever saw was in Capetown in March, 1914. It was an admirably got−up enlargement of a funeral card, with a deep black border, adorned with a realistic picture of a hearse, and was worded Unionist Opposition dead. Government dying. Electors of the Liesbeck Division drive your big nails into the coffin by voting for Tom Maginess on Saturday. Whether it was due to this novel form of electioneering or not, I cannot say, but Maginess won the seat by two thousand votes. I still have a copy of that poster.

Neither Londonderry nor Capetown are in Jamaica, but oddly enough, Middlesex is, for the island is divided into three counties, Cornwall, Middlesex, and Surrey. The local geography is a little confusing, for it is a surprise to find (in Jamaica at all events) that Westmoreland is in Cornwall, and Manchester in Middlesex.

Kingston owes its position as capital to the misfortunes of its two neighbours, Port Royal and Spanish Town. When Port Royal was totally destroyed by an earthquake in 1692, the few survivors crossed the bay and founded a new town on the sandy Liguanea plain. Owing to its splendid harbour, Kingston soon became a place of great importance, though the seat of Government remained in sleepy Spanish Town, but the latter lying inland, and close to the swamps of the Rio Cobre, was so persistently unhealthy that in 1870 the Government was transferred to Kingston. Though very prosperous, its most fervent admirer could not call it beautiful, and, owing to its sandy soil, it is an intensely hot place, but in compensation it receives the full sea breeze. Every morning about nine, the sea breeze (locally known as the Doctor") sets in. Gentle at first, by noon it is rushing and roaring through the town in a perfect gale, to drop and die away entirely by 4 p.m. By a most convenient arrangement, the land breeze, disagreeably known as the Undertaker, drops down from the Liguanea Mountains on to the sweltering town about 11 p.m., and continues all through the night. It is this double breeze, from sea by day, from land by night, that renders life in Kingston tolerable. Owing to the sea breeze invariably blowing from the same direction, Jamaicans have the puzzling habit of using Windward and Leeward as synonyms for East and West. To be told that such−and−such a place is two miles to Windward of you seems lacking in definiteness to a new arrival.

As we rolled slowly along in our buggy, the Guardsman was in a state of perpetual bewilderment at having growing sugar, coffee, cocoa, and rice pointed out to him by the driver. I thought that it was an island, he murmured; it turns out to be nothing but a blessed growing grocer's shop. Half−way between Kingston and Spanish Town is the Old Ferry Inn, the oldest inn in the New World. It stands in a mass of luxuriant greenery on the very edge of the Rio Cobre swamps, and is a place to be avoided at nightfall on that account. This fever trap of an inn, being just half−way between Kingston and Spanish Town, was, of all places in the island to select, the chosen meeting−place of the young bloods of both towns in the eighteenth century. Here they drove out to dine and carouse, and as they probably all got drunk, many of them must have slept here, on the very edge of the swamp, to die of yellow fever shortly afterwards.

Sleepy Spanish Town, the old capital, has a decayed dignity of its own. The public square, with its stately eighteenth−century buildings, is the only architectural feature I ever saw in the British West Indies. Our national lack of imagination is typically exemplified in the King's House, now deserted, which occupies one side of the square. When it was finished in 1760, it was considered a sumptuous building. The architect, Craskell, in that scorching climate, designed exactly the sort of red−brick and white stone Georgian house that he would have erected at, say, Richmond. With limitless space at his disposal, he surrounded his house with streets on all four sides of it, without one yard of garden, or one scrap of shade. No wonder that poor little Lady Nugent detested this oven of an official residence. The interior, though, contains some spacious, stately Georgian rooms; the temperature being that of a Turkish bath.

Rodney's monument is a graceful, admirably designed little temple, and the cathedral of a vague Gothic, is spacious and dignified. Spanish Town cathedral claims to have been built in 1541, in spite of an inscription over the door recording that this church was thrown downe by ye dreadfull hurricane of August ye 28, 1712, and was rebuilt in 1714. It contains a great collection of elaborate and splendid monuments, all sent out from England, and erected to various island worthies. The amazing arrogance of an inscription on a tombstone of 1690, in the south transept, struck me as original. It commemorates some Lieutenant−Governor of Jamaica, and after the usual eulogistic category of his unparalleled good qualities, ends so in the fifty−fifth year of his age he appeared with great applause before his God.

There is a peculiarly beautiful tree, the *Petraea*, which seems to flourish particularly well in Spanish Town. When in flower in February, neither trunk, leaves, nor branches can be seen for its dense clusters of bright blue blossoms, which are unfortunately very short−lived.

Four miles above Spanish Town the hideously named Bog Walk, the famous gorge of the Rio Cobre, commences. I do not believe that there is a more exquisitely beautiful glen in the whole world. The clear stream rushes down the centre, whilst the rocky walls tower up almost perpendicularly for five or six hundred feet on either side, and these rocks, precipitous as they are, are clothed with a dense growth of tropical forest. The bread−fruit tree with its broad, scalloped leaves, the showy star−apple, glossy green above deep gold below, mahoganies, oranges, and bananas, all seem to grow wild. The bread−fruit was introduced into Jamaica from the South Sea Islands, and the first attempt to transplant it was made by the ill−fated *Bounty*, and led to the historical mutiny on board, as a result of which the mutineers established themselves on Pitcairn Island, where their descendants remain to this day. Whatever adventures marked its original advent, the bread−fruit has made itself thoroughly at home in the West Indies, and forms the staple food of the negroes. When carefully prepared it really might pass for under−done bread, prepared from very indifferent flour by an inexperienced and unskilled baker. It is the immense variety of the foliage and the constantly changing panorama that gives Bog Walk its charm, together with the red, pink, and fawn−coloured trumpets of the hibiscus, dotting the precipitous ramparts of rock over the rushing blue river. Bog Walk is distinctly one of those places which no one with opportunities for seeing it should miss. It opens out into an equally beautiful basin, St. Thomas−in−the−Vale, of which Michael Scott gives an admirable description in *Tom Cringle*. I should hardly select that steamy cup in the hills as a place of residence, but as a natural forcing−house and a sample of riotous vegetation, it is worth seeing.

The native orchids of Jamaica are mostly oncidiums, with insignificant little brown and yellow flowers, and have no commercial value whatever. The Guardsman, however, was obsessed with the idea that he would discover some peerless bloom for which he would be paid hundreds of pounds by a London dealer. Every silk−cotton tree is covered with what Jamaicans term wild pines, air−plants, orchids, and other epiphytes, and every silk−cotton was to him a potential Golconda, so whenever we came across one he wanted the buggy stopped, and up the tree he went like a lamp lighter. I am bound to admit that he was an admirable tree climber, but I objected on the score of delicacy to the large rents that these aerial rambles occasioned in his white ducks. On regaining the ground he loaded the buggy with his spoils, despite the driver's assertion that dat all trash. Unfortunately with his epiphytes he brought down whole colonies of ants, and the Jamaican ant is a most pugnacious insect with abnormal biting powers. After I had been forced to disrobe behind some convenient greenery in order to rid

myself of these aggressive little creatures, I was compelled to put a stern veto on further tree exploration.

The ascent from Ewarton, over the Monte Diavolo, is so splendid that I have made it five times for sheer delight in the view. Below lies St. Thomas−in−the−Vale, a splendid riot of palms, orange, and forest trees, and above it towers hill after hill, dominated by the lofty peaks of the Blue Mountains. It is a gorgeously vivid panorama, all in greens, gold, and vivid blues. Monte Diavolo is the only part of Jamaica where there are wild parrots; it is also the home of the allspice tree, or pimento, as it is called in the island. This curious tree cannot be raised from seed or cutting, neither can it be layered; it can only propagate itself in Nature's own fashion, and the seed must pass through the body of a bird before it will germinate. So it is fortunate, being the important article of commerce it is, that the supply of trees is not failing. Bay rum is made from the leaves of the allspice tree.

Once over the Monte Diavolo, quite a different Jamaica unrolls itself. Broad pasture−lands replace the tropical house at Kew; rolling, well−kept fields of guinea−grass, surrounded with neat, dry−stone walls and with trim gates, give an impression of a long−settled land. We were amongst the pen−keepers, or stock−raisers here. This part of the colony certainly has a home−like look; a little spoilt as regards resemblance by the luxuriance with which creepers and plants, which at home we cultivate with immense care in stove−houses, here riot wild in lavish masses over the stone walls. If the cherished rarities of one country are unnoticed weeds in another land, plenty of analogies in other respects spring to the mind. I could wish though, for asthetic reasons, that our English lanes grew tropical Begonias, Coraline, and a peculiarly attractive Polypody fern, similar to ours, except for the young growths being rose−pink. Between Dry Harbour and Brown's Town there is one succession of fine country−places, derelict for the most part now, but remnants of the great days before King Sugar was dethroned. Here the opulent sugar planters built themselves lordly pleasure houses on the high limestone formation. Sugar grows best on swampy ground, but swamps breed fever, so these magnates wisely made their homes on the limestone, and so increased their days.

The high−road runs past one stately entrance−gate after another; entrances with high Georgian, carved stone gateposts surmounted with vases, probably sent out ready−made from England; Adam entrances, with sphinxes and the stereotyped Adam semi−circular railings, all very imposing, and all alike derelict. Beyond the florid wrought−iron gates the gravel drives disappear under a uniform sea of grass; the once neatly shaved lawns are covered with dense bush. All gone! Planters and their fine houses alike! King Sugar has been for long dethroned. The names of these places, Amity, Concord, Orange Grove, Harmony Hall, Friendship, and Fellowship Hall, all rather suggest the names of Masonic Lodges, and seem to point to a certain amount of conviviality. The houses themselves are hardly up to the standard of their ambitious entrance−gates, for they are mostly of the stereotyped Jamaican Great House type; plain, gabled buildings surrounded by verandahs, looking rather like gigantic meat safes; but, as they say in Ireland, any beggar can see the gatehouse, but few people see the house itself, and I imagine that skilled craftsmen were rare in Jamaica in the eighteenth century.

The attempt to reconstruct the life of one, two, or three hundred years ago has always appealed to me, especially amidst very familiar scenes. The stage−setting, so to speak, is much as it must have appeared to our predecessors, but the actual drama played on the stage must have been so very different. I should have liked to have seen these planters' houses a hundred years ago, swarming with guests, whilst the cookhouses smoked bravely as armies of black slaves busied themselves in preparing one of the gigantic repasts described by Lady Nugent. Unfortunately to enter thoroughly into the spirit of the thing, one would have been forced, in her words, to eat like a cormorant, and to drink like a porpoise, with the certainty of a liver attack to follow.

Talking of bygone days, the Fourth−Form Room at Harrow has been unchanged since Queen Elizabeth's time, and still retains all its Elizabethan fittings: heavy, clumsy, solid oak armchairs for the masters, each one equipped with a stout, iron−bound, oak table, and strong oak benches for the boys. As a youngster, I liked to think that I was sitting on the identical benches occupied, more than three hundred years earlier, by Elizabethan youths in trunk hose and doublets. In my youth I was much impressed in Canterbury Cathedral by the sight of the deep grooves worn by the knees of countless thousands of pilgrims to Thomas a Beckett's shrine in the solid stone of

the steps leading from the Choir to the retro−Choir, steps only to be ascended by pilgrims on their knees. At Harrow the inch−thick oak planks of the Elizabethan benches have been completely worn through in places by the perpetual fidgeting of hundreds of generations of schoolboys, which is as remarkable in its way as the knee grooves at Canterbury, though the attrition is due to a different portion of the human anatomy. As a boy I used to wonder how the trunk−hosed Elizabethan Harrovians addressed each other, and whether they found it very difficult to avoid palpable anachronisms in every sentence. Their conversations would probably have been something like this: Come hither, young Smith; I would fain speak with thee. Only one semester hast thou been here, and thy place in the school is but lowly, yet are thy hose cross−gartered, and thy doublet is of silk. Thou swankest, and that is not seemly, therefore shall I trounce thee right lustily to teach thee what a sorry young knave thou art. Nay, good Master Brown, hearken to me. This morn too late I kept my bed, and finding not my buff jerkin, did don in haste my Sunday doublet of changeable taffeta, for thou wottest the ills that do befall those late for school. Neither by my halidom knew I, that being yet of tender years, it was not meet for me to go cross−gartered, so prithee, gentle youth, cease belabouring me with thy feet.

Incidentally, I suppose that Christopher Columbus and his adventurers all landed in the West Indies in 1492, clad in full armour, after the fashion of the age, and I cannot imagine how they escaped being baked alive in the scorching heat. Every suit of armour must have been a portable Dutch−oven, inflicting tortures on its unfortunate wearer. The little bay near Brown's Town where Columbus landed in Jamaica, on his third voyage, is still called Don Christopher's Cove, though the Spanish form of his name is, of course, Cristobal Colon.

Brown's Town is the most beautiful little spot imaginable, glowing with colour from its wealth of flowers. It had, though, another attraction for me. The hotel was kept by a white lady of most serious" views, and in the hotel dining−room I found a bookshelf containing all the books given me as a child for Sunday reading. There they all were! *Little Henry and his Bearer*, *Anna Ross the Orphan of Waterloo* , *Agathos*, and many, many more, including a well−remembered American book, *Melbourne House*. The heroine of the last−named work, an odiously priggish child called Daisy Randolph, refused to sing on a Sunday when desired to do so by her mother. For this, most properly, she was whipped. A devoted black maid who shared Daisy's religious views, comforted her little mistress by bringing her a supper of fried oysters, ice−cream and waffles. As a child I used to think how gladly I would undergo a whipping every Sunday were it only to be followed by a supper of fried oysters, ice−cream and waffles, the latter a comestible unknown to me, but suggesting infinitely delicious possibilities. Unfortunately I can never remember having been asked to sing on Sunday, or indeed on any other day.

Speaking seriously, I do not believe that these emotionally pietistic little books produced any good effect on the children into whose hands they were put. I remember as a child feeling exasperated against the ultra−righteous little heroines of all these works. I say heroine, because no boy was ever given a chance as a household−reformer, unless he had happened to have been born a hopeless cripple, or were suffering from an incurable spinal complaint. In the latter case, experience induced the certainty that the author would be unable to resist the temptation of introducing a pathetic death−bed scene. Accordingly, when the little hero's spine grew increasingly painful and he began to waste away, the two next chapters were carefully skipped in order to be spared the harrowing details of the young martyr's demise. Girls, not being so invariably doomed to an early death, were alone qualified to act as family evangelists, and one knew that the sweet child's influence was bound, slowly but surely, to permeate the entire household. Her mother would cease to care only for the world and its fine things, and would even endeavour to curb her inordinate love of dress. Her father would practically abandon betting, and, should he have been fortunate enough to have backed a winner, would at once rush on conscience−stricken feet to pour the whole of his gains into the nearest missionary collecting−box. Even the cynical old bachelor uncle, who habitually scoffed at his niece's precocious piety, became gradually influenced by her shining example, and would awake one morning to find himself the amazed, yet gratified, possessor of a new heart.

In order to renew my acquaintance with the whole of these friends of my youth, I remained two days longer in Brown's Town, with the assent of the good−natured Guardsman.

Joss, the Guardsman, had a fine baritone voice, and the English rector of Brown's Town, after hearing him sing in the hotel, at once commandeered him for his church on Sunday, though warning him that he would be the only white member of the choir. My services were also requisitioned for the organ. That church at Brown's Town is, by the way, the most astonishingly spacious and handsome building to find in an inland country parish in Jamaica. On the Sunday, seeing the Guardsman in conversation with the local tenor, a gentleman of absolutely ebony−black complexion, at the vestry door, both of them in their cassocks and surplices, I went to fetch my camera, for here at last was a chance of satisfying the Guardsman's mania for turning his trip to the West Indies to profitable account. Every one is familiar with the ingenious advertisements of the proprietors of a certain well−known brand of whisky. My photograph would, unquestionably, be a picture in Black and White, both as regards complexion and costume, but on second thoughts, the likenesses of two choir−men in cassocks and surplices seemed to me inappropriate as an advertisement for a whisky, however excellent it might be, though they had both unquestionably been engaged in singing spiritual songs.

It was Archbishop Magee who, when Bishop of Peterborough, encountered a drunken navvy one day as he was walking through the poorer quarters of that town. The navvy staggered out of a public−house, diffusing a powerful aroma of gin all round him; when he saw his Chief Pastor he raised his hand in a gesture of mock benediction and called jeeringly to the Bishop, The Lord be with you! And with thy *spirits*, answered Magee like a flash.

The drive from Brown's Town across the centre of the island to Mandeville is one of the most beautiful things that can be imagined. It can only be undertaken with mules, and then requires twelve hours, the road running through the heart of the ginger−growing district, of which Boroughbridge is the headquarters. The Guardsman was more than ever confirmed in his opinion that Jamaica was only a growing grocer's shop, especially as we had passed through dense groves of nutmeg−trees in the morning. I have a confused recollection of deep valleys traversed by rushing, clear streams, of towering pinnacles of rock, and of lovely forest glades, the whole of them clothed with the most gorgeous vegetation that can be conceived, of strange and unfamiliar shapes glowing with unknown blossoms, with blue mountains in the distance. It was one ever−changing panorama of loveliness, with beauty of outline, beauty of detail, and unimaginable beauty of colour.

We were forced to return to Kingston, for a French Cruiser Squadron was paying a prolonged visit to Jamaica, and the Governor required my services as interpreter.

That visit of the French Fleet was quite an historical event, for it was the first outward manifestation of the Anglo−French Entente. The Anglo−French Convention had been signed two years previously, on April 8, 1904. I cannot say with whom the idea of terminating the five−hundred−year−old feud between Britain and France originated, but I know who were the instruments who translated the idea into practical effect: they were M. Paul Cambon, French Ambassador in London, and my brother−in−law, Lord Lansdowne, then Foreign Secretary; between them they smoothed down asperities, removed ancient grievances, and lubricated points of contact where friction might arise. No one, probably, anticipated at the time the tremendous consequences of the Anglo−French Convention, nor dreamed that it was destined, after the most terrible conflict of all time, to change the entire history of the world.

In the early part of 1905 the Emperor William had made his theatrical triumphal progress through the Turkish dominions, and on March 31 of the same year he landed at Tangier in great state. What exact agreement the Emperor concluded with the Sultan of Morocco we do not know, but from that moment the French met with nothing but difficulties in Morocco, their own particular sphere of influence" under the Anglo−French Convention. All the reforms proposed by France were flouted by the Sultan, and Germans claimed equal commercial and economic rights with the French. A conference met at Algeciras on January 10, 1906, to settle these and other disputed questions, but the French authorities viewed the situation with the utmost anxiety. They were convinced that the mailed fist would be brandished in their faces on the smallest provocation, and that the French Navy might have to intervene.

Now came the first visible result of the *entente*. The British Government offered the hospitality of Kingston Harbour, with coaling facilities, for an unlimited period to the French Cruiser Squadron, then in the West Indies. Kingston is not only the finest harbour in the Antilles, but the coaling arrangements are far superior to any in the French ports, and, most important point of all, Kingston would be some twenty−four hours steaming nearer to Gibraltar and the Mediterranean, in case of emergency, than the French islands of Guadeloupe or Martinique.

The arrival, then, of the French Fleet was a great event, and, acting possibly on a hint from home, every attention was shown to the French officers by the Governor, Sir Alexander Swettenham. He entertained forty French officers to luncheon at King's House, and his French having grown rather rusty, asked me to welcome them in his name. I took great care in preparing my speech, and began by ascertaining whether any of the reporters who would be present understood French. I was much relieved to find that not one of them knew a single word of the language, for that gave me a free hand. The table, on the occasion of the luncheon, was decorated in a fashion only possible in the West Indies. One end of the table glowed, a scarlet carpet of the splendid flowers of the *Amherstia nobilis*, looking like red satin tassels, then came a carpet of the great white trumpets of the *Beaumontia*, on a ground of white stephanotis. Lastly a blue carpet of giant solanums, interspersed with the dainty blue blossoms of the *Petraea*, the whole forming the most magnificent tricolour flag imaginable. The French officers much appreciated this attention.

I spoke for twenty minutes, and fairly let myself go. With a feeling of security due to the inability of the reporters to follow French, I said the most abominably indiscreet things, considering that it was an official entertainment in an official residence, but I think that I must have been quite eloquent, for, when I sat down, the French Admiral crossed the room and shook hands warmly with me, saying, Monsieur, au nom de la France je vous remercie.

Joss, the Guardsman, struck up an intimate alliance with a young French naval lieutenant of his own age. As the Guardsman knew just two words of French, and the Frenchman was totally ignorant of English, I cannot conceive how they understood one another, but they seemed to take great delight in each other's society, exploring together every corner of Kingston, both by day and by night, addressing each other as Henri, old man, or Joss vieux copain, and jabbering away incessantly, each in his own tongue.

Lady Swettenham, the Governor's wife, paid a formal visit to the Admiral on board his flag−ship, the *Desaix*, and I accompanied her. The Admiral told Lady Swettenham that she and Lady Lathom, who was with her, must consent to be tied up with ribbons bearing the ship's name, the French naval fashion of doing honour to ladies of distinction. The Flag−Lieutenant came in and took a good look at the ladies' dresses; Lady Swettenham being in white, Lady Lathom in pale mauve. Presently Flags reappeared bearing white and mauve ribbons (of the exact shade of her dress) for Lady Lathom, and pale pink and blue ones for Lady Swettenham, each about four yards long. Proverbially gallant as are British naval officers, the idea of first studying the ladies' dresses would not have occurred to them; that little touch requires a Frenchman. We wished to take our leave, but the Admiral begged us to remain; there was evidently something coming. It was an intensely hot afternoon, and the heavy, red−plush furniture and curtains of the Admiral's cabin seemed to add to the heat. His face wore the expression some people assume when they are preparing a treat for a child. Flags looked in and nodded. Faites entrer alors, ordered the Admiral, still smiling, and a steward came in bearing six bottles of Guinness' stout. You see that I know what you like, added the Admiral, beaming. On a broiling hot afternoon in Jamaica, tepid stout is the very last thing in the world that one would choose to drink, but the Admiral was convinced that it was the habitual beverage of all English people, and had actually sent his steward ashore to procure the precious liquid. It was a delicate attention, but it so happened that both ladies had a positive aversion to stout; they drank it bravely notwithstanding, and we all assumed expressions of intense delight, to the Admiral's immense gratification.

It was the Admiral's first visit to the West Indies, and he did not like them. Non, madame. Des nuits sans fraicheur, des fleurs sans odeur, des fruits sans saveur, des femmes sans pudeur; voila les Antilles!

The Guardsman and I, anxious to see more of this lovely island, went off by train to the western extremity of Jamaica. The engineer who surveyed the Jamaican Government Railway must have been an extremely eccentric individual. There is a comparatively level and very fertile belt near the sea−coast, extending right round the island. Here nearly all the produce is grown. Instead of building his railway through this flat, thickly populated zone, the engineer chose to construct his line across the mountain range of the interior, a district very sparsely inhabited, and hardly cultivated at all. The Jamaica Government Railway is admirably designed if regarded as a scenic railway, but is hardly successful if considered as a commercial undertaking. The train winds slowly through the Cockpit country; now panting laboriously up steep inclines, now sliding down a long gradient, with a prodigious grinding of brakes and squeaking of wheels. The scenery is gorgeous, but there is no produce to handle at the various stations, and but few passengers to pick up. As we found every hotel full at our destination, we had to take refuge in a boarding−house, though warned that it was only for coloured people. We found four subfuse young men, with complexions shaded from pale coffee−colour to deep sepia, at supper in the dining−room.

May I inquire, sir, said the Guardsman, with ready tact, to the lightest−complexioned of the young men, how long you have been out from England?

I was born in Jamaica, sir, answered the immensely gratified youth, and have never left it.

And do you, sir, continued the Guardsman to the swarthiest of them all, feel the heat of the climate much? It is rather a change from England, isn't it?

I, too, sir, have never left Jamaica, replied the delighted young man.

So enchanted were these dusky youths at having been mistaken for white men, that they simply overwhelmed us with attentions during the rest of our stay there.

The Guardsman was bent on shooting an alligator, and having heard that these pleasant saurians swarmed in a swamp beyond the town, went there at dusk with his rifle, and I, very foolishly, was induced to accompany him. There is something most uncanny in these tracts of swamp at nightfall. The twisted, distorted trees, the gleaming, evil−smelling pools of water, and the immense, snake−like lianes hanging from the branches all give one a curious sense of unreality, especially on a moonlight night. It is like a Gustave Dore drawing of a bewitched forest. The Guardsman splashed about in the shallow water, but never a sign of an alligator did we see. Giant tortoises crawled lazily about, just visible in the half−light under the trees; innumerable land−crabs scurried to and fro, and unclean reptiles pattered over the fetid ooze, but we saw no more alligators than we should have seen in St. James's Park.

There was a little group of coral islands, decked with plumes of cocoa−nut palms, on the other side of the bay, close to a great mangrove swamp, and the Guardsman insisted on our hiring a boat and rowing out there, blazing though the sun was. These mangrove swamps are evil−looking places. The mangrove, the only tree, I believe, that actually grows in salt water, has unnaturally green leaves. The trees grow on things like stilts, digging their roots deep into the foul slime. When the tide is out, these stilts stand grey and naked below the canopy of vivid greenery, and amongst them obscene, crab−like things crawl over the festering black ooze. The water in the labyrinth of channels between the mangroves was thick and discoloured; there was not a breath of air, the heat was unbearable, and the whole place steamed with decay and disease.

Yet somehow the scene seemed very familiar, for one had read of it, again and again, in a hundred boys' books. The same mental process was at work both in myself and in Joss, but it took different forms. I composed in my mind a chapter of a thrilling romance. Suddenly down one of the glassy channels between the mangroves we saw the pirate felucca approaching us rapidly. She had got out her sweeps and looked like some gigantic water−insect as she made her way towards us, churning the sleeping waters into foam. At her tiller stood a tall

form, which I recognised with a shudder as that of the villainous mulatto Pedro, and her black flag drooped limply in the stagnant air. Our gallant captain at once ordered our carronades to be loaded with canister, and then addressed the crew. 'Yonder gang of dastardly miscreants think to capture us, my lads,' cried Captain Trueman, 'but little they know the material they have to deal with. Even the boys, Bob and Jim, young as they are, will show them the sort of stuff a British tar is made of, if I am not mistaken.' On hearing our gallant captain's noble words, Jim and I exchanged a silent hand−grip, and Jim, snatching up a matchlock, levelled it at the head of the mulatto Pedro, but at that very moment, etc., etc., etc., though I much fear that the remainder of *Bob, the Boy Buccaneer of the Bahamas* will remain unwritten.

Our surroundings suggested the same idea to Joss, but were prompting the Guardsman to more direct action. From one or two of his remarks I had foreseen the possibility of his making an incredible suggestion to me, and gradually suspicion ripened into horrified certainty.

Would you very much mind he began, at least if you are not too old I should so like we shall never get another opportunity like this would you very much mind and out it came, playing at pirates for a little while?

It was unthinkable! The Guardsman was actually proposing to a staid, middle−aged gentleman of forty−eight, an ex−Member of Parliament, a church−warden, and an ex−editor, to play at pirates with him, as though he were ten years old. I pointed out how unusual it was for an officer in the Coldstream, aged twenty−six, to think even of so puerile an amusement, but to include a dignified, earnest−minded, elderly man in the invitation was really an unprecedented outrage. My justifiable indignation increased when I found that the Guardsman actually expected me at my age to enact the role of Carlos, the Cut−throat of the Caribbean.

Our discussion was interrupted by a violent shivering fit which seized me, accompanied by a sudden, racking headache. The swamps had done their work on the previous evening. By night−time I was in a high fever, and when we returned to Kingston next day by train, I, with a temperature up to anywhere, was hardly conscious of where I was or what I was doing.

I was put to bed at King's House, and the fever rapidly turned to malarial gastritis. The distressing feature connected with this complaint is that it is impossible to retain any nourishment whatever. An attack of fever is so common in hot countries that this would not be worth mentioning, except as an example of the curious way in which Nature sometimes prompts her own remedy. The doctor tried half the drugs in the pharmacopoeia on me, the fever simply laughed at them all. Nothing could have exceeded the kindness of Sir Alexander and Lady Swettenham during my illness, but as I could take no nourishment of any kind, I naturally grew very weak. The doctor urged me to cancel my passage and await the next steamer to England, but something told me that as soon as I felt the motion of a ship under me, the persistent sickness would stop. I also felt sure that were I to remain in Jamaica another fortnight, I should remain there permanently, and gruesome memories haunted me of an undertaker's shop in Kingston, which displayed a prominent sign, Handsome black and gold funeral goods" (note the euphemism!) delivered in any part of the city within two hours of telephone call. As I had no desire to make a more intimate acquaintance with the funeral goods, however handsome, I insisted on being carried down to the mail−steamer, and was put to bed in the liner. It was blowing very fresh, and we heard that there was a heavy sea outside. As long as we lay alongside the jetty in the smooth waters of the harbour, the distressing symptoms persisted at their regular intervals, but no sooner had the ship cleared Port Royal and begun to lift to the very heavy sea outside, than the sickness stopped as though by magic. The *Port Kingston*, of the now defunct Imperial Direct West India Mail Line, was really a champion pitcher, for she had an immense beam for her length, and a great amount of top−hamper in the way of deck−houses. As the violent motion continued, I was able to take as much food as I wanted with impunity, and next day, the heavy seas still tossing the *Port Kingston* about like a cork, I was up and about, perfectly well, free from fever and able, as Lady Nugent would have said, to eat like a cormorant. I noted, however, that the motion of the ship seemed to produce on most of the passengers an exactly opposite effect to what it did on myself.

The voyage from Jamaica, by that line, was rather a trying one, for in the interest of the cargo of bananas, the Captain steered straight for the Newfoundland Banks, so in five days the temperature dropped from 90 degrees to 40 degrees, and the unfortunate West Indian passengers would cower and shiver in their thickest clothes over the radiators, where the steam hissed and sizzled.

Before we had been at sea two days, we heard of a most gallant act that had been done by one in our midst. The mail−boats of the Imperial Direct Line each carried from six to eight apprentices, young lads in process of training as officers in the Merchant Service. The apprentices on board the *Port Kingston* had had a great deal of hard work whilst the ship was loading her cargo of fruit at Port Henderson previous to our voyage home, so the Captain granted them all a holiday, lent them one of the ship's boats, provided them with luncheon and fishing lines, and sent them out for a day's sailing and fishing in Kingston Harbour.

They sailed and caught fish, and, as the afternoon wore on, began to rag, as boys will do. They ragged so effectually that they managed to capsize the boat, and were, all of them, thrown into the water.

Curiously enough, three of the eight apprentices were unable to swim. The senior apprentice, a boy named Robert Clinch, seventeen years old, swam out, and brought back two of his young companions in safety to the keel of the upturned boat. Clinch was just starting to bring in the third lad, the youngest of them all, when there was a great swirl in the water, the grey outline of a shark rose to the surface, turned on his back, and dragged the little fellow down. Clinch, without one instant's hesitation, dived under the shark and attacked him with his bare fists. It was an immensely courageous thing to do, for where there is one shark there will probably be many, and the boy knew that he ran the risk of being torn to pieces at any minute. So rigorous was his onslaught on the shark that the fish released his victim, though not before he had bitten off both the little fellow's legs at the thigh. Clinch swam back with the mangled body of his young friend to the upturned boat, and managed to get him on to the keel, but the poor lad bled to death in a few minutes.

Young Clinch was a most modest boy. Nothing could get him to talk of his exploit, and should the subject be mentioned, he would grow very red, shuffle his feet, and turn the conversation into some other channel. The passengers drew up an address, with which they presented him, as a mark of their appreciation of his act of heroism, but it was with great difficulty that Clinch could be induced to accept it.

The episode made such an impression on me that I wrote out an account of it, got it attested and signed by the Captain, and forwarded it to Lord Knollys, an old friend of mine, who was then Private Secretary to King Edward, asking him to bring the matter to his Majesty's notice.

I am pleased to add that, in due course, Midshipman Robert Clinch was duly summoned to Buckingham Palace, where he received the well−earned Albert Medal for saving life, and also the Medal of the Royal Humane Society.

I should very much like to know what Robert Clinch's subsequent career has been.

CHAPTER VI

The Spanish Main Its real meaning A detestable region Tarpon and sharks The isthmus The story of the great pearl La Pelegrina The Irishman and the Peruvian The vagaries of the Southern Cross The great Kingston earthquake Point of view of small boys Some earthquake incidents Flesh−coloured stockings Negro hysteria A family incident, and the unfortunate Archbishop Port Royal A sugar estate A scene from a boy's book in real life Cocoa−nuts Reef−fishing Two young men of great promise.

With so firm a hold had Jamaica captured me that January 3, 1907, found me again starting for that delightful

island, this time accompanied by a very favourite nephew, who, poor lad, was destined to fall in Belgium in the very early days of the war.

We purposely chose the longer route by Barbados, Trinidad, and the Spanish Main, in order to be able to visit the Panama Canal Works, then only in their semi−final stage.

A curious misapprehension seems to exist about that term Spanish Main, which somehow suggests to me infinite romance; conquistadores, treasure−ships, gentlemen−adventurers, and bold buccaneers. It is merely a shortened way of writing Spanish Main_land, and refers not to the sea, but to the land; the *terra firma*, as opposed to the Antilles; the continent, in distinction to the islands. By a natural process the term came to be applied to the sea washing the Spanish Mainland, but main does *not* mean sea, and never did. It is only in the last hundred years that poets have begun to use main as synonymous with sea, probably because there are so many more rhymes to the former than to the latter, and it sounds a fine dashing sort of term, but I can find no trace of a warrant for the use of the word in this sense before 1810. Main refers to the land, not to the water.

I can imagine no more detestable spot anywhere than this Spanish Main, in spite of the distant view of the mighty Cordilleras, around whose summits perpetual thunderstorms seem to play, and from which fierce gales swoop down on the sea. Clammy, suffocating heat, fever−dealing swamps, decaying towns, with an effete population and a huge rainfall, do not constitute an attractive whole. Owing to the intense humidity, even the gales bring no refreshing coolness in their train.

It is easy to understand the importance the old Spanish conquistadores attached to the Isthmus of Panama, for all the gold brought from Peru had to be carried across it on mule−back to the Atlantic coast, before it could be shipped to Spain. Even Columbus, who did not know of the existence of the Pacific, founded a short−lived settlement at Porto Bello, or Nombre de Dios, in 1502, and Martin de Enciso established another at Darien in 1502, but the combined effects of the deadly climate and of hostile Indians exterminated the settlers. After Vasco Nunez de Balboa had discovered the Pacific on September 26, 1513, the strategic importance of the Isthmus became obvious, so Cartagena on the Caribbean, and Panama on the Pacific were founded. The ill−advised and ill−fated enterprise of the Scotsman William Patterson came much later, in 1698. The Scottish settlement of Darien, from which such marvellous results were expected, lasted barely two years. In 1700 the few survivors of the adventurers from Scotland were expelled by the Spaniards, ruined alike in health and pocket. The fever−stricken coasts of the Spanish Main needed but little defence of forts and guns, to protect them against the aggressive efforts of other European nations.

At our first calling−place after leaving England, we heard of the total destruction of Kingston, our destination, by the great earthquake of January 14, but it was too late to turn back, so on we went, past breezy Barbados, and sweltering Trinidad, to the Spanish Main. The curious little nautilus, or Portuguese man−of−war, is very common in these waters, and can be seen in quantities sailing along the surface with their crude−magenta membranes extended to the breeze. Cartagena de Indias, a city of narrow streets, high houses and massive ramparts, is a curious piece of seventeenth−century Spain to find transplanted to the Tropics. I imagine that all its inhabitants, by the law of the survival of the fittest, must be immune from fever, which is certainly not the case in that most unattractive spot Colon.

It may interest any prospective visitors to Colon to learn that there is excellent tarpon fishing in Colon Harbour itself. My nephew, having provided himself with a tarpon rod, hooked a splendid fish from the deck of the mail−steamer, the bait being a cavalle, a local white fish of some 3 Ibs. My nephew played the tarpon for nearly two hours; the fish fought splendidly, shooting continuously into the air, a curved glittering bar of silver, 180 lbs. of giant gleaming herring, when the line (a stout piano wire) suddenly snapped as he was being reeled in. A tarpon fisherman has a leathern bucket strapped in front of him, in which to rest the butt of his rod, otherwise the strain would be too great. Whilst my nephew was playing his tarpon, I was fortunate enough to hook a large shark, and there was little fear of my line parting, for it was a light chain of solid steel. I was

surprised that^ the brute showed so little fight, he let me tow him about where I liked. We fixed a running noose to the wire rope of a derrick, and after a few attempts succeeded in dropping it over the shark's head, and in tautening it behind his fins; the steam−derrick did the rest. I could see distinctly six or seven pilot−fish playing round the shark. They were of about a pound weight, and were marked exactly like our fresh−water perch, except that their stripes were bright blue on a golden ground. As the shark is rather stupid, and has but poor eyesight, the function of the pilot−fish is to ascertain where food is to be found, and then to show their master the way to it, after which, like the sycophants they are, they live on the crumbs that fall from his mouth. The pilot−fish only deserted their master when the derrick hauled him out of the water, and at the same time some dozen remoras, or sucking−fish, looking like disgusted bloated leeches, let go their hold on the shark and dropped back into the sea.

No human being would voluntarily pay a second visit to Colon, a dirty, mean collection of shanties, with inhabitants worthy of it. The principal article of commerce seemed to be black−calico funeral suits, a sartorial novelty to me.

Since the Americans took command of the Canal Zone they have achieved wonders in the way of sanitation, and have practically extirpated yellow fever. The credit for this is principally due to Colonel Goethals, but no amount of sanitation can transform a belt of swamps with an annual rainfall of 150 inches into a health−resort. The yellow−lined faces of the American engineers told their own tale, although they had no longer to contend with the fearful mortality from yellow fever which, together with venality and corruption, effectually wrecked Ferdinand de Lesseps' attempt to pierce the Isthmus in 1889.

The railway between Colon and Panama was opened as far back as 1855, and is supposed to have cost a life for every sleeper laid. Neglected little cemeteries stretch beside the track almost from ocean to ocean. Before the American Government took over the railway there was one class and one fare between Colon and Panama, for which the modest sum of $25 gold was demanded, or 5 pounds for forty−seven miles, which makes even our existing railway fares seem moderate. People had perforce to use the railway, for there were no other means of communication.

For forty−seven miles the track runs through rank, steamy swamps, devoid of beauty, the monotony only broken by the endless cemeteries and an occasional alligator dozing on a bank of black slime.

Panama is the oldest city on the American Continent, and has just four hundred and one years of history behind it. It has unquestionably a strong element of the picturesque about it. It is curious to see in America so venerable a church as that of Santa Ana, built in 1560.

From the immensely solid ramparts, built in the actual Pacific, the Pearl Islands are dimly visible. These islands had a personal interest for me. Balboa was the first European to set eyes on the Pacific on September 29, 1513. He had with him one hundred and ninety Spaniards, amongst whom was the famous Pizarro. A few days after, he crossed over to the Pearl Islands, which he found in a state of great commotion, for a slave had just found the largest pear−shaped pearl ever seen. Balboa, with great presence of mind, at once annexed the great pearl, and gave the slave his freedom.

Having fallen out of favour with Ferdinand V. of Spain (Isabella had died in 1504), Balboa endeavoured to propitiate the king by sending home an envoy with gifts for him, and amongst these presents was the great pearl. The beauty of the jewel was at once recognised; it was named La Pelegrina, and took its place amongst the treasures of the Spanish Crown. After Ferdinand V.'s death, the great pearl with the other Crown jewels came into the possession of his grandson, the Hapsburg Emperor Charles V., and from Charles La Pelegrina descended to his son, Philip II. of Spain. When Philip married Queen Mary Tudor of England, he gave her La Pelegrina as a wedding present. The portrait of Queen Mary in the Prado at Madrid, shows her wearing this pearl, so does another one at Hampton Court, and a small portrait in Winchester Cathedral, where her marriage with Philip took place. After Mary's death La Pelegrina returned to Spain, and was handed down from sovereign to sovereign

until Napoleon in 1808 placed his brother Joseph on the throne of Spain. It was a somewhat unsteady throne, and after many vicissitudes, Joseph fled from Spain in the Spring of 1813. Anticipating some such enforced retirement, Joseph, like a prudent man, had had some of the smaller and more valuable pictures from the Spanish palaces packed in wagons and despatched towards the frontier. These pictures fell into the hands of Wellington's troops at the Battle of Vittoria, and are hanging at this moment in Apsley House, Piccadilly, for Ferdinand VII., on his restoration to the throne, presented them to the Duke of Wellington; or rather, to be quite accurate, lent them to the Duke of Wellington and to his successors. Joseph Bonaparte also thoughtfully placed some of the Spanish Crown jewels, including La Pelegrina, in his pockets, and got away safely with them. Joseph died, and left the great pearl to his nephew, Prince Louis Napoleon, afterwards Napoleon III. When Prince Louis came to London in exile, he brought La Pelegrina with him. Prince Louis Napoleon was a close friend of my father's and had been his Esquire at the famous Eglinton tournament. The Prince came to see my father one day and confided to him that he was in great pecuniary difficulties. He asked my father to recommend him an honest jeweller who would pay him the price he wanted for La Pelegrina. He named the price, and drew the great pearl out of his pocket. My father, after examining the jewel and noticing its flawless shape and lustre, silently opened a drawer, drew a cheque, and handed it to Prince Louis without a word. That afternoon my father presented my mother with La Pelegrina. To my mother it was an unceasing source of anxiety. The pearl had never been bored, and was so heavy that it was constantly falling from its setting. Three times she lost it; three times she found it again. Once at a ball at Buckingham Palace, on putting her hand to her neck, she found that the great pearl had gone. She was much distressed, knowing how upset my father would be. On going into supper, she saw La Pelegrina gleaming at her from the folds of the velvet train of the lady immediately in front of her. Again she lost it at Windsor Castle, and it was found in the upholstery of a sofa. As a child, on the rare occasions when La Pelegrina came out of its safe, I loved to stroke and smooth its sleek, satin−like sheen. The great pearl somehow fascinated me. When it came into my brother's possession after my father's death, he had La Pelegrina" bored, though it impaired its value, so my sister−in−law was able to wear the great jewel as often as she wished without running the constant danger of losing it. I liked that distant glimpse of the Pearl Islands, for they were the birthplace of the jewel which had attracted me so curiously as a child.

We returned from Panama by a train after dark. As the night−air from the swamps has the reputation of being deadly, every window in the car was shut. I noticed a dark−skinned citizen of either Peru or Ecuador in some difficulties with the conductor, owing to his lack of knowledge of English. The Peruvian pulled up a window (*up* on the American Continent, not *down* as with us) and sat in the full draught of the night−air. A pleasant young Irishman named Martin, a near relative of the Miss Martin who collaborated with Miss Somerville in the inimitable *Experiences of an Irish R.M.* noticed this. By Gad! that fellow will get fever if he sits in the draught from the swamps. I'll go and warn him. I told Martin that the South American spoke no English. That's all right, cried Martin. I speak a little Spanish myself. Taking a seat by the Peruvian, Martin tapped him on the shoulder to secure his attention, pointed a warning finger at the open window, and said slowly but impressively, in a strong Co. Galway accent, Swamp o, mustn't−sit−in−draught o; sit−in−draught o, get−chill o; get−chill o, catch−fever o; catch−fever o, damned−ill o; damned−ill o, die o. He repeated this twice, and upon the Peruvian turning a blank look of incomprehension at him, returned to his place saying, I don't believe that fellow understands one single word of Spanish, so I went myself and warned the Peruvian in Spanish of the risk he was running, and he closed the window. I do not know whether he suffered for his imprudence, but Martin was down next day with a sharp bout of fever.

Martin next announced that the Southern Cross had gone stark, staring mad, and had moved round by mistake to the North. We were travelling from the Pacific to the Atlantic, therefore presumably going from West to East, and there, through the window, sure enough was that much−overrated constellation, the Southern Cross, shining away gaily in the North. Upon reflexion, it seemed unreasonable to suppose that the Southern Cross could have so far forgotten its appointed place in the heavens, the points of the compass, and the very obligations its name imposed upon it, as to establish itself deliberately in the North: there must be some mistake somewhere. So we got a map, and discovered, to our amazement, that, though Colon is on the Atlantic and Panama on the Pacific, yet Colon is *West* of Panama, owing to the kink in the Isthmus at this point. The railway from the Pacific runs *North−west* to

the Atlantic, though at this particular part of the line we were travelling due West, so the Southern Cross was right after all, and we were wrong.

The track from ocean to ocean seemed to be lined with one continuous street of wooden stores, eating−houses, and dance−halls, all erected for the benefit of the workers on the canal, and all alike blazing with paraffin lamps. It was like one continuous fair, but the kindly night masked the endless cemeteries.

We bought in Colon a little book of verse entitled *Panama Patchwork*. It was the work of an American, James Stanley Gilbert, who had lived for six years on the Isthmus, and had seen most of his friends die there. Gilbert's lines have, therefore, a certain excusable tinge of morbidity, as, for example:

Beyond the Chagres River
Are paths that lead to death:
To fever's deadly breezes,
To malaria's poisonous breath.

I refrain from quoting others which are really too gruesome to reproduce, but I like his welcome to the Trade wind, the boisterous advent of which announces the end of the very unhealthy wet season, and a brief spell of dry weather. It must be remembered that the author was unused to the pen:

Blow thou brave old Trade wind, blow!
Send the mighty billows flashing
In the radiant sunlight, dashing
O'er the reef, like thunder crashing,
Blow thou brave old Trade wind, blow!

One can almost hear the great seas thundering on the coral reefs in reading these lines, and can see in imagination the nodding cocoanut palms bending their pliant green heads to the life−giving Trades.

It is curious the different terms used for these continuous winds: we call them Trade winds ; the French, Vents alizes ; the Germans, Passatwinde ; the Spanish Vientos generates. All quite different.

As my nephew and I drove out of the dock enclosure at Kingston, we were appalled at the scene of desolation that met our eyes. Kingston was one heap of ruins; there was not a house intact. Neither of us had imagined the possibility of a town being so completely destroyed, for this was in 1907, not 1915, and twenty brief seconds had sufficed to wreck a prosperous city of 40,000 inhabitants. The streets had been partially cleared, but the telephone and the electric−light wires were all down, as were the overhead wires for the trolly−cars. We traversed three miles of shapeless heaps of bricks and stones. Some trim well−kept villas in the suburbs which I remembered well, were either shaken down, or gaped on the road through broad fissures in their frontages, great piles of debris announcing that the building was only, so to speak, standing on sufferance, and would have to be entirely reconstructed. On arriving at King's House, we found the main building still standing, but so damaged that it might collapse at any moment, and therefore uninhabitable. The handsome ballroom, which formed a separate wing, was nothing but a pile of rubbish, a formless mass of bricks and plaster. The dining−room, making the corresponding wing, was built entirely of wood, and had consequently escaped injury. This dining−room was a very lofty hall, paved with marble and entirely surrounded by arches open to the air. It had previously reminded me of the interiors seen in Italian pictures of sacred subjects, with its bareness, spacious whiteness, its columns and arches. Here the Governor, Lady Swettenham and her sister were living, in little encampments formed by screens. Two splendid chandeliers of Spanish bronze, originally looted from Havannah in the eighteenth century, had been dismantled by the Governor's orders, in view of the possibility of further shocks. The verandah outside formed the living−room for every one. My nephew and I were very comfortably lodged in a little wooden shed, formerly the laundry. I had noticed as we drove through the town that the great Edinburgh reservoirs were

apparently quite uninjured, and here at King's House the fountain was splashing in its basin as gaily as ever, the building containing the big swimming−bath was undamaged, and the spring which fed the bath still gurgled cheerfully into it. Wherever there was water, the shock seemed to have been neutralised, for I imagine that the water acted as a cushion to deaden the earth−wave. Neither the electric lighting nor the telephones were working.

A tropical night is seldom quiet, what with the croaking of frogs, the chirping of the cicadas, and some bird, insect, or reptile that imitates the winding in of a fishing−reel for hours together, but really the noise of the Jamaican nights after the earthquake was quite unbearable. Negroes are very hysterical, and some black preachers had utilised the earthquake to start a series of revival meetings, and these were held just outside the grounds of King's House. Right through the night they lasted, with continual hymn−singing, varied with loud cries and groans. Abide with me is a beautiful hymn, but really its beauties began to pall when it had been sung through from beginning to end nine times running. Neither my nephew nor I could get any sleep that first night owing to the blatant devotional exercises of the overwrought negroes.

Both Sir Alexander and Lady Swettenham were really wonderful. He, though an old man, only allowed himself five hours' sleep, and spent his days at Headquarters House trying to bring the affairs of the ruined city into some kind of order, and to start the every−day machinery of ordinary civilised life again, for there were no shops, no butchers or bakers, no clothing, no groceries everything had been destroyed, and had to be reconstructed. We had noticed the previous afternoon a very rough newly erected shanty. It was barely finished, but already jets of steam were puffing from its roof, and a large sign proclaimed it a steam−bakery. That was the only source of bread−supply in Kingston. Is it necessary to specify the nationality of a firm so prompt to rise to an emergency, or to add that the names over the door were two Scottish ones? Lady Swettenham was equally indefatigable, and sat on endless committees: for sheltering the destitute, for helping the homeless with food, money and clothing, for providing for the widows and orphans.

It was estimated that twelve hundred people lost their lives on that fatal afternoon of January 14, 1907, though even this pales before the terrific catastrophe of St. Pierre in Martinique, on May 8, 1902, when forty thousand people and one of the finest towns in the West Indies were blotted out of existence in one minute by a fiery blast from the volcano Mont Pele.

Lady Swettenham was driving into Kingston with Lady Dudley at 2.30 p.m. on the day of the earthquake. Some ten minutes later they felt the carriage suddenly rise, and then fall again. The horses stopped, and the coachman looked back in vain for the tree he thought he must have run over, until, on turning the next corner, they came upon a house in ruins. Then Lady Swettenham knew. Both ladies worked all night in the hospital, attending to the hundreds of injured. The hospital dispensary had been wrecked, and, sad to say, the supply of chloroform became exhausted, so amputations had to be performed without anaesthetics. Most fortunately there was to have been a great ball at King's House that very evening, so Lady Swettenham was able to provide the hospital with unlimited soup, jellies, and cold chickens; otherwise it would have been impossible to provide the sufferers with any food at all.

As we all know, points of view differ. After the trolley−car service had been re−established, my nephew and I had occasion to go into Kingston daily towards noon. On the front bench of the car there was always seated a little white boy, about nine years old, with a pile of school−books. He was a well−mannered, friendly little fellow and soon entered into conversation. Waxing confidential, he observed to us, Isn't this earthquake awfully jolly? Our school is all 'mashed up' so we get out at half−past eleven instead of at one.

And how about your own house, Charlie? Is that all right?

Oh no, it's all 'mashed up' too, so is Daddy's store. We're living on the lawn in tents, like Robinson Crusoe. It's most awfully jolly!

Incidentally I may remark that Charlie's father had been completely ruined by the earthquake, his store not being insured, but the small boy only saw things from his own point of view.

A certain London West−End church, with which I am connected, has a Resident Choir School attached to it. As the choir−boys' dormitory is at the top of the building, every time that there was an air−raid during the war, they were routed out of bed and sent down to the coal−cellar. The boys were told to write an account of one peculiarly severe raid as part of their school−work. One small urchin described it as follows: The Vicar woke us up and told us there was an air−raid, and that we were to go down into the coal−cellar in our pyjamas with our blankets. It was awfully jolly down in the cellar. In our blankets we looked like robbers in a cave, or like a lot of Red Indians. The Vicar told us stories, and we had buns and cocoa and sang songs. It was all so awfully jolly that all the chaps hope that there will be plenty more air−raids.

Here again the small boy's point of view differs materially from that of the adult.

To go back to Jamaica, an acquaintance had returned early from his office, and was having a cup of coffee on his verandah at 2.30. Suddenly he saw the trees at the end of his garden rise up some eight feet. A quick brain−wave suggested an earthquake to him at once, and half−unconsciously he jumped from the verandah for all he was worth. As he alighted on the lawn, his house crashed down behind him.

There were some further milder shocks. I was engaged in shaving early one morning in our little wooden house, when I felt myself pushed violently against the dressing−table, almost removing my chin with the razor at the same time. I suspected my nephew of a practical joke, and called out angrily to him. In an aggrieved voice he protested that he had not touched me, but had himself been hurled by an unseen agency against the wardrobe. Then came a perfect cannonade of nuts from an overhanging tree on to the wooden roof of our modest temporary abode, and still we did not understand. I had at that time an English valet, the most stolid man I have ever come across. He entered the hut with a pair of brown shoes in one hand, a pair of white ones in the other. In the most matter−of−fact way he observed, There's been an earthquake, so perhaps you would like to wear your brown shoes to−day, instead of the white ones. By what process of reasoning he judged brown shoes more fitted to earthquake conditions than white ones, rather escaped me.

Appalling tragedy though the earthquake was, like most tragedies it had its occasional lighter side. A certain leading lady of the island had been in the habit of wearing short skirts, long before the dictates of fashion imposed the present unbecoming skimpy garments. She did this on account of the numerous insect pests with which Jamaica unfortunately abounds. For the same reason she adopted light−coloured stockings, so that any creeping intruder could be easily seen and brushed off. Her wardrobe being destroyed in the earthquake, she took the train into Spanish Town in an endeavour to replenish it. In a large drapery store the black forewoman at once recognised the lady, and came forward, all bows and smiles, to greet so important a customer.

Please, what can I hab de pleasure of showing Madam?

I want some silk stockings, either pink or flesh−colour, if you have any!

Very sorry, Madam, we hab no pink silk stockings, but we hab plenty of flesh−coloured ones, taking down as she spoke a great bundle of *black* silk stockings. Of course, if one thinks over it for a moment, it would be so.

The religious hysteria amongst the negroes showed no signs of abating. A black prophet, a full−blooded negro named Bedward, made his appearance, and gained a great following. Bedward, dressed in a discarded British naval uniform, and attended by a neurotic bodyguard of screaming, hysterical negresses, made continual triumphal parades through the streets of Kingston. As far as I could ascertain the most important item in his religious crusade was the baptism of his converts in the Hope River, at a uniform charge of half−a−crown per head.

With regard to baptism, a curious incident occurred long before I was born. A sister of mine, the late Duchess of Buccleuch, was so frail and delicate at her birth that it was thought that she could not possibly survive. She was accordingly baptised privately two days after her birth. She rallied, and grew into a big sturdy girl. When she was four years old, my father had her received into the Church by the Archbishop of Canterbury, at the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace. During the service the Archbishop became inarticulate, and many of those present feared that he had sustained a stroke, or had been suddenly afflicted with aphasia. What had happened was this: As my sister was inclined to be fidgetty and troublesome, my mother had, perhaps unwisely, given her a packet of sugar−almonds to keep her quiet. The child was actually sucking one of these when she arrived at the Chapel Royal, but was, of course, made to remove it. Unseen by any one, she managed to place another in her mouth. When the Archbishop took her in his arms, the child, seeing his mouth so close to hers, with the kindest intentions in the world, took the sugar−almond from her own mouth and popped it into the Archbishop's. Never had a Primate been in a more embarrassing situation! Having both his arms occupied in holding the child, he could not remove the offending almond with his fingers. It would be quite superfluous on my part to point out how highly indecorous it would be for an Archbishop to shall we say to expel anything from his mouth in church; and even after the sugar had been dissolved, an almond must be crunched before it can be disposed of, another wholly inadmissible contingency. So the poor Archbishop had perforce to remain inarticulate; let us only hope that you and I may never find ourselves in so difficult a situation.

Many people in Jamaica were in 1907 in quite as difficult a situation. I found the wife of the Chief Justice, an old acquaintance of mine in the Far East, living in the emptied swimming−bath of what had been her home. The officers of the West India Regiment at Up Park Camp were all under canvas on the cricket−ground. The officers' quarters at Up Park Barracks were exceedingly well designed for the climate, being raised on arcades. They were shattered, but the wooden shingle roofs had fallen intact and unbroken, and lay on the ground in pieces about 100 feet long, a most curious spectacle. Students of *Tom Cringle* will remember the gruesome description of his dinner at the Mess at Up Park Camp, during an epidemic of yellow fever, when one officer after another got up and left the room, pinching the regimental doctor on the shoulder as he did so, as an intimation that he, too, had been claimed by the yellow death. The military authorities acted unwisely in selecting Up Park as a site for barracks. It certainly stands high, but is shut off from the sea breeze by the hill known as Long Mountain, and has, in addition, a dangerous swamp to windward of it, two drawbacks which might have been foreseen.

I noticed that brick houses suffered more than stone ones. This was attributed to the inferior mortar used by Jamaican masons, for which there can be no excuse, for the island abounds in lime. Wooden houses escaped scatheless. Every statue in the Public Gardens was thrown down, except that of Queen Victoria. The superstitious negroes were much impressed by this fact, though the earthquake had, curiously enough, twisted the statue entirely round. Instead of facing the sea, as she formerly did, the Queen now turned her back on it, otherwise the statue was uninjured. The clock on the shattered Parish Church recorded the fatal hour when it had stopped in the general ruin: 2.42 p.m. As far as I could learn, the earthquake had not taken the form of a trembling motion, but the solid ground had twice risen and fallen eight feet, a sort of land−wave, which apparently was confined to the light sandy Liguanea plain, for where the mountains began no shock had been felt. The fine old church of St. Andrew had been originally built in 1635, but had been demolished by the earthquake of 1692 and rebuilt in 1700, as the inscription at the west end testified. Here the words Anna Regina, surrounded by a mass of florid carving, showed that Jamaica is no land of yesterday. The earthquake of 1907 shook down the tower, but did not injure the collection of very fine seventeenth−and eighteenth−century monuments the church contains. The inscription on one of these, opposite the Governor's pew, pleased me by its originality. After a detailed list of the many admirable qualities of the lady it commemorates, it goes on to say that in the yeare 1685 she passed through the spotted veil of the smallpox to her God.

We accompanied the Governor to Port Royal to take stock of the damage there. Previous to 1692, Port Royal was reputed the richest and the wickedest spot on earth, for it was the headquarters of the Buccaneers; here they divided their ill−gotten gains, and here they strutted about bedizened in their tawdry finery, drinking and gambling. I should be inclined to distrust the local legend that in the many taverns the wine was all served in

jewelled golden cups, for, given the character of the customers, one would imagine that the gold cups would be apt to leave the taverns with the customers. Then came the earthquake of 1692, and half of Port Royal was swallowed by the sea. A pillar has been erected at Green Bay, opposite to a Huguenot refugee, one Lewis Galdy, who had a wonderful escape. According to the inscription on it, Mr. Lewis Galdy was swallowed by the earthquake, and, by the providence of God, thrown by another shock into the sea, and lived many years afterwards in great reputation.

Port Royal cannot be called a fortunate spot, for in 1703 it was again entirely destroyed by fire, and in 1722 it was swept away by a hurricane.

It is, in spite of its historic past, a mean, squalid, decaying little place. Being built almost entirely of wood, the town had sustained but little injury, but the massive concrete fort at the end of the peninsula had slid bodily into the sea, six−inch guns and all. Some twenty cocoa−nut palms it had taken with it were standing in the water, their brown withered tops just peering above the surface, giving a curious effect of desolation. A tramway used for conveying ammunition bore witness to the violence of the earth−waves, for it stood in places some ten feet up in the air, resting on nothing at all; looking for all the world like a switchback railway at Earl's Court. So many charges are levelled at the Royal Engineers that it is pleasant to be able to testify that every building erected by this much−abused corps at Port Royal had resisted the earthquake and was standing intact. Port Royal, notwithstanding its situation at the end of a peninsula, had in old days a terrible reputation for unhealthiness, only surpassed by that of Fort Augusta across the bay, the latter a veritable charnel−house. The neighbourhood of the poisonous swamps of the Rio Cobre was in both cases responsible for the loss of tens of thousands of British soldiers' lives in these two ill−fated spots. They were both hot−beds of yellow fever.

My nephew and I, being able to do no good there, were anxious to escape from ruined Kingston, and made arrangements to stay as paying guests with one or two planters, in order to see something of their daily life. After a second drive through the exquisitely beautiful Bog Walk and over Monte Diavolo, we found ourselves on the sugar estate of a widow, a lady of pure white blood. There were abundant indications of the former prosperity of the place, and even more apparent signs that at present the wolf was very close to the door. The verandah was paved with marble, there was some fine mahogany carving in the central hall, the dessert−service was of George II. silver−gilt, and the china beautiful old Spode. Everything else about the place told its own story of desperate financial conditions. Our hostess declared that it was impossible for a woman to manage a sugar estate, as she could not always be about amongst the canes and in the boiler−house, and her sons were not yet old enough to help her. No one who has not experienced it can picture the heat of a Jamaican sugar−factory; I should imagine the temperature to be about 120 degrees. Most people, I think, take a rather childish pleasure in watching the first stages of the manufacture of familiar products. I confess to feeling interested on being told that the stream of muddy liquid issuing from the crushed canes and trickling gaily down its wooden gutters, would ultimately figure as the lump−sugar of our breakfast−tables. There is also a peculiarly fascinating apparatus known as a vacuum−pan, peeping into which, through a little tale window, a species of brown porridge transforms itself into crystallised sugar of the sort known to housekeepers as Demerara under your very eyes; and another equally attractive, rapidly revolving machine in which the molasses, by centrifugal force, detaches itself from the sugar, and runs of its own accord down its appointed channels to the rum distillery, where Alice's Dormouse would have had the gratification of seeing a real treacle−well. In this latter place, where the smell of the fermenting molasses is awful, only East Indian coolies can be employed, a West Indian negro being unable to withstand its alcoholic temptations.

After seeing all the lions of the island, we drifted as paying guests to a school for little white boys on the north coast.

The surroundings of this school were ideally beautiful. It stood on a promontory jutting into the sea, with a coral reef in front of it, but shut in as it was by the hills, the heat of the place was unbearable, and the little white boys all looked pathetically pale and peaky.

My nephew pointed out to me that a little cove near the school must be the identical place we had both read of hundreds of times, and he justly remarked what an ideal spot it would be in which to be shipwrecked. All the traditional accessories were there. The coral reef with the breakers thundering on it; the placid lagoon inshore; a little cove whose dazzling white coral beach was fringed with cocoa−nut palms down to the very water's edge; a crystal−clear spring trickling down the cliff and tumbling into a rocky basin; the hill behind clothed with a dense jungle of bread−fruit trees and wild plantains, whose sea of greenery was starred with the golden balls of innumerable orange trees; the whole place must really have been lifted bodily out of some boy's book, and put here to prove that writers of fiction occasionally tell the truth, for it seemed perfectly familiar to both of us. Certainly, the oranges were of the bitter Seville variety and were uneatable, and wild plantains are but an indifferent article of diet; still, they satisfied the eye, and fulfilled their purpose as indispensable accessories to the castaway's new home. It would be impossible to conceive of more orthodox surroundings in which to be shipwrecked, for our vessel would be, of course, piled up on the reef within convenient distance, and we would presuppose a current setting into the cove. We should also have to assume that the ship was loaded with a general cargo, including such unlikely items as tool−chests and cases of vegetable seeds, all of which would be washed ashore undamaged precisely when wanted. It is quite obvious that a cargo of, say, type−writers, or railway metals, would prove of doubtful utility to any castaways, nor would there be much probability of either of these articles floating ashore. My nephew, a slave to tradition, wished at once to construct a hut of palm branches close to the clear spring, as is always done in the books; he was also positively yearning to light a fire in the manner customary amongst orthodox castaways, by using my spectacles as a burning−glass. With regard to the necessary commissariat arrangements, he pointed out that there were abundant Avocado pear trees in the vicinity, which would furnish Midshipman's butter, whilst the bread−fruit tree would satisfactorily replace the baker, and the Aki fruit form an excellent substitute for eggs. He enlarged on the innumerable other vegetable conveniences of the island, and declared that it was almost flying in the face of Providence for a sea−captain to neglect to lose his ship in so ideal a spot.

Whilst watching the little boys playing football in a temperature of 90 degrees, we noticed an unusual adjunct to a football field. A great pile of unripe, green cocoa−nuts (called water−cocoa−nuts in Jamaica) lay in one corner, with a negro boy standing guard over them. Up would trot a dripping little white urchin, and pant out, Please open me a nut, Arthur, and with one stroke of his machete the young negro would decapitate a nut, which the little fellow would drain thirstily and then rush back to his game. The schoolmaster told me that he always gave his boys cocoa−nut water at their dinner, as it never causes a chill, and as there were thousands of trees growing round the school, it was an inexpensive luxury. One of the duties of Arthur, the negro boy, was to supply the school with nuts, and I saw him going up the trees like a monkey, with the aid of a sling of rope round his leg.

I and my nephew went out fishing on the reef at dawn, before the breeze sprang up. The water was like glass, and we could see the bottom quite clearly at nine fathoms. It was like fishing in an aquarium. The most impossible marine monsters! Turquoise−blue fish; grey and pink fish; some green and scarlet, others as yellow as canaries. We could follow our lines right down to the bottom, and see the fish hook themselves amongst the jagged coral, till the bottom−boards of the boat looked like a rainbow with our victims. As the breeze sprang up, the surf started at once, and fishing became impossible. We had been warned that many of the reef fish were uneatable, and that the yellow ones were actively poisonous. We were quite proud of our Joseph's−coat−like catch, but our henchman, the negro lad Arthur, assured us that every fish we had caught was poisonous. We had reason later to doubt this assertion, as we saw him walking home with a splendid parti−coloured string of fish, probably chuckling over the white man's credulity.

The natural surroundings of that school were lovely, but the little white boys, who had lived all their lives in Jamaica, most likely took it all for granted, and thought it quite natural to have their bathing−place surrounded by cocoa−nut palms, their playground fringed with hibiscus and scarlet poinsettias, and the garden a riot of mangoes, bread−fruits, nutmeg and cinnamon trees.

No doubt they thought their school and its grounds dull and hideous. On a subsequent voyage home from Jamaica, there was on board a very small boy from this identical school, on his way to a school in Scotland. He seemed about eight; a little, sturdy figure in white cotton shorts. He was really much older, and it was curious to hear a deep bass voice (with a strong Scottish accent) issuing from so small a frame. He was a very independent little Scot, wanting no help, and quite able to take care of himself. We arrived at Bristol in bitterly cold weather, and the boy, who had been five years in Jamaica, had only his tropical clothing. We left him on the platform of Bristol station, a forlorn little figure, shivering in his inadequate white cotton shorts, and blue with the unaccustomed cold, to commence his battle with the world alone, but still declining any assistance in reaching his destination. That boy had a brief, but most distinguished career. He passed second out of Sandhurst, sweeping the board of prizes, including the King's Prize, Lord Roberts' Prize, the Sword of Honour, and the riding and shooting prizes. He chose the Indian Army, and the 9th Goorkhas as his regiment, a choice he had made, as he told me afterwards, since his earliest boyhood, when Rudyard Kipling's books had first opened his eyes to a new world. That lad proved to have the most extraordinary natural gift for Oriental languages. Within two years of his first arrival in India he had passed in higher Urdu, in higher Hindi, in Punjabi, and in Pushtoo. Norman Kemp had; in addition, some curious intuitive faculty for understanding the Oriental mind, and was a born leader of men. He was a wonderful all−round sportsman, and promised to be one of the finest soldier−jockeys India has ever turned out, for here his light weight and very diminutive size were assets. He came to France with the first Indian contingent, went through eighteen months' heavy fighting there, and then took part in the relief of Kut, where he won the M.C. for conspicuous valour on the field, and afterwards gained the D.S.O. I have heard him conversing in five different languages with the wounded Indian soldiers in the Pavilion Hospital at Brighton (with the Scottish accent underlying them all), and noted the thorough understanding there was between him and the men. Young as he was, he had managed to get inside the Oriental mind. He was killed in a paltry frontier affray, six months after the Armistice. I am convinced that Norman Kemp would have made a great name for himself had he lived. He had the peculiar faculty of gaining the confidence of the Oriental, and I think that he would have eventually drifted from the Military to the Political or Administrative side in India. He was a splendid little fellow.

Nearly twenty−five years earlier, I had known another very similar type of young man. He was a subaltern in the Norfolk Regiment, and a great school−friend of a nephew of mine. Chafing at the monotony of regimental life, he got seconded, and went out to the Nigerian Frontier Field Force. Here that young fellow of twenty−two, who had hitherto confined his energies to playing football and boxing, proved himself not only a natural leader of men, but a born administrator as well. He quickly gained the confidence of his Haussa troops, and then set to work to improve the sanitary conditions of Jebba, where he was stationed. He equipped the town with a good water−supply, as well as with a system of drainage, and planted large vegetable gardens, so that the European residents need no longer be entirely dependent on tinned foods. It was Ronald Buxton, too, who first had the idea of building houses on tripods of railway metals, to raise them above the deadly ground−mists. Thanks to him, the place became reasonably healthy, and his powers of organisation being quickly recognised, he was transferred from the Military to the Administrative side. His whole heart was in his work. Like young Kemp, Buxton always stayed in my house when on leave. Though the most tempting invitations to shoot and to hunt rained in on him whilst in England, he was always fretting and chafing to be back at work in his pestilential West African swamp, where he lived on a perpetual diet of bully beef and yams in a leaky native grass−built hut. Like young Kemp, he was absolutely indifferent to the ordinary comforts of life, and appeared really to enjoy hardships, and they were both quite insensible to the attractions of money. He was killed in the South African War, or would, I am sure, have had a most distinguished Colonial career. These two young men seemed created to be pioneers in rough lands. As far as my own experience goes, it is only these Islands that produce young men of the precise stamp of Norman Kemp and Ronald Buxton.

CHAPTER VII

Appalling ignorance of geography amongst English people Novel pedagogic methods Happy Families An

instructive game Bermuda A waterless island A most inviting archipelago Bermuda the most northern coral−atoll The reefs and their polychrome fish A water−glass Sea−gardens An ideal sailing place−How the Guardsman won his race A miniature Parliament Unfounded aspersions on the Bermudians Red and blue birds Two pardonable mistakes Soldier gardeners Officers' wives The little roaming home−makers A pleasant island The inquisitive German Naval Officers The Song of the Bermudians.

The crass ignorance of the average Englishman about geography is really appalling. He neither knows, nor wants to know, anything about it, and oddly enough seems to think that there is something rather clever about his dense ignorance. This ignorance extends to our statesmen, as we know by the painful experience of some of our treaties, which can only have been drawn up by men grossly ignorant of the parts of the world about which they were supposed to be negotiating. I quite admit that geography is almost ignored in our schools, and yet no branch of knowledge can be made so attractive to the young, and, taught in conjunction with history, as it should be, none is of higher educational value. At the request of two clerical friends, I gave some geography lessons last year to the little boys in their schools. My methods were admittedly illegitimate. In the course of the last fifteen years I have sent hundreds of coloured picture−postcards of places all over the world, in Asia, Africa, Europe and America, to a small great−nephew of mine, now of an age when such things no longer appeal to him. Armed with my big bundle of postcards, and with another parcel as well, I tackled my small pupils. I never spoke of them of a place without showing them a set of views of it, for I have a theory that the young remember more by the eye than by the ear. In this way a place−name conveyed to them a definite idea, for they had seen half−a−dozen somewhat garishly coloured presentments of it. The young love colour. Then my second method came into play. Evans, what did I tell you last time grew in Jamaica? Sugar and coffee, sir, Next boy, what else? Pepper, salt and mustard, sir. Young idiot! Next boy. Cocoa, sir, and ginger. Very good, Oxley. Bring me that long parcel there. There is enough preserved ginger for two pieces for each boy; Ellis, who gave a silly answer, gets none. Baker, what fruit did I tell you grew in the West Indies? Pineapples, sir. Very good, Baker. Bring me those two tins of pineapple and the tin−opener. Plenty for you all. My lessons were quite enormously popular with my pupils, though the matron complained that the boys seemed liable to bilious attacks after them.

In the days of my childhood, some ingenious person had devised a game known as Educational Quartettes. These quartettes were merely another form of the game of Happy Families, which seems to make so persistent an appeal to the young. Every one must be familiar with it. The underlying principle is that any possessor of one card of any family may ask another player for any missing card of the suit; in this way the whereabouts of the cards can be gradually ascertained, and Mr. Bones the Butcher finds himself eventually reunited, doubtless to his great joy, to his worthy, if unprepossessing spouse, Mrs. Bones, and to his curiously hideous offspring, Miss Bones and Master Bones. The same holds good with regard to the other families, those of Mr. Bun the Baker, Mr. Pots the Painter, and their friends, and we can only hope that these families make up in moral worth for their painful lack of physical attractions. Educational Quartettes were played in exactly the same way. At the age of six, I played them every night with my sisters and brother, and the set we habitually used was English Ecclesiastical Architecture. In lieu of Mr. Bung the Brewer, we had Norman Style, 1066−1145. Mrs. Bung was replaced by Massive Columns, Miss Bung by Round Arches, Master Bung by Dog−tooth Mouldings, each one with its picture. The next Quartette was Early English, 1189−1307. No. 2 being Clustered Columns, No. 3 Pointed Arches, No. 4 Lancet Windows, each one again with its picture, and so on through the later styles. We had none of us the least idea that we were being educated; we thought that we were merely playing a game, but the information got insensibly absorbed through ear and eye, and remained there.

Never shall I forget the astonishment of a clergyman who was showing his church to my youngest brother and myself, he then being aged nine, and I eleven. The Vicar observed that, had we been older, we would have found his church very interesting architecturally, when my nine−year−old brother remarked quite casually, Where we are, it is decorated 1307−1377, but by the organ it's Early English, 1189−1307. The clergyman, no doubt, thought him a precocious little prig, but from perpetually playing Architectural Quartettes, this little piece of information came instinctively from him, for he had absorbed it unconsciously.

Another set we habitually played was entitled Famous Travellers, and even after the lapse of fifty−six years, many of the names still stick in my memory. For instance under North Africa came 2, Jules Gerard; 3, Earth; 4, Denham and Clapperton. Jules Gerard's name was familiar to me, for was he not, like the illustrious Tartarin de Tarascon, a *tueur de lions*? It was, indeed, Jules Gerard's example which first fired the imagination of the immortal Tarasconnais, though personally I confess to a slight feeling of disappointment at learning from Gerard's biographer that, in spite of his grandiloquent title, his total bag of lions in eleven years was only twenty−five. As to the German, Heinrich Earth, my knowledge of him is of the slightest, and I plead guilty to complete ignorance about Denham and Clapperton's exploits, though their names seem more suggestive of a firm of respectable family solicitors or of a small railway station on a branch line, than of two distinguished travellers. The main point is that after an interval of more than half a century, these names should have stuck in my memory, thus testifying to the educational value of the game. I wish that some educationalist, taking advantage of the proved liking of children for this form of game, would revive these Quartettes, for there is an immense advantage in a child learning unconsciously. I think that geography could be easily taught in this way; for instance: 1. France (capital Paris). 2. Lyons and Marseilles. 3. Bordeaux and Rouen. 4. Lille and Strasbourg. Coloured maps or views of the various cities would be indispensable, for I still maintain that a child remembers through its eyes. In my youth I was given a most excellent little manual of geography entitled *Near Home*, embellished with many crude woodcuts. The book had admittedly an extremely string religious bias, but it was written in a way calculated to interest the young, and thanks to the woodcuts most of its information got permanently absorbed. Perhaps some one with greater experience in such matters than I can pretend to, may devise a more effectual scheme for combating the crass ignorance of most English people about geography.

Should one ask the average Englishman where Bermuda is, he would be certain to reply, Somewhere in the West Indies, which is exactly where it is not.

This fascinating archipelago of coral islands forms an isolated little group in the North Atlantic, six hundred miles from the United States, three thousand miles from Europe, and twelve hundred miles north of the West Indies. Bermuda is the second oldest British Colonial possession, ranking only after Newfoundland, which was discovered by John Cabot in 1497, and occupied in the name of Queen Elizabeth in 1583. Sir George Somers being wrecked on Bermuda in 1609, at once retaliated by annexing the group, though, as there is not one drop of water on any of the islands, there were naturally no aboriginal inhabitants to dispute his claim.

Bermuda is to me a perpetual economic puzzle, for it seems to defy triumphantly all the rules which govern other places. Here is a group of islands whose total superficies is only 12,500 acres, of which little more than one−tenth is capable of cultivation. There is no fresh water whatever, the inhabitants being entirely dependent on the rainfall for their supply; and yet some 22,000 people, white and coloured, live there in great prosperity, and there is no poverty whatever. I almost hesitate before adding that there are no taxes in Bermuda beyond a 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on everything imported into the islands except foodstuffs; for the housing accommodation is already rather overstrained, and should this fact become generally known, I apprehend that there would be such an influx into Bermuda from the United Kingdom of persons desirous of escaping from our present crushing burden of taxation, that the many caves of the archipelago would all have to be fitted up as lodging−houses. The real explanation of the prosperity of the islands is probably to be found in the wonderful fertility of the soil, which produces three crops a year, and in the immense tourist traffic during the winter months.

The islands were originally settled in rather a curious way. Certain families, my own amongst them, took shares in the Bermuda Company, and each undertook to plant a little tribe there. These tribes seem to have come principally from Norfolk and Lincolnshire, as is shown by the names of the principal island families. The Triminghams, the Tuckers, the Inghams, the Pennistones, and the Outerbridges have all been there since the early sixteen hundreds. Probably nowhere in the world is the colour−line drawn more rigidly than in Bermuda; white and coloured never meet socially, and there are separate schools for white and black children. This is, of course, due to the instinct of self−preservation; in so small a community it would have been impossible otherwise for the white settlers to keep their blood pure for three hundred years. The names of the different parishes show the

families who originally took shares in the Bermuda Company; Pembroke, Devonshire, Hamilton, Warwick, Paget, and Somerset amongst others.

They are the most delightful islands imaginable. The vegetation is sub−tropical rather than tropical, and all the islands are clothed with a dense growth of Bermudian cedar (really a juniper), and of oleander. I have never seen a sea of deeper sapphire−blue, and this is reflected not from above, but from below, and is due to the bed of white coral sand beneath the water. On the dullest day the water keeps its deep−blue tint. When the oleanders are in bloom, the milk−white houses, peeping out from this sheet of rose−pink, with the deep indigo of the sea, and the sombre green of the cedars, make one of the most enchanting pictures that it is possible to imagine.

Bermuda has distinctly an island climate, which is perhaps fortunate, as the inhabitants are entirely dependent on rain−water. With a north wind there is brilliant sunshine tempered by occasional terrific downpours. With a south wind there is a perpetual warm drizzle varied with heavy showers. With a west wind the weather is apt to be uncertain, but I was assured that an east wind brought settled, fine weather. I never recollect an east wind in Bermuda, but my climatic reminiscences only extend to the winter months.

Bermuda is the most northern coral−atoll existing, and is the only place where I have actually seen the coral insect at work on the reefs. He is not an insect at all, but a sort of black slug. These curious creatures have all an inherited tendency to suicide, for when the coral−worm gets above the tide−level he dies. Still they work bravely away, obsessed with the idea of raising their own particular reef well out of the water at the cost of their own lives. The coral of a reef is an ugly brown substance which has been inelegantly compared to a decayed tooth. Not until the coral is pulverised does it take on its milk−white colour. I am told by learned people that Bermuda, like most coral islands, is of Aolian formation; that is, that the powdered coral has been gradually deposited by the winds of countless centuries until it has risen high out of the water. Farther south in the tropics, we know what happens. Nature has given the cocoa−nut the power of preserving its vitality almost indefinitely. The fallen nuts float on the sea and drift hither and thither. Once washed up on a beach and dried by the sun, the nut thrusts out little green suckers from those eyes which every one must have noticed on cocoa−nuts, anchors itself firmly into the soil, and in seven years will be bearing fruit. The fallen fronds decay and make soil, and so another island becomes gradually clothed with vegetation. In Bermuda the cedar replaces the cocoa−nut palm.

Fishing on the reefs in Bermuda is the best fun imaginable for persons not liable to sea−sickness. The fisherman has in his left hand a water−glass, which is merely a stout box with the bottom filled in with plate−glass. The water−glass must be held below the ripple of the surface, which, by the way, requires a fair amount of muscular effort, when through the pane of glass, the sea−floor ten fathoms below is clearly visible. The coloured fish of Jamaica were neutral−tinted pigmies compared to the polychrome monsters on a Bermudian reef, and one could actually see them swallowing one's bait. One of the loveliest fishes that swims is the Bermudian angel−fish, who has the further merit of almost equalling a sole when fried. Shaped like a John Dory, he has a lemon−coloured body with a back of brilliant turquoise−blue, which gleams in the water like vivid blue enamel. He is further decorated with two long orange streamers. The angel−fish, having a very small mouth, must be fished for with a special hook. Then there is the queen−turbot, shaded from dark blue to palest turquoise, reminding one of Lord's Cricket Ground at an Eton and Harrow match; besides pink fish, scarlet fish, and orange fish, which when captured make the bottom−boards of the boat look like a Futurist landscape, not to speak of horrible, spotted, eel−like creatures whose bite is venomous. Reef−fishing is full of exciting incidents, but its chief attraction is the amazing beauty of the sea−gardens as seen through the water−glass, with sponges and sea−fans of every hue, gently waving in the current far below, as fish of all the colours of the rainbow play in and out of them in the clear blue water.

At Bermuda I found my old friend, the Guardsman, established at Government House as A.D.C. The island is one of the most ideal places in the world for boat−sailing, and the Guardsman had taken up yacht racing with his usual enthusiasm; atoning for his lack of experience by a persistent readiness to take the most hideous risks. The C.O. of the British battalion then stationed in Bermuda was rather hard put to it to find sufficient employment for his

men, owing to the restricted area of the island. He encouraged, therefore, their engagements in civilian capacities, as it not only put money into the men's pockets, but kept them interested. At Government House we had soldier−gardeners, soldier−grooms, a soldier cowman, and a soldier−footman. The footman was a Southampton lad, and having been employed as a boy in a racing−yacht on the Solent, was a most useful man in a boat, and the Guardsman had accordingly annexed him as one of his racing crew, regardless of the fact that his labours afloat rather interfered with the specific domestic duties ashore for which he had been engaged by the Governor. A hundred−year−old yacht had for many years been handed over from Governor to Governor. The *Lady of the Isles* was Bermudian−rigged and Bermudian−built of cedar−wood. She had great beam, and was very lightly sparred, having a correspondingly small sail−area, but in spite of her great age she was still absolutely sound and was a splendid sea−boat. The Bermudian rig had been evolved to meet local conditions. Imagine a cutter with one single long spar in the place of a mast and topmast; this spar is stepped rather farther aft than it would be in an ordinary cutter, and there is one huge mainsail, leg−of−mutton shaped, with a boom but no gaff, and a very large jib. Owing to their big head−sails, and to their heavy keels, these Bermudian craft fore−reach like a steamer, and hardly ever miss stays. For the same reason they are very wet, as they bury themselves in the water. A handsome silver cup had been presented by a visitor for a yacht race right round the Bermudas, and the Guardsman managed to persuade the Governor to enter his centenarian yacht for this race, and to confide the sailing of her to himself. The ancient *Lady of the Isles* got a very liberal time allowance on account of her age and her small spread of canvas, but to every one but the Guardsman it seemed like entering a Clydesdale for the Derby. He had already formulated his plan, but kept it strictly to himself; for its success half a gale of wind was necessary. I agreed to sail with him, and as the start was to be at 6 a.m. I got up three mornings running at 4 a.m., and found myself with Joss, the Guardsman, and the soldier−footman on the water−front at half−past five in the morning, only to discover that there was not the faintest breath of air, and that Hamilton Harbour lay one unruffled sheet of lapis−lazuli in a flat calm; a state of things I should imagine unparallelled in the still vexed Bermoothes. (How on earth did Shakespeare ever come to hear of Bermuda?) Three days running the race was declared off, so when the Guardsman awoke me on the fourth morning with the news that it was blowing a full gale, I flatly declined to move, and turned over and went to sleep again, thereby saving my nerves a considerable trial.

Government House has a signal−station of its own, and at ten o'clock a message arrived announcing that the *Lady of the Isles* was leading by four miles. The Governor, who had never taken his old yacht's entry seriously, grew tremendously excited, ordered a light trap and two fast ponies round, and he and I, equipped with telescopes and sandwiches, spent the rest of the day tearing from one end of the island to the other, now on the south shore, now on the north shore, lying on our stomachs with telescopes to our eyes. It was quite true that the old centenarian had a tremendous lead, which was gradually decreased as the day went on. Still, the Guardsman, with face and hands the colour of a copper kettle, appeared triumphantly at dinner with a large silver cup which he presented with a bow to Lady Wodehouse, the Governor's wife, whilst the soldier−footman, burnt redder than the Reddest of Indians above his white shirt and tie, grinned sympathetically as he busied himself over his duties with the cauliflowers and potatoes. What had happened was this: the race was right round the islands, without any mark−boats to round. There was a very heavy sea running, and great breakers were washing over the reefs. The other yachts all headed for the gate, or opening in the reefs, but the Guardsman, a keen hunting man, knowing that alone of the competitors the old *Lady of the Isles* had no fin−keel, had determined to try and *jump the reef*. In spite of the frantic protests of the black pilot, he headed straight for the reef, and, watching his opportunity, put her fairly at it as a big sea swept along, and got over without a scrape, thus gaining six miles. It was a horribly risky proceeding, for had they bumped, the old yacht would have gone to pieces, and the big sharks lie hungrily off the reefs. The one chance for the broad−beamed old boat, with her small sail−area, was a gale of wind, for here her wonderful qualities as a sea−boat came in. I often sailed in races with the Guardsman in a smaller modern boat, much to the detriment of my nervous system, for he was incorrigible about taking risks, in which he was abetted by the soldier−footman, a sporting youth who, being always given a pecuniary interest in the races, was quite willing to take chances. The Guardsman, as a hunting man, never seemed to realise that a yacht had not the same jumping powers as a horse, and that a reef was a somewhat formidable barrier to tackle.

Owing to Bermudian boats being so wet, one always landed soaked to the skin, and in any town but Hamilton, people would have stared at seeing three drowned rats in white garments, clinging like tights, making their dripping way home through the streets; but there it is such an everyday occurrence that no one even turned their heads; and, as the soldier−footman was fond of observing, It's comfortable feeling as 'ow you're so wet that you can't get no wetter no'ow.

Bermuda has its own little Parliament of thirty−six members, the oldest Parliament in the New World. It really is an ideal Chamber, for every one of the thirty−six members sit on the Government side; there is no Opposition. The electors do not seem to favour youthful representatives, for the heads of the legislators were all white or grey, and there seemed in the atmosphere a wholesome mistrust of innovations. There was great popular excitement over a Bill for permitting the use of motor−cars in the islands, a Bill to which public opinion was dead opposed. There was some reason in this opposition. The roads in Bermuda are excellent, but they are all made of coral, which becomes very slippery when wet. The roads twist a great deal, and the island is hilly, and the farmers complained that they could never get their great wagons of vegetables (locally called garden−truck") down to the harbour in safety should motor−cars be permitted. I well remember one white−headed old gentleman thundering out: Our fathers got on without all these new−fangled notions, and what was good enough for my father is good enough for me, Mr. Speaker, a sentiment which provoked loud outbursts of applause. Another patriarch observed: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, is our motto in Bermuda, Mr. Speaker, a confession of faith which was received by the House with rapturous enthusiasm; so, by thirty−three votes to three, all motors were declared illegal in the islands.

I do not apprehend that there will ever be a shortage of building materials in Bermuda, for this is how a house is built. The whole formation being of coral, the stones are quarried on the actual site of the house, the hole thus created being cemented and used as a cistern for the rain−water from the roof. The accommodating coral is as soft as cheese when first cut, but hardens after some months' exposure to the air. The soft stones are shaped as wanted, together with thin slabs of coral for the roof, and are then all left to harden. When finished, the entire house, including the roof, is whitewashed, the convenient coral also furnishing the whitening material.

These white roofs give quite an individual character to a Bermudian landscape, their object, of course, being to keep the rain−water supply pure. The men and women who live in these houses are really delightful people, and are all perfectly natural and unaffected. They are all, as one might suppose in so small a place, inter−related. The men seem to have a natural aptitude for cricket, whilst Bermudian girls can all dance, swim, play lawn−tennis, and sail boats to perfection. On my second visit to the islands, I was much struck with one small incident. Two pretty sisters were always the first arrivals at the bi−weekly hotel dances. I found that they lived on the far side of Hamilton Harbour, some six miles by road. As they could not afford ten dollars twice a week for carriage hire, they put on sea−boots and oilskins over their ball−gowns, and then paddled themselves across a mile and a half of rough water, shook out their creases and touched up their hair on arrival, danced all the evening, and then paddled themselves home, whatever the weather. Most Bermudian girls, indeed, seem quite amphibious.

I went out the second time with a great friend of mine, who was anxious to see her son, then quartered in the island. We had attended the Parade Service on Sunday at the Garrison Church, and my friend was resting on the hotel verandah, when she heard two American ladies talking. My dear, said one of them, you ought to have come up to that Garrison Church. I tell you, it was a right smart, snappy, dandy little Service, with a Colonel in full uniform reading selections from the Bible from a gilt eagle.

Amongst other interesting people I saw a good deal of at that time in Bermuda was Mark Twain, who had, however, begun to fail, and that most cultivated and delightful of men, the late William Dean Howells. I twice met at luncheon a gentleman who, I was told, might possibly be adopted as Democratic Candidate for the Presidency of the United States. His name was Dr. Woodrow Wilson.

Many country houses in Bermuda have pieces of old Chippendale and French furniture in them, as well as fine specimens of old French and Spanish silver. I entirely discredit the malicious rumours I have heard about the origin of these treasures. All male Bermudians were seafaring folk in the eighteenth century, and ill−natured people hint that these intrepid mariners, not content with their legitimate trading profits, were occasionally not averse to a little maritime enterprise. These scandalmongers insinuate that in addition to the British Ensign under which they sailed, another flag of a duskier hue was kept in a convenient locker, and was occasionally hoisted when the owner felt inclined to indulge his tastes as a collector of works of art, or to act as a Marine Agent. I do not believe one word of it, and emphatically decline to associate such kindly people with such dubious proceedings, even if a hundred and fifty years have elapsed since then.

These merchant−traders conducted their affairs on the most patriarchal principles. They built their own schooners of their own cedar−wood, and sailed them themselves with a crew of their own black slaves. The invariable round−voyage was rather a complicated one. The first stage was from Bermuda in ballast to Turks' Island, in the British Caicos group. At Turks' Island for two hundred years salt has been prepared by evaporating sea−water. The Bermudian owner filled up with salt, and sailed for the Banks of Newfoundland, where he disposed of his cargo of salt to the fishermen for curing their cod, and loaded up with salt−fish, with which he sailed to the West Indies. Salt−fish has always been, and still is, the staple article of diet of the West Indian negro; so, his load of salt−fish being advantageously disposed of, he filled up with sugar, coffee, rum, and other tropical produce, and left for New York, where he found a ready sale for his cargo. At New York he loaded up with manufactured goods and Yankee notions, and returned to Bermuda to dispose of them, thus completing the round trip; but I still refuse to credit the story of other and less legitimate developments of mercantile enterprise. Of course, should Britain be at war with either France or Spain, and should a richly loaded French or Spanish merchantman happen to be overtaken, things might obviously be a little different. The Bermudian owner might then feel it his duty to relieve the vessel of any objects of value to avoid tempting the cupidity of others less scrupulous than himself; but I cannot believe that this was an habitual practice, and should the dusky flag ever have been hoisted, I feel certain that it was only through sheer inadvertence.

I know of one country house in Bermuda where the origin of all the beautiful things it contains is above all suspicion. The house stands on a knoll overlooking the ultramarine waters of Hamilton Harbour, and is surrounded by a dense growth of palms, fiddle trees, and spice trees. The rooms are panelled in carved cedar−wood, and there is charming grillage iron−work in the fanlights and outside gates. There is an old circular−walled garden with brick paths, a perfect blaze of colour; and at the back of the house, which is clothed in stephanotis and Gloire de Dijon roses, an avenue of flaming scarlet poinsettias leads to the orchard: it is a delightful, restful, old−world place, which, together with its inhabitants, somehow still retains its eighteenth−century atmosphere.

The red and blue birds form one of the attractions of Bermuda. The male red bird, the Cardinal Grosbeak, a remarkably sweet songster, wears an entire suit of vivid carmine, and has a fine tufted crest of the same colour, whilst his wife is dressed more soberly in dull grey bordered with red, just like a Netley nursing sister. The blue birds have dull red breasts like our robins, with turquoise−blue backs and wings, glinting with the same metallic sheen on the blue that the angel−fish display in the water. As with our kingfishers, one has the sense of a brilliant flash of blue light shooting past one. The red and blue birds are very accommodating, for they often sit on the same tree, making startling splashes of colour against the sombre green of the cedars. That the light blue may not have it all its own way, there is the indigo bird as well, serving as a reminder of Oxford and Harrow, and pretty little ground−doves, the smallest of the pigeon family, as well as the Chick−of−the−Village, a most engaging little creature. Unfortunately some one was injudicious enough to import the English house−sparrow: these detestable little birds, whose instincts are purely mischievous and destructive, like all useless things, have increased at an enormous rate, and are gradually driving the beautiful native birds away. All these birds were wonderfully tame till the hateful sparrows began molesting them. I am glad to say that a fine of 5 pounds is levied on any one killing or capturing a red or blue bird, and I only wish that a reward were given for every sparrow killed. That pleasant writer Bartimaeus, has in his book *Unreality* drawn a very sympathetic picture of

Bermuda under the transparent *alias* of Somer's Island. He, too, has obviously fallen a victim to its charms, and duly comments on the blue birds, which Maeterlinck could find here in any number without a lengthy and painstaking quest.

As a boy, whilst exploring rock−pools at low water on the west coast of Scotland, I used to think longingly of the rock−pools in warm seas, which I pictured to myself as perfect treasure−houses of marine curiosities. They are most disappointing. Neither in Bermuda, nor in the West Indies, nor even on the Cape Peninsula, where the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet, could I find anything whatever in the rock−pools. To adopt the Sunday School child's word, there seem to be no tindamies on the beaches of warm seas. Every one must have heard of the little girl who got her first glimpse of the sea on a Sunday School excursion. The child seemed terribly disappointed at something, and in answer to her teacher's question, said that she liked the sea, but please where were the 'tindamics?' I was looking forward so to the tindamies! Pressed for an explanation the little girl repeated from the Fourth Commandment, In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all the tindamies. Tindamies is quite a convenient word for star−fish, crabs, cuttle−fish and other flotsam and jetsam of the beach.

The Sunday School child's mistake is rather akin to that of the old Sussex shepherd who had never had a day's illness in his life. When at last he did take to his bed, it was quite obvious that he would never leave it again. The vicar of the parish visited him almost daily to read to him. The old man always begged the clergyman to read him the hymn, The roseate hues of early dawn. At the tenth request for the reading of this hymn the clergyman asked him what it was in the lines that made such an appeal to him. Ah, sir, answered the old shepherd, here I lie, and I know full well that I shall never get up again; but when you reads me that beautiful 'ymn, I fancies myself on the downs again at daybreak, and can just see 'Them rows of ewes at early dawn'!

Had the old shepherd lived in Bermuda instead of in Sussex, that is a sight which he would never have seen, for the local grass, though it appears green enough to the eye, is a coarse growth which crackles under the feet and contains no nutriment whatever as pasture; so all cows have to be fed on imported hay, rendering milk very costly. For the same reason all meat and butter have to be imported, and their price even in pre−war days was sufficiently staggering. The high cost of living and the myriads of mosquitoes are the only draw−backs to life in these Delectable Islands. That no systematic effort to exterminate mosquitoes has ever been made in Bermuda is to me incomprehensible, for these mosquitoes are all of the Stegomyia, or yellow−fever−carrying variety. The Americans have shown, both in the Canal Zone and in Havana, that with sufficient organisation it is quite possible to extirpate these dangerous pests, and the Bermudians could not do better than to follow their example.

Our soldier−gardeners at Government House had their own methods, and were inclined to attach importance to points considered trivial by civilians. The men were laying out a new vegetable garden for the Governor, and I went with the corporal one evening to inspect progress. The corporal, after glancing at the new−planted rows of vegetables, shook his head in deep sadness. 'Arris, 'Arris, I'm surprised at you! Look at the dressing of that there rear rank of lettuces. Up with them all! and I had to point out that the lettuces would grow quite as well, and prove just as succulent, even should they not happen to be in strict alignment, and that the dressing was only important at a subsequent stage. I laid out a new border to the approach for the Governor, with the help of four soldiers, and it was really rather a successful piece of work. I began with a large group of Kentia and Chamaeropes palms, after which came a patch of bright yellow crotons, giving place to a thicket of a white−foliaged Mexican shrub, followed by a mass of crimson and orange crotons and copper−coloured coleus, which arrangement I repeated. What with scarlet poinsettias, many−hued hibiscus, and the pretty native orange pigeon−berry, I got quite an amount of colour into my border.

Pretty as are the gardens of Government House, they have to yield the palm to those of Admiralty House, which have been carefully tended by generations of admirals. Bartimaeus in *Unreality* grows quite enthusiastic over these gardens, though he does not mention their three peculiarities. One is a fountain, the only one in the islands. As there is not one drop of fresh water, this fountain has its own catchment area, and its own special rain−water tank. My own idea is that the Admiral reserves its playing for the visits of foreign naval men, to delude them into

the idea that Bermuda has an abundant water supply. The second unusual feature is a series of large chambers hewn out of the solid rock, with openings towards the sea. These caves were cut out by convict labour as a refuge from the fierce heat of the summer months. The third is a flat tombstone by the lawn−tennis ground, inscribed Here lies a British Midshipman 1810, nothing more; no name, no age, no particulars. I have often wondered how that forlorn, nameless, ageless midshipman came to be lying in the Admiral's garden. He was probably drowned and washed ashore without anything to identify him, so they buried him where they found him.

The particular white battalion quartered in Bermuda during my first visit there was very fortunate in its ladies, for it had an unusual proportion of married officers. I have the greatest admiration for these plucky little women who accompany their husbands all over the globe, and who always seem to manage, however narrow their means, to create a cheerful and attractive little home for their menkind. They all appeared able to dress themselves well, though, if the truth were known, they were probably mostly their own dressmakers, and, owing to the servant difficulty in Bermuda, their own cooks as well; they had transformed their little white−washed houses into the most inviting little dwellings, and in spite of having to do a great part of their own housework, they always managed to look pretty and charming. The average wife of the average officer of a Line regiment is a wonderful little woman.

The supper−parties in the married officers' quarters at Prospect Camp were the cheeriest entertainments I have ever been at. Every one had to contribute something. My own culinary attainments being confined to the preparation of three dishes, I was compelled to repeat them monotonously. The subalterns were made to carry the dishes from the kitchen, and to wash−up afterwards, yet I am sure that the average London hostess would have envied the jollity, the fun and high spirits that made those informal supper−parties so delightful, and would have given anything to introduce some of this cheery atmosphere into her own decorous and extremely dull entertainments, where the guests did not have to cook their own dinners.

I gave a dinner−party at an hotel to eleven people, all officers or officers' wives. The conversation turned on birthplaces, and the answers given were so curious, that I wrote them all down. Not only were all my guests soldiers and soldiers' wives, but they were nearly all the sons and daughters of soldiers as well. One major had been born at Cape Town; his very comely wife in Barbados. The other major had been born at Meerut in India, his wife at Quebec, and her unmarried sister in Mauritius; and so it was with all of them. Of those twelve people of pure British blood, I was the only one who had been born in England or in Europe; even the subaltern had been born in Hong−Kong. I do not thing that stay−at−homes quite realise the existence of this little world of people journeying from end to end of the earth in the course of their duty, and taking it all as a matter of course.

I regret that the Imperial West India Direct Line should now be defunct, for this gave a monthly direct service between Bristol and Bermuda, and I can conceive of no pleasanter winter quarters for those desirous of escaping the rigours of an English January and February. Ten days after leaving Bristol, ten days it must be confessed of extremely angry seas, the ship dropped her anchor in Grassy Bay, and the astonished arrival from England found ripe strawberries, new peas, and new potatoes awaiting his good pleasure. No visitor could fail to be delighted with the pretty, prosperous little island, and with its genial and hospitable inhabitants. For Americans, too, the place was a godsend, for in forty−eight hours they could escape from the extreme and fickle climate of New York, and find themselves in warm sunshine, tempered, it is true, by occasional downpours, for Nature, realising that the inhabitants were dependent on the rainfall for their water supply, did her best to avoid any shortage of this necessity of life. Canadians had also a great liking for the islands, for not only were they on their own soil there, but in sixty hours they could transport themselves from the ice and snow of Montreal and Toronto to a climate where roses and geraniums bloomed at Christmas, and where orange and lemon trees and great wine−coloured drifts of Bougainvillaa mocked at the futile efforts of winter to touch them. The Bishop of Bermuda, who also included Newfoundland in his See, declared that climatically his diocese was absolutely ideal, for he passed the six winter months in Bermuda and the remainder of the year in Newfoundland, thus escaping alike the rigorous winters of the northern island and the fierce summer heat of the southern one. The Bishop himself was a Newfoundlander, as were many of the Church of England clergy in Bermuda. A humorous friend of mine, a

sapper in charge of the wireless, shared to the full my liking for the islands and their pleasant inhabitants, but positively detested Prospect Camp where he was stationed. Prospect, though healthy enough, is wind−swept, very dusty, and quite devoid of shade. He declared that the well−known hymn should be altered, and ought to run:

What though the Ocean breezes
Blow o'er Bermuda's isle;
Where every man is pleasing
And only Prospect vile.

Few people seem to realise that Bermuda is a first−class fortress, a dockyard, and an important naval coaling−station. A glance at the map will show its strategic importance. Nature has made it almost inaccessible with barrier−reefs, and there is but one narrow and difficult entrance off St. George's. This entrance is jealously guarded by a heavy battery of 12 in. and 6 in. guns, and the ten−mile long ship−channel inside the reefs from St. George's to the Dockyard is very difficult and complicated, though I imagine that, with modern guns, a ship could lie outside the reefs and shell the islands to pieces.

The first time that I was in Bermuda, a German Training Squadron arrived, with a number of naval cadets on board, and announced their intention of remaining ten days. The German officers at once exhibited a most un−Teutonic keenness about sea−fishing. The Governor, fully alive to the advantage a possibly hostile power might reap from an independent survey and charting of the tortuous and difficult ship−channel between St. George's and the Dockyard, at once held a consultation with the Senior Naval Officer, in the Admiral's absence, and, as a result of this consultation, three naval petty officers were detailed to show the Germans the best fishing−grounds. At the same time naval patrol boats displayed a quite unusual activity inside the reefs. Both patrol boats and petty officers had their private orders, and I fancy that these steps resulted in very few soundings being taken, and in the ship−channel remaining uncharted by our German visitors. I was returning myself, after dark, in the ferry−boat plying between the Dockyard and Hamilton, when there were four German officers on the bridge. Imagining themselves secure in the general ignorance of their language, they were openly noting the position of the leading lights, as the little steamer threaded her way through the smaller islands and One rock and Two rock passage, and all these observations were, I imagine, duly entered in their pocket−books after landing. In conversation with the German officers I was much struck with the essentially false ideas that they had with regard to the position of the motherland and her dependencies. They seemed convinced that every Dominion and dependency was merely waiting for the first favourable opportunity to declare its complete independence, and they hardly troubled to conceal their opinion that Britain was hopelessly decadent, and would never be able to wage a campaign again. Bermuda, in view of its wonderful strategic position, had, I am convinced, been marked down as a future German possession, when they would have endeavoured to make a second Heligoland of it.

Nowhere could a little population be found more loyal to the motherland than in Bermuda, or prouder of its common heritage.

A friend of mine, a lady who had never left the islands, wrote some lines which I thought so fine that I set them to music. Her words, though, are so much better than my setting, that I will quote them in full.

THE SONG OF THE BERMUDIANS
THE KEEPERS OF THE WESTERN GATE

Queen of the Seas! Thou hast given us the Keys,
Proudly do we hold them, we thy Children and akin,
Though we be nor rich nor great,
We will guard the Western Gate,
And our lives shall pay the forfeit ere we let the foeman in.

Empty are our hands, for we have nor wealth nor lands,
No grain or gold to give thee, and so few a folk are we;
Yet in very will and deed,
We will serve thee at thy need,
And keep thine ancient fortalice beyond the Western Sea.

The sea is at our doors, and we front its fretted floors,
Swept by every wind that listeth, ringed with reefs from rim to rim,
Though we may not break its bars,
Yet by light of sun or stars
Our hearts are fain for England, and for her our eyes are dim.

Sweet Mother, ponder this, lest thy favour we should miss;
We, the loneliest and least of all thy peoples of the sea.
With bared heads and proud
We bless thy name aloud,
For gift of lowly service, as we guard the gate for thee.

Those lines, to me, have a fine ring about them. The words, In very will and deed, We will serve thee at thy need, were not a mere empty boast, as the splendid record of little Bermuda in the years of trouble from 1914 to 1918 shows, when almost every man of military age, whether white or coloured, voluntarily crossed the Atlantic to help the motherland in her need; so let us wish all success to the sun−kissed, cedar−clad little islands, and to their genial inhabitants.

CHAPTER VIII

The demerits of the West Indies classified The utter ruin of St. Pierre The Empress Josephine A transplanted brogue Vampires Lost in a virgin forest Dictator−Presidents Castro and Rosas The mentality of a South American The Liberator The Basques and their national game Love of English people for foreign words Yellow fever Life on an Argentine *estancia* How cattle are worked The lasso and the bolas Ostriches Venomous toads The youthful rough−rider His methods Fuel difficulties The vast plains The wonderful bird−life.

Any one desirous of seeing an exceedingly beautiful, and comparatively unknown, corner of the world, should take the fortnightly Inter−colonial steamer from Trinidad, and make the voyage up the islands. The Lesser Antilles are very lovely, but there is something rather melancholy about them, for they are obviously decaying in prosperity; the white planters are abandoning them, and as the coloured people take their place, externals all begin to assume a shabby, unkempt appearance. I am speaking of the conditions anterior to 1914; the great rise in the price of sugar since then may have resulted in a back−wash of prosperity affecting both the Windward and the Leeward Islands.

I should always myself classify the West India islands according to their liability to, or immunity from, the various local drawbacks. Thus Barbados, though within the hurricane zone, is outside the earthquake zone, and is free from poisonous snakes. Trinidad, only 200 miles away, is outside the hurricane area, but is most distinctly inside the earthquake zone, is prolific in venomous snakes and enjoys the further advantage of being the home of the blood−sucking vampire bat. Jamaica is liable to both hurricanes and earthquakes, but has no poisonous snakes. St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Martinique are really over−full of possibilities, for, in addition to a liability to earthquakes and hurricanes, they each possess an active volcano, and Martinique and St. Lucia are the habitat of the dreaded and deadly Fer−de−Lance snake.

The Administrator of St. Vincent had been good enough to ask me to dinner by telegram. The steamer reached St. Vincent after dark, and it was a curious experience landing on an unknown island in a tailcoat and white tie, driving for two miles, and then tumbling into a dinner−party of sixteen white people, not one of whom one had ever seen before, or was ever likely to meet again. It was as though one had been dropped by an aeroplane into an unknown land, and when the steamer sailed again before midnight, it was all as though it had never been. The orchids on that dinner−table were very remarkable, for orchid−growing was the Administrator's hobby. He grafted his orchids on to orange trees, and so obtained enormous growths. We measured some of the flower−sprays, the biggest being nine feet long. As they were brown and yellow Oncidiums, they were more curious than beautiful.

The appalling desolation of St. Pierre, in the French island of Martinique, cannot be imagined without having been seen. Of a very handsome city of 40,000 inhabitants there is absolutely nothing left except one gable of the cathedral. There is no trace of a town having ever existed here, for the poisonous manchineel tree has spread itself over the ruins, and it is difficult to realise that twenty years ago the pride of the French West Indies stood here. The rich merchants and planters of St. Pierre had all made their homes in the valley of the little river Roxelana. After the sides of Mont Pele had gaped apart and hurled their white−hot whirlwind of fire over the doomed town on that fatal May 8, 1902 a fiery whirlwind which calcined every human being and every building in the town in less than one minute molten lava poured into the valley of the Roxelana until it filled it up entirely, burying houses, gardens and plantations alike. There is no trace even of a valley now, and the stream makes its way underground to the sea. Napoleon the Great's first wife, Josephine de la Pagerie, was a native of Martinique and retained all her life the curious indolence of the Creole. Her gross extravagance and her love of luxury may also have been due to her Creole blood. Her first husband, of course, had been the Vicomte de Beauharnais, and her daughter, Hortense de Beauharnais, married Napoleon's brother, Louis, King of Holland. This complicated relationships, for Queen Hortense's son, Louis Napoleon, afterwards Napoleon III., was thus at the same time nephew and step−grandson of Napoleon I. M. Filon, in his most interesting study of the Empress Eugenie, points out that Napoleon III. showed his Creole blood in his constant chilliness. He chose as his private apartments at the Tuileries a set of small rooms on the ground floor, as these could be more easily heated up to the temperature he liked. According to M. Filon, Napoleon III. shortened his life by persisting in remaining so much in what he describes as those over−gilt, over−heated, air−tight little boxes.

The well−known greenhouse climbing plant lapageria, with its waxy white or crimson trumpets of flowers, owes its name to Josephine de la Pagerie, for on its first introduction into France it was called La Pageria in her honour, though with the English pronunciation of the name the connection is not at first obvious.

It is not so generally known that Madame de Maintenon, as Francoise d'Aubigne, spent all her girlhood in Martinique.

The coloured women of Martinique have apparently absorbed, thanks to their two hundred years' association with the French, something of that innate good taste which seems the birthright of most French people, and they show this in their very individual and becoming costumes. The Martinique negress is, as a rule, a handsome bronze−coloured creature, and she wears a full−skirted, flowing dress of flowered chintz or cretonne, with a *fichu* of some contrasting colour over her breast. She hides her woolly locks under an ample turban of two shades, one of which will exactly match her *fichu*, whilst the other will either correspond to or contrast with the colour of her chintz dress, thus producing what the French term une gamme de couleur, most pleasing to the eye, and with never a false note in it. Beside these comely, amply breasted bronze statues, the British West Indian negress, with her absurd travesty of European fashions, and her grotesque hats, cuts, I am bound to say, a very poor figure indeed.

The flourishing little island of Montserrat has one peculiarity. The negroes all speak with the strongest of Irish brogues. Cromwell deported to Montserrat many of the Malignants from the West of Ireland, who acquired negro slaves to cultivate their sugar and cotton. These negroes naturally learnt English in the fashion in which their masters spoke it. The white men have gone; the brogue remains. I was much amused on going ashore in the

Administrator's whaleboat, he being an old acquaintance from the Co. Tyrone, to hear his jet−black coxswain remark, 'Tis the lee side I will be going, sorr, the way your Honour will not be getting wet, for them back−seas are mighty throublesome. This in Montserrat was unexpected.

There is a curious uninhabited rock lying amongst the Virgin Islands. It is quite square and box−like in shape, and is known as The Dead Man's Chest. Before seeing it I had always thought that the eternal chant of the old pirate at the Admiral Benbow, in *Treasure Island*:

Fifteen men on the Dead Man's Chest,
Yo−ho−ho, and a bottle of rum!

referred literally to a seaman's chest, though reflection might have shown that one chest would afford rather scanty seating−ground for fifteen men.

At Nevis, the curious can see in Fig Tree Church the register attesting the marriage of Horatio Nelson, Captain of H.M.S. *Boreas* , to Frances Nisbet, widow, on March 11, 1789. William IV., at that time Duke of Clarence, was Nelson's best man on that occasion.

Nevis possesses powerful hot mineral springs, and a hundred years ago and more was the great health resort of white people in the West Indies. Here the planters endeavoured to get their torpid livers into working order again, and the local boast was that for every pearl necklace and pair of diamond shoe−buckles to be seen at the English Bath, there were three to be seen in Nevis. To add to its attractions it was asserted that the drinking, gambling, and duelling in Nevis left Bath completely in the shade.

Though one was constantly hearing of diminishing trade in the Lesser Antilles, certain questions kept suggesting themselves to me. For instance, in islands abounding in water power, why ship copra in bulk to England or the United States, instead of crushing it locally and exporting the oil, which would occupy one−tenth of the cargo−space? Why, in an island producing both oranges and sugar, ship them separately to Europe to be made into marmalade, instead of manufacturing it on the spot? The invariable answer to these queries was lack of capital ; no one seemed to guess that lack of enterprise might be a contributory cause as well.

I have alluded to the vampire bat of Trinidad. Six weeks before my arrival there, the Governor's aide−de−camp had most imprudently slept without lowering his mosquito curtains. He awoke to find himself drenched in blood, for a vampire bat had opened a vein, drunk his fill, and then flown off leaving the wound open. The doctor had to apply the actual cautery to stop the bleeding, and six weeks afterwards the unfortunate aide−de−camp was still as white as a sheet of paper from loss of blood. At Government House, Port−of−Spain, there is a very lofty entrance−hall, bright with electric light. The vampires constantly flew in here, to become helpless at once in the glare of light, when they could be easily killed with a stick. The vampire is a small, sooty−black bat with a perfectly diabolical little face. An ordinary mosquito net is quite sufficient protection against them, or, to persons who do not mind a light in their room, a lamp burning all night is an absolute safeguard against their attacks. Every stable in Trinidad has a lighted lamp burning all night in it, and those who can afford them, drop wire−gauze curtains over their horses' stalls as a protection against vampires.

The Trinidad negro being naturally an indolent creature, all the boatmen and cab−drivers in Port−of−Spain are Barbadians. As we know, the Badians have an inordinate opinion of themselves and of their island. Whilst I was in Trinidad, General Baden−Powell came there in the course of his world−tour inspection of Boy Scouts. On the day of General Baden−Powell's arrival, all the Badian boatmen and cab−drivers struck work, and the vampire−bitten aide−de−camp, who was in the town, met serried phalanxes of dark faces hurrying to the landing−stage. On asking a Badian what the excitement was about, the negro answered with infinite hauteur.

You ask me dat, sir? You not know dat our great countryman General *Badian*−Powell arrive to−day, so we all go welcome him.

Charles Kingsley in *At Last* goes into rhapsodies over the High Woods of Trinidad. I confess that I was terribly disappointed in them. They are too trim and well−kept; the Forestry department has done its work too well. There are broad green rides cut through them, reminiscent of covers in an English park, but certainly not suggestive of a virgin forest. One almost expects to hear the beaters' sticks rattling in them, and I did not think that they could compare with the splendid virgin forests of Brazil.

I was in Brazil just thirty years ago with Patrick Lyon, brother of the present Lord Strathmore. We were staying at Petropolis, and Lyon, fired by my accounts of these virgin forests, declared that he must see one for himself. He had heard that the forests extended to within three miles of Petropolis, and at once went to hire two horses for us to ride out there. There were no horses to be had in the place, but so determined was Lyon to see these untrodden wilds, that he insisted on our doing the three miles on foot, then and there. It was the height of the Brazilian summer, and the heat was something appalling. We struggled over three miles of a glaring white shadeless road, grilled alive by the sun, but always comforting ourselves by dwelling on the cool shades awaiting us at the end of our journey. At length we reached the forest, and wandered into a green twilight under the dense canopy of leaves, which formed an unbroken roof a hundred feet over our heads. With green twilight the obvious epithet should be cool ; that is exactly what it was not, for if the green canopy shut out the sun, it also shut out the air, and the heat in that natural leafy cathedral was absolutely overpowering. We wandered on and on, till I began to grow giddy and faint with the heat. I asked Lyon how he was feeling, and he owned that the heat had affected him too, so we sat down on a rock to recuperate.

It is a solemn thought, observed Lyon, after a long silence, that we are perhaps the first human beings to have set foot in this forest. We simply must pull ourselves together, for it might be months before any one passed here, and you know what that means. I assented gloomily, as I formed melancholy mental pictures of ourselves as two mature Babes−in−the−Wood, speculating whether, in the event of our demise in these untrodden wilds, any Brazilian birds, brilliant of plumage but kindly of heart, would cover us up with leaves. These great forest tracts were producing an awe−inspiring effect on us as we realised our precarious position, when we suddenly heard Toot! toot! toot! and to our inexpressible amazement we saw a tramcar approaching us through the trees. The car came within twenty feet of us, for the track had been quite hidden by some rising ground; we hailed it, and returned to Petropolis prosaically seated on the front bench of a tramcar. We afterwards found that the untrodden wilds of our virgin forest were traversed by a regular hourly service of tramcars; alas for vanished illusions!

There is a street in Port−of−Spain which used to be known as the Calle de los Presidentes, or Presidents' Street, for it was here that fugitive Presidents of Venezuela were wont to take refuge when the political atmosphere of that republic grew uncomfortable for them. Most of these gentlemen thoughtfully brought with them as much of the national till as they were able to lay their hands on, to comfort them in their exile. Spanish−American republics seem to produce Dictator−Presidents very freely. When I was in Venezuela in 1907 Cipriano Castro had grasped supreme power, and governed the country as an autocrat. Castro, who was an uneducated half−caste, ruled by corruption and terror; he repudiated all the national obligations, quarrelled with the United States and with every European Power, and disposed of his political opponents by the simple expedient of placing them against a wall with a file of soldiers with loaded rifles in front of them. For eight years this ignorant, bloodthirsty savage enjoyed absolute power, until he was forced in 1908 to flee to Europe. I do not know whether he followed the national custom by taking most of the exchequer with him. A typical sample of Castro's administrative powers was to be seen at La Guayra, the wretched, poverty−stricken seaport of Caracas. Dominating the squalid little place was a huge and imposing fort with heavy guns, over which the gaudy Venezuelan tricolour of yellow, blue, and red fluttered bravely. This fort was an elaborate sham, built of coloured plaster, and the guns were of painted wood only; but Castro thought that it was calculated to frighten the foreigner, and it possibly flattered the national vanity as well.

A most remarkable example of a Dictator−Tyrant was Juan Rosas, who, for seventeen years, from 1835 to 1852, ruled the Argentine Republic as an unchallenged despot. Rosas was born in 1793, and began life as a gaucho. He seized supreme power in 1835, and is credited with having put twenty−five thousand people to death. The Nero of South America" was ably backed−up by his seconds−in−command, Oribe and Urquiza, two most consummate scoundrels. Whether Rosas saw red, as others since his day have done, or whether it was the play on his own name which pleased him, I cannot say, but he had a perfect mania for the colour red. He dressed all his troops in scarlet ponchos, and ordered every male inhabitant of Buenos Ayres who wore a coat at all, to wear a scarlet waistcoat, whilst all ladies were bidden to wear a knot of scarlet ribbon and to carry a red fan. In the Dictator's own house at Palermo all the carpets and stuffs were scarlet. An elderly lady in Buenos Ayres, who remembered Rosas' dictatorship perfectly, showed me some of the scarlet fans, specially made in Spain for the Argentine market after Rosas had promulgated his edict. My friend described to me how Rosas placed several of his rough police at the doors of every church, and any lady who did not exhibit the obligatory red bow on her black dress (in Spanish−speaking countries the women always go to Mass in black), received a dab of pitch on her cheek, on to which the policeman clapped a rosette of red paper. She told it all so graphically that I could almost see the stream of frightened, black−clad women issuing from the church, whilst their husbands and lovers stood expectantly below (South American men rarely enter a church), every man−jack of them with a scarlet waistcoat, like a flock of swarthy robin redbreasts. I have seen some of these waistcoats; the young bloods wore scarlet silk, the older men red cloth. Rosas, like a medieaval monarch, had his court fool or jester, a dwarf known as Don Eusebio. Rosas dressed him in scarlet and gave him the rank of a general, with a scarlet−clad bodyguard, and woe betide any one who treated the Dictator's fool with scant respect. Rosas was undoubtedly as mad as Bedlam, but he was an abominably bloodthirsty madman who successfully exterminated all his opponents. The Dictator was accessible to every one at his house at Palermo, and the marvel is that he managed to escape assassination. His enormities became so intolerable that in 1852 the Brazilians and Uruguayans invaded the Argentine, and at the critical moment General Urquiza, Rosas' trusted second−in−command, betrayed him and went over to the enemy, so the Dictator's power was broken.

Rosas took refuge in the British Legation, and for some reason which I have never fathomed, he was shipped to England on H.M.S. *Locust* . He settled down at Swaythling near Southampton, where he died in 1877 after twenty−five years peaceful residence. He was a peculiarly bloodthirsty scoundrel.

Some of these Spanish−American dictators have been beneficent despots, such as Jose Francia, who, upon Paraguay proclaiming her independence in 1811, got elected President, and soon afterwards managed to secure his nomination as Dictator for life. He ruled Paraguay autocratically but well until his death in 1840, and the country prospered under him. Under the iron rule of Porfirio Diaz, from 1877 to 1911, Mexico enjoyed the only period of comparative calm that turbulent country has known in recent years, and made continued economic progress.

I think that a Latin−American's only abstract idea of government is a despotic one. They do not trouble much about the *substance* as long as they have the *shadow*, and provided that the national arms display prominently a Cap of Liberty, and mottoes of Libertad y Progreso are sufficiently flaunted about, he does not bother much about the absence of such trifles as trial by jury, or worry his head over the venality and tyranny of officials, the faking of elections, or the disregard of the President of the day for the constitutional limitations imposed upon his office. Do not the national arms and motto proclaim that his country stands in the van of Liberty and Progress, and what more could any one want? Some of the coats−of−arms of Spanish−American republics and states would give an official of the College of Arms an apoplectic fit, for colour is unblushingly displayed on colour and metal upon metal in defiance of every recognised rule of heraldry.

The first time that I was in Buenos Ayres a very pleasant young English civil engineer begged me to visit the family with whom he was boarding, assuring me that I should find the most amusing nest of cranks there. These people had come originally from the Pacific Coast, I cannot recall whether from Bolivia or Ecuador. As their revolutionary tendencies and their constant efforts to overthrow the Government had rendered their native country

too hot to hold them, they had drifted through Peru to Chili, and had wandered across the continent to Buenos Ayres, where the details connected with the running of a boarding−house had left them with but little time for putting their subversive tendencies into practice. Amongst their paying guests was an elderly man from the country of their origin, who twenty−five years earlier had so disapproved of the particular President elected to rule his native land, that he had shown his resentment by attempting to assassinate him. Being, however, but an indifferent shot with a revolver, he had merely wounded the President in the arm. He had somehow managed to escape from Bolivia, or Ecuador, and ultimately made his way to Buenos Ayres, where he was warmly welcomed in revolutionary circles; and his defective marksmanship being overlooked, the will was taken for the deed, and he was always alluded to as El Libertador, or The Liberator. I accompanied the young engineer to his boarding−house one evening, where I met the most extraordinary collection of people. Every one was talking at once, and all of them at the very top of their voices, so it was impossible to follow what was being said, but I have no doubt that their opinions were all sufficiently enlightened and advanced. The Liberator sat apart in an arm−chair, his patriarchal white beard streaming over his chest, and was treated with immense deference by every one present. At intervals during the evening glasses of Guinness' bottled stout were offered to the Liberator (and to no one else), this being a beverage of which most South Americans are inordinately fond. I was duly introduced to the Liberator, who received my advances with affability tempered with haughtiness. I flattered myself that I had made a very favourable impression on him, but I learnt afterwards that the old gentleman was deeply offended with me, for, on being introduced to him, I had assured him that it was a pleasure to meet so distinguished a *man* (un *hombre* tan distinguido), whereas I should have said so distinguished a *gentleman* (un *caballero* tan distinguido), a curious point for so ardent a democrat to boggle over.

No stranger in Buenos Ayres should omit a visit to the Plaza Euskara on a Sunday.

The Plaza Euskara is the great court where the Basques play their national game of pelota. Euskara is the term used by the Basques themselves for their mysterious language, a language with no affinity to any European tongue, and so difficult that it is popularly supposed that the Devil, after spending seven fruitless years in endeavouring to master it, gave up the attempt in despair. Pelota is the father of racquets and fives, and is an immemorially old game, going back, it is said, to the times of the Romans. Instead of using a racquet, it is played with a curved wicker basket strapped on to the right wrist. This basket is not unlike in shape to those wicker−work covers which in pre−taxi days were placed by London hotel porters over the wheels of hansom−cabs to protect ladies' dresses in getting in or out of them. When a back−handed stroke is necessary, the player grasps his right wrist with his left hand, using his wicker−encased right hand as a racquet. The court is nearly three times the length of a racquet−court, and is always open to the air. There is a back wall and a wall on the left−hand side; the other two sides are open and filled with spectators. The players are marvellously adroit, and get up balls which seem quite impossible to return; they are all professionals, for the game is so difficult that it must be learnt in early boyhood. It is scored like racquets up to fifteen points, one side invariably wearing blue berets and sashes, the other red. Large red and blue dials mark the points on the end wall as they are scored.

On Sundays and holidays the Plaza Euskara is a wonderful sight, with its thousands of spectators, all worked up to a pitch of intense excitement. The betting is tremendous, and fat wads of dollar bills are produced from the shabbiest of coats, whose owners one would hardly associate with such an amount of portable wealth. The three umpires sit together on a sort of rostrum, each one crowned with the national Basque beret. Points are being continually referred to their decision, amidst the shouts and yells of the excited partisans. Every time the three umpires stand up, remove their berets, and make low bows to each other; they then confer in whispers, and having reached a decision, they again stand up bareheaded, repeat their bows, and then announce their verdict to the public. Pelota is certainly a most interesting game to watch, owing to the uncanny skill of the players. Invariably in the course of the afternoon there is one match in which the little apprentices take part, either with their masters as partners, or entirely amongst themselves.

I have used the Spanish word pelota, but it merely means ball, just as the Russian word soviet means nothing in the world but council. English people who refuse to take the trouble to learn any foreign language,

seem to love using these words; they have all the glamour of the unfamiliar and unknown about them. Personally, it always seemed to me very foolish using the term Kaiser to describe the ex−Emperor William. Certainly any dictionary will tell one that Kaiser is the German equivalent for Emperor, but as we happen to speak English I fail to see why we should use the German term. Equally, Konig is the German for King, and yet I never recollect any one alluding to the Konig of Saxony. Some people seem to imagine that the title Kaiser" was a personal attribute of William of Hohenzollern; it was nothing of the sort. Should any one have been entitled to the term, it would have been the Hapsburg Emperor, the lineal descendant of the Heiliger Romischer Kaiser, and yet one used to read such ridiculous headings as Kaiser meets Austrian Emperor. What did the writers of this imagine that Franz−Josef was called by his subjects? The meaningless practice only originated in England with William II.'s accession; it was unheard of before. If English people had any idea that Rey was the Spanish for King, I am sure that on King Alfonso's next visit to England we should see flaring headlines announcing the Arrival of the Rey in London, and in the extraordinarily unlikely event of the Queen of Sweden ever wishing to pay a visit to this country, any one with a Swedish dictionary could really compose a brilliant headline, The Drottning drives despondently down Downing Street, and I confess that neither of them seem one whit more foolish than for English−speaking people to use the term Kaiser. The label may be a convenient one, but it is inaccurate, for there was not one Kaiser but two.

The familiar, when wrapped in all the majesty of a foreign tongue, can be very imposing. Some little time back a brother of mine laid out a new rock−garden at his house in the country. The next year a neighbour wrote saying that he would be very grateful should my brother be able to supply him with any of his superfluous rock−plants. My brother answered, regretting his inability to accede to this request, as, owing to the dry spring, his rock−garden had failed absolutely, in fact the only growth visible in it consisted of several hundred specimens of the showy yellow blooms of the Leo Elegans. Much impressed with this sonorous appellation, his correspondent begged for a few roots of Leo Elegans. My brother, in his reply, pointed out that the common dandelion was hardly a sufficient rarity to warrant its being transplanted.

I went out a second time to the Argentine Republic with Patrick Lyon, to whom I have already alluded, in order to place a young relative of his as premium−pupil on an English−owned ranche, or estancia, as it is locally called. We had an extremely unpleasant voyage out, for at Rio Janeiro we were unfortunate enough to get yellow fever into the ship, and we had five deaths on board. I myself was attacked by the fever, but in its very mildest form, and I was the only one to recover; all the other victims of the yellow scourge died, and I attribute my own escape to the heroic remedy administered to me with my own consent by the ship's doctor. Although Buenos Ayres is quite out of the yellow−fever zone, the disease has occasionally been brought there from Brazil, and to Argentines the words yellow fever are words of terror, for in the early seventies the population of Buenos Ayres was more than decimated by a fearful epidemic of the scourge. Our ship was at once ordered back to Brazil, and was not allowed to discharge one single ounce of her cargo, which must have entailed a very heavy financial loss on the R.M.S.P. Company. We unfortunate passengers had to undergo twenty−one days rigorous quarantine, during which we were allowed no communication whatever with the outside world, and were in addition mulcted of the exorbitant sum of 3 pounds a day for very indifferent board and accommodation.

Having reached the estancia and placed our pupil on it, we liked the place so well that we made arrangements to stay there for six weeks at least, thus getting a very good idea of its daily life. The province of Buenos Ayres is one great featureless, treeless, dead−flat plain, and being all an alluvial deposit, it contains neither a pebble in the soil nor a single spring of water. Water is found everywhere at a depth of six or seven feet, and this great level extends for a thousand miles. Where its undoubted fascination comes in is hard to say, yet I defy any one not to respond to it. It is probably due to the sense of limitless space, and to a feeling of immense freedom, the latter being physical and not political. The only indigenous tree is the ombu, and the ombu makes itself conspicuous by its rarity. Nature must have fashioned this tree with her tongue in cheek, for the wood is a mere pith, and a walking−stick can be driven right into the tree. Not only is the wood useless as timber, but it is equally valueless as fuel, for the pith rots before it can be dried. The leaves are poisonous, and in spite of its being mere pith, it is one of the slowest−growing trees known, so that, take it all round, the solitary indigenous tree of Buenos Ayres is

about the most useless arboreal product that could be imagined. The ombu is a handsome tree to the eye, not unlike an English walnut in its habit of growth, and it has the one merit of being a splendid shade−tree. During the last forty years, poplars, willows and eucalyptus have been lavishly planted round the estancia houses, so any green or dusky patch of trees breaking the bare expanse of dun−coloured plain is an unfailing sign of human habitation.

The manager and the premium−pupils on our estancia all breakfasted before six, and then went out to the horse−corral to catch their horses for the day's work. They were obliging enough to catch horses, too, for myself and Lyon, which we duly found tied up to a tree when we made our later appearance. Let us suppose an order for fifty bullocks to have come from Buenos Ayres. The manager with the three pupils and some ten mounted gauchos would ride off to the selected enclosure, and run his eye over the mob of cattle. Having selected six beasts, he would point them out to the gauchos, and then pick out two for himself and his younger brother. Shaking his reins, and calling out *Ico! Ico!* to his horse, he would ride up to the doomed beast, and endeavour to cut him out from the herd. The horse, who understood and enjoyed the game as well as the man on his back, once he had distinguished the bullock they were riding down, needed no stimulant of whip, but would follow him of his own accord, twisting and doubling like a retriever after a wounded hare, or a terrier after a rat. Once the animal was cut out of the herd, the manager would uncoil his lasso, one end of which was made fast to the cinch−ring of his girths, and out flew the looped coil of rope with unerring straightness, catching the bullock round the horns. The intelligent horse, having played the game many times before, steadied himself for the shock which experience had taught him to expect when he would feel the whole weight of the galloping bullock suddenly arrested in his rush for freedom tugging at his cinch−ring. The gauchos had also secured their beasts in the same way, and the process was continued until the fifty bullocks had been securely corralled, blissfully unconscious that this was the first stage of their ultimate transformation into roast beef, or *filets de boeuf a la Bordelaise*.

Though Lyon and I never attempted to use the lasso, we often joined in riding a beast down, and the horses, after they had once identified the particular beast they were to follow, turned and twisted with such unexpected suddenness that they nearly shot us both out of the saddle a dozen times. None of the pupils were yet able to use the lasso with certainty, though they spent hours in practising at a row of bullocks' skulls in the corral. In time a foreigner can learn to throw the lasso with all the skill of a born Argentine, but the use of the bolas is an art that must be acquired in childhood. I used to see some of the gauchos' children, little fellows of five or six, practising on the fowls with miniature toy bolas made of string, and they usually hit their mark. The bolas consist of pieces of raw hide shaped like the letter Y; at the extremities are two heavy lead balls, whilst at the base of the Y is a wooden ball which is held in the hand. The operator whirls the bolas round his head, and sends them flying at the objective with unfailing certainty, and the animal emboladoed drops as though shot through the head. I have seen these used on outside camps, but on a well−managed estancia, such as Espartillar, the use of the bolas is strictly prohibited, since it tends to break the animal's leg. The only time I ever saw them employed there, was against a peculiarly aggressive male ostrich, who attacked all intruders into his particular domain with the utmost ferocity. The bird fell like a dead thing, and he assumed a very chastened demeanour after this lesson. The South American ostrich, the Rhea, though smaller and less dangerous than his big African cousin, can be most pugnacious when he is rearing a family of young chicks. I advisedly say he, for the hen ostrich, once she has hatched her eggs, considers all her domestic obligations fulfilled, and disappears to have a good gossip with her lady friends, leaving to her husband the task of attending to the young brood. The male bird is really dangerous at this time, for his forward kick is terrifically powerful. The ostrich can run faster than any horse, but it is quite easy to circumvent any charging bird. All that is necessary is to turn one's horse quickly at right angles; the ostrich has such way on him that he is unable to pull up, and goes tearing on a hundred yards beyond his objective before he can change his direction. This manoeuvre repeated two or three times leaves the bird discomfited; as they would say in Ireland, You have him beat. I confess that I have never seen an ostrich bury his head in the sand to blind himself to any impending danger, as he is traditionally supposed to do; I fancy that this is a libel on a fairly sagacious bird, and that in reality the practice is entirely confined to politicians.

The Argentine Republic is peculiar in possessing a venomous toad, equipped like a snake with regular poison−glands and fangs. He is known in the vernacular as escuerzo, and is rather a handsome creature, wearing a green black−striped coat. I am told by learned people that he is not a true toad, that his proper name is *Ceratophrys ornata*, and that he is a cannibal, feeding on harmless frogs and toads which he kills with his poison−fangs. There was a plentiful supply of these creatures at Espartillar, and the pupils, when they found an escuerzo, loved to tease him with a stick. He is probably the worse−tempered and most irritable batrachian known, and when prodded with a stick would puff himself out, and work himself into a hideous passion. Every one went about high−booted, and possibly his fangs were not powerful enough to penetrate a boot, but, anyhow, he never made the attempt; he tried to snap at the hands instead, and as he could only jump up a foot or so, he continued making a series of abortive little leaps, each futile attempt at reaching his aggressor's hands adding to the creature's insane rage. When the escuerzo was beside himself with fury, the pupil would dip his stick into the oily residue of his pipe, and hold it out to the toad, who would fasten on to it like a mad creature, only to die in a few seconds of the nicotine.

The only other venomous reptile was the *Vibora de la Cruz*, the Viper with the Cross, much dreaded by the gauchos.

It is an interesting sight seeing wild young horses being broken−in, and receiving their first instruction in the service of man. The rough−rider at Espartillar was a younger brother of the manager's, a short, sturdy, round−faced, grinning Cornish lad of eighteen, a youth of large appetite, but of few words, universally known as The Joven, which merely means the lad. Joven, by the way, is pronounced Hoven, with a slight guttural sound before the H. The Joven, having met with no serious accidents during the two years he had officiated as roughrider, had kept his nerve, and was still young enough to enjoy his hazardous duties most thoroughly.

He always had a large gallery of spectators, for every one on the estancia who could manage it trooped to the corral to criticise and to pass judgment. The sun−browned Joven, who preferred riding without stirrups, would appear, stripped to his drawers and vest, shod with canvas *alpargates*, with a *revenque*, or short raw−hide whip, in his hand. A young horse, who had hitherto run wild, would be let in and lassoed, with a second lasso thrown over his hind legs. Before tightening the lassoes the men threw a *recado*, or soft leather saddle on him, the Joven tugging at the string−girths until the unfortunate grass−fed animal looked like a wasp. The lassoes were tautened, and the youngster thrown over on his side. The Joven, grinning cheerfully, then forced a thong of raw hide into his unwilling pupil's mouth, whilst the young horse, half−mad with terror, rolled his eyes impotently. The Joven, standing astride over the fallen animal, half−dancing on his toes in his canvas shoes, would shout to the men to slacken the heel− rope, and then to let go the head−rope. As the terrified animal struggled to his feet, the Joven slipped nimbly on to the *recado*. Then came a brief pause, as the horse puzzled over the unaccustomed weight on his back, and those abominable girths that were cutting him in two, till, with his head between his knees, and his back arched like a bow, up he went vertically into the air, landing on all four feet. That irksome weight was still there, and he had received a sharp cut with some unknown instrument, but it might be worth while trying it again. So up he went a second time, the Joven grinning from ear to ear, but sitting like a rock, then, as it was as well to teach a young horse that bucking entailed punishment, the *revenque* descended smartly two or three times, and a *revenque* hurts. The puzzled youngster did not like it, and thought that he would try rolling for a change. The Joven slipped off with the dexterity of an acrobat, and dancing about on his toes, chose his moment, and was again on the horse's back as he rose. Then came a real contest and trial of skill between the four−legged and two−legged youngsters, as the horse began kicking furiously, and then reared, but do what he would that tiresome weight was still on his back, and there was an unaccustomed pressure on his sides. The Joven, his sun−baked round face wreathed in grins, as though he were having the time of his life, was now using his *revenque* in earnest, and the young horse decided that he would prefer to try a gallop at full speed. Off he went like an arrow from a bow, the Joven dexterously guiding him through the entrance to the corral, partly with the thong of raw hide, in part with light strokes of the *revenque* on the side of the head, and they disappeared in a dense cloud of dust over the limitless camp. A quarter of an hour later they reappeared, the horse cantering quietly, and the

boy, still grinning like a Cheshire cat, sitting quite loosely, with his legs dangling, as though he were in an arm−chair. The Joven slid to the ground, and commenced talking to the horse in Spanish, as he stroked his head. *Pingo! Pingo!* he cried, as he stroked him, the word *Pingo* being supposed in the Argentine, for some unknown reason, to exercise a magically soothing influence over a horse, and then, removing the raw−hide thong from the youngster's mouth, he unsaddled him and turned him loose with a resounding smack on his quarters, leaving him to meditate on the awful things that may befall a young horse when he attempts to misbehave. The light−hearted Joven, dripping with perspiration, wiped the sweat from his eyes, and, with unabated cheerfulness, took stock of the second animal he was to school, for he was to give three lessons that morning. When they were over, the youth's own mother would not have known him, so caked with dust and perspiration was he. He made his way to the swimming−bath, still cheerful and smiling, determined not to miss the midday meal by one second, for, like all the heroines of Mr. E. F. Benson's novels, the eighteen−year−old Joven was afflicted with a perpetual voracious hunger. When I complimented him at dinner on his very skilful performance, the Joven, being in a loquacious mood, said, after a pause for thought, Oh, yes, beamed with friendliness, and promptly devoured another plateful of beef. I asked him whether he never regretted the quiet of his father's Cornish farm, in view of the strenuous exertions his duties as rough−rider at Espartillar imposed on him. The Joven knocked out his pipe, lit another, thought for five minutes, and then said, No, it's fun, displaying every tooth in his head as he did so as a proof that his conversational brevity was due not to a surly disposition, but to the limitations of his vocabulary.

The pupils at Espartillar were exceedingly well treated. The house was most comfortably furnished, and contained a full−sized English billiard−table, two pianos, a plentiful supply of books, and a barrel−organ, for this was many years before the birth of the gramophone. It is the singular custom on most estancias to kill beef for six months of the year, and mutton for the remaining six, which entails a certain monotony of diet. We had fallen in for the beef−eating half−year, but the French wife of the English estancia−carpenter officiated as cook, and she had all the culinary genius of her countrywomen. Above all she avoided those twin abominations Ajo and Aji, or garlic and green chilli, which Argentines cram into every dish, thus making them hideously unpalatable to Northern Europeans.

In an absolutely treeless land, without any coal measures, fuel is one of the greatest difficulties of camp life. In my time, in the city of Buenos Ayres, all the coal came from England, and cost, delivered, 5 pounds a ton. Its cost in the country, hauled for perhaps twenty miles over the roadless camp, would be prohibitive, and there was no wood to be had. For this reason, on every estancia there were some ten acres planted with peach trees. It seems horribly wasteful to cut down peach trees for fuel, but they grow very rapidly, burn admirably, and whilst they are standing the owner gets an unlimited supply of peaches for pickling and preserving. The soil of the Argentine suits peaches, and both sorts, the pink−fleshed European free−stone and the American yellow−fleshed cling−stone, do splendidly. In Spanish, the former are called *melocotones*, the latter *duraznos*. At Espartillar there were quite twenty acres of peach trees, and when Lyon and I wished to be of use, the manager frequently asked us to hitch−up the wagon, and bring him in a few sackfuls of peaches for preserving.

Espartillar boasted a great neglected wilderness of a garden, as untidy and unkempt as a fashionable pianist's hair, but growing the most wonderful collection of fruit. Here pears, peaches, lemons, guavas, and strawberries flourished equally well in the accommodating Argentine climate, and the pears of South America, the famous *peras de agua*, must be tasted before their excellence can be imagined. The garden was traversed by an avenue of fine eucalyptus trees, amongst whose dusky foliage little screaming green parrakeets darted in and out all day long, like flashes of vivid emerald light. The garden was also, unfortunately, the favourite recreation−ground of a family of lively skunks, and the skunk is an animal whose terrific offensive powers necessitate extreme caution in approaching him. Should a young dog unwarily attempt to tackle a skunk, he had to be rigorously quarantined for a fortnight, for otherwise the inexpressibly sickening odour was unendurable.

Beyond the garden enclosure, the dun−coloured expanse of treeless featureless camp stretched its endless flat levels to the horizon, the wooden posts supporting the wire fences being the only sign that man had ever invaded

these vast solitudes. Our minds are so constituted that we set bounds to everything, for everything to which we are accustomed has limits; one had a perpetual feeling that were one only to ride over the camp long enough, towns and human habitations must be reached somewhere, A glance at the map showed that this was not so. Due south one could have ridden hundreds of miles with no variations whatever to mark the distances achieved. This endless camp had apparently no beginning and no end; it was as though one had suddenly come face to face with Eternity.

All my experiences, however, are thirty years old. I believe that now, within a radius of fifty miles from Buenos Ayres, most of the camp has been broken up and ploughed. Growing wheat now covers the vast khaki−coloured plains I recollect dotted with roving herds of cattle. The picturesque and half−savage Gaucho, who lived entirely on meat, and would have scorned to have walked even a hundred yards on foot, has been replaced by the Italian agricultural labourer, who lives on *polenta* and macaroni, and will cheerfully trudge any distance to his work. The great solitudes have gone, for with tillage there must be roads now, and villages, and together with the solitudes the wonderful teeming bird−life must have vanished, too.

I prefer to recollect the Espartillar I knew, a place of unending spaces and glorious sunshine, with air almost as intoxicating as wine, where innumerable spurred plovers screamed raucously all day long, where the little ground−owls blinked unceasingly at the edge of their burrows; where bronze−green ibises flashed through the sunlight, and rose−coloured spoonbills trailed in pink streaks across the blue sky, as they flew in single file from one *laguna* to another. That marvellous bird−life was worth travelling seven thousand miles to see; wheatfields can be seen anywhere.

CHAPTER IX

Difficulties of an Argentine railway engineer Why Argentina has the Irish gauge A sudden contrast A more violent contrast Names and their obligations Capetown The thoroughness of the Dutch pioneers A dry and thirsty land The beautiful Dutch Colonial houses The Huguenot refugees The Rhodes Fruit Farms Surf−riding Groote Schuur General Botha The Rhodes Memorial The episode of the Sick Boy A visit from Father Neptune What pluck will do.

A railway engineer in the Argentine Republic is confronted with peculiar difficulties. In the first place, in a treeless country there is obviously no wood for sleepers. A thousand miles up the giant Parana there are vast tracts of forest, but either the wood is unsuited for railway−sleepers, or the means of transport are lacking, so the engineer is forced to use iron pot−sleepers for supporting his rails. These again require abundant ballast, and there is no ballast in a country devoid of stone and with a soil innocent of the smallest pebble. The engineer can only use burnt clay to ballast his road, and as a result the dust on an Argentine railway defies description. In my time, when carriages of the English type were in use, the atmosphere after an hour's run was as thick as a dense London November fog, and after five or six hours' travelling the passengers alighted with faces as black as niggers'. Whilst waiting for a train, its approach would be announced by a vast pillar of dust appearing in the distance. This pillar of dust seemed almost to reach the sky, and any passengers of Hebraic origin must really have imagined themselves back in the Sinai peninsula, and must have wondered why the dusky pillar was approaching them instead of leading them on.

The difficulties connected with the working of railways did not end here. Most people know that a swarm of locusts can stop a train, for the bodies of these pests are full of grease, and after the engine−wheels have crushed countless thousands of locusts, the wheels become so coated with oil that they merely revolve, and refuse to grip the rails. Let the driver open his sand−box never so widely, the wheels cannot bite, and so the train comes to a standstill. Oddly enough, a bird, too, causes a great deal of trouble. The oven−bird makes a large domed nest of clay, the size of a cocoa−nut. In that treeless land the oven−birds look on telegraph−posts as specially provided by a benign Providence to afford them eligible nesting−sites, and from some perversity of instinct, or perhaps attracted by the gleam of the white earthenware, they invariably select one of the porcelain insulators as the site of

their future home, and proceed to coat it laboriously with clay, thus effectually destroying the insulation. Now the working of a single−line is entirely dependent on the telegraph, and the oven−birds, with their misplaced zeal, were continually interrupting telegraphic communication, so on the Great Southern Railway of Buenos Ayres every single telegraph−post was surmounted with a wooden box, mutely proclaiming itself the most desirable building−site that heart of bird could wish for, and silently offering whatever equivalents to a gravel soil and a southern aspect could suggest themselves to the avian intelligence. In spite of this these misguided fowls retained their affection for the insulators, and the Great Southern had during the nesting season to employ a gang of men to tear the nests down.

Unlike the majority of railways, both in North and South America, which have adopted the 4 ft. 8−1/2 ins. gauge, the standard gauge of the Argentine Republic is the Irish one of 5 ft. 3 ins., and the reason of this is rather singular. In 1855, during the Crimean War, a short railway was laid down from Balaclava to the British lines. The firm of contractors who built this railway for the British Government had constructed some three years previously a small railway in Ireland, for which they had never been paid. They accordingly seized the engines and rolling−stock, which, owing to the difference in gauge, were useless in England. It occurred to the contractors that they might utilise this material by building the Crimean Railway to the Irish gauge of 5 ft. 3 ins., and they accordingly proceeded to do so. Two years after the Crimean War the same firm secured the contract for building the first railway in the Argentine, a short line, twenty−one miles long, from Buenos Ayres to the River Tigre. As they considered that their Crimean rolling−stock was still in good order, they obtained permission to build the Tigre Railway to the Irish gauge, and these much−travelled coaches and engines which had started their railway career in Ireland, were shipped from the Crimea to the Plate, and eventually found themselves, to their vast surprise, rolling between Buenos Ayres and Tigre. The first time that I was in Buenos Ayres, in 1883, two of the original Crimean engines were still running on this little railway, the *Balaclava* and the *Eupatoria*, the latter re−christened *Presidente Mitre*. The newer railways followed the lead of the pioneer, and so it comes about that Ireland and the Argentine Republic have the same standard gauge.

The vast solitudes of Espartillar were within eight hours of Buenos Ayres, three by wagon and five by rail, so it was possible to wander out one night to the star−lit camp, where the silence was only broken by the screech of an occasional night−bird, or the beat of the wings of myriads of flighting ducks, without the slightest trace of man or his works perceptible in the great, grey, still, unpeopled world, and to be sitting the next night in evening clothes in a garish, over−gilt, over−decorated restaurant, humming with the clatter of plates and the chatter of high−pitched Argentine voices, as a noisy string−band played selections from the latest Paris operette. It was difficult to realise that this ostentatiously modern town, with its meretricious glitter, and its population of pale−faced town−breds, was only a hundred miles from the place where, amongst brown, sunburnt folk, we had been living a primitive life tempered by quiet transplanted English comfort.

To me there is always something rather attractive in sudden contrasts in surroundings. My memory goes back forty years to Russia, when I was on a bear−shooting expedition with Sir Robert Kennedy. Kennedy had killed two bears, and we were making our way back to Petrograd that night, for next evening there was to be one of the famous *Bals des Palmiers* at the Winter Palace which we neither of us wished to miss. So it came about that one evening we were sitting in a two−roomed peasant's house, thigh−booted and flannel−shirted, in the roughest of clothes, devouring sustenance for our night's sledge journey out of pieces of newspaper by the light of a little smoky oil−lamp, whilst around us stood half the village, whispering endless comments, and gaping open−eyed on those mysterious strangers from the unknown world outside Russia. The room was lined with rough unpainted boards nailed over the log walls; one quarter of it was occupied by a huge stove, on the top of which the children were sleeping; it was very dirty, and the heat in combination with the fetid atmosphere was almost unendurable. A dimly lit picture, all in sombre browns, relieved by the scarlet shirts of the men, and the gaudy printed calicoes of the women, just visible in the uncertain light of the flickering lamp, and of the red glow from the stove. Then came an all−night drive in sledges through the interminable forest of pines, the piercing cold lashing our faces like a whip, and the stars blazing in the great expanse of dull−polished steel above us with that hard diamond−like radiance they only assume when the thermometer is down below zero.

Twenty−four hours later we were both in the vast halls of the Winter Palace in full uniform, as bedizened with gold as a *nouveau riche's* drawing−room. Though the world outside may have been frost−bound, Winter's domain stopped at the threshold of the Palace, for once inside, banks of growing hyacinths and tulips bloomed bravely, and the big palms, from which the balls derived their name, stood aligned down the great halls, as though they were in their native South Sea Isles, with a supper−table for twelve persons arranged under each of them. Those Bals des Palmiers were really like a scene from the Arabian Nights, what with the varied uniforms of the men, the impressive Russian Court dresses of the women, the jewels, the lights, and the masses of flowers. The immense scale of everything in the Winter Palace added to the effect, and the innumerable rooms, some of them of gigantic size, rather gained in dignity by being sparsely tenanted, for only 1,500 people were asked to the Palmiers. There was nothing like it anywhere else in Europe, and no one now living will ever look on so brilliant a scene, set in so vast a *cadre*. There was really a marked contrast between the two consecutive evenings Kennedy and I had spent together.

One of the ladies of the British Embassy in Petrograd inquired of a Court official what the cost of a Bal des Palmiers amounted to. The chamberlain replied that for 1,500 people the cost would be about 9,000 pounds, working out at 6 pounds per head. This included a special train all the way from Nice with growing and cut flowers, and another special train from the Crimea with fruit. A very expensive item was the carriage by road from Tsarskoe Selo of one hundred specially grown large palm trees in specially constructed frost−proof vans; there was also the heavy cost of the supper and wine, which for the Bals des Palmiers was provided on a far more sumptuous scale than at the ordinary Court entertainments and balls.

Ichabod! Ichabod!

Certain names carry their own responsibilities; for instance, when a town proudly proclaimed itself the City of Good Airs it should live up to its title. The Buenos Ayres of the early eighties was a notoriously insanitary place without any system of proper drainage. Some of the Good Airs fairly knocked one down when one encountered them. That has all now been rectified; Buenos Ayres is at present admirably drained, and is one of the healthiest cities of South America.

Certain names, again, have their drawbacks. Helen Lady Dufferin, the mother of my old Chief and godfather, was the grand−daughter of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and in common with her two sisters, the Duchess of Somerset and Mrs. Norton, she had inherited her full share of the Sheridan wit. As I have pointed out elsewhere, people of a certain class in London maintained in those days far closer relations with persons of a corresponding class in Paris than is the custom now. Lady Dufferin had innumerable friends in Paris, and amongst the oldest of these friends was Comte Joseph de Noailles. Whenever the Comte de Noailles came to London, Lady Dufferin was the first person he went to see. When they were both in their old age, the Comte de Noailles arrived in London, and, as usual, went to dine with his friend of many years. As it was a warm evening in July, he walked to Lady Dufferin's house from his hotel, carrying his overcoat on his arm. On leaving the house, the old gentleman forgot his cloak, and Lady Dufferin received a note the next morning asking her to be good enough to send back the cloak by the bearer. The note was signed Joseph de Noailles. Lady Dufferin returned the cloak with this message, Monsieur, lorsqu' on a le malheur de s'appeler Joseph, on ne laisse pas son manteau chez une dame.

Joseph naturally suggests Egypt, and Egypt recalls Africa, and on the whole African continent there is surely no more delectable spot than the Cape peninsula. Capetown with its suburbs is dominated everywhere by the gigantic flat−topped rock of Table Mountain. Go where you will amongst the most splendid woodland, coast and mountain scenery in the world, that ever−changing rampart of rock is still the central feature. Jan Van Riebeck, the original Dutch pioneer of 1652, must have yielded to the irresistible claims of Table Bay as a harbour with a very bad grace, before founding his new settlement on the slopes of Table Mountain. Every racial and inherited instinct in him must have positively itched to select in preference some nice low swampy site, for choice in the Cape Flats, if not actually below sea−level, at all events at sea−level, where substantial brick dams could be erected against the encroaching waters, where he could construct an elaborate system of canals, and where windmills would have to

pump day and night to prevent the place becoming submerged. The Dutch, both in Java and in Demerara, had yielded to this misplaced affection for a sea−level site, and had constructed Batavia and Georgetown strictly according to their racial ideals, with a prodigal abundance of canals. Though this doubtless gave the settlers a home−like feeling, the canal−intersected town of Batavia is so unhealthy under a broiling tropical sun that it has been virtually abandoned as a place of residence.

Capetown has none of the raw, unfinished aspect so many Colonial towns wear, but has a solid, grave dignity of its own, and its suburbs are unquestionably charming. The settled, permanent look of the town is perhaps due to the fact that there is not a single wooden house or fence in Capetown, everything is of substantial brick, stone and iron. The Dutch were admirable town−planners; since the country has been in British hands our national haphazard carelessness has asserted itself, and the city has been extended without any apparent design whatever. I was certainly not prepared for the magnificent groves of oaks which are such a feature of Capetown and its vicinity. These oaks, far larger than any to which we are accustomed, bear witness to the painstaking thoroughness of the Dutch. Before an oak capable of withstanding the arid climate and burning sun of South Africa could be produced, it had to be crossed and re−crossed many times. The existing stately tree is the fruit of this patient labour; it grows at twice the pace of our oaks, and attains far larger dimensions; it is quite useless as a timber tree, but produces enormous acorns which, in windy weather, descend in showers from the trees and batter the corrugated iron roofs of the houses with a noise like an air−raid.

The Union of South Africa is unfortunate in having the great range of the Drakensberg running parallel to the coastline for hundreds of miles, for until the Zambesi is reached there are practically no navigable rivers at all. This barrier mountain range, and the recklessness of the early settlers in cutting down the forests, are together responsible for the aridity of South Africa. She is, indeed, as Ezekiel said of old, planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty ground. The Cape peninsula is comparatively well−watered; between the giant rocky buttresses of Table Mountain little clear streams gush down, and there are several brooks, proudly termed rivers locally, quite visible to the naked eye. Everything in this world is relative. I remember at Alkmaar in North Holland ascending an artificial mound perhaps seventy feet high, planted with trees. In the dead−flat expanse of the Low Countries, this hillock is looked on by the natives of Alkmaar much as Mont Blanc is regarded by the inhabitants of Geneva, with feelings of profound veneration; so in South Africa the tiniest brooklet is the source of immense pride to the dwellers on its banks, and rightly so, for it is the very life−blood of the district, and literally Isaiah's rivers of water in a dry place. I always carefully avoided any allusion to the sixteen different burns running through the park at Baron's Court, for it might have looked like arrogance to boast of this super−abundance of water in my old home, where, between ourselves, a wholly dry day was rather a notable rarity. Where the aridity is most noticeable is in the great oak and fir woods at Groote Schuur, the lordly pleasure−house which Cecil Rhodes built for himself at Rondebosch, under the slopes of the Devil's Peak. Here, under the trees, the ground is absolutely bare; not even the faintest sign of grass, not the smallest scrap of vegetation. Rondebosch Parish Church might have been lifted bodily from England; it is an exceedingly handsome building of a very familiar type, yet in the churchyard there was not one blade of green; nothing but naked earth between the graves. Fortunately the Australian myrtle has been introduced, a shrub that can apparently dispense with moisture, so thanks to it every garden in the Capetown suburbs is surrounded by a hedge of vivid perennial green. These suburbs have a wonderfully home−like look, embowered as they are in oak trees, and the buildings are all of the solid familiar type; even the very railway stations, except for their nameboards, might be at Wandsworth Common, Balham, or Barnes, instead of at Rosebank, Rondebosch, and Claremont, though Balham and Barnes are not fortunate enough to have the purple ramparts of Table Mountain or the Devil's Peak towering over them, whilst, on the other hand, they fortunately escape the all−pervading South African dust.

I like the name The Tavern of the Ocean, formerly given to Capetown; and what a welcome break it must have afforded in the wearisome voyage from Europe to the Dutch East Indies, or to India proper! The Netherlands Dutch seem only to have regarded it as a half−way house, a sort of unimportant railway halt between Europe and the East, where the necessary fresh water and green vegetables could be supplied to passing vessels. It was not until Simon Van der Stel was appointed Governor in 1678 that any idea of developing the Cape as a colony

was ever entertained. Van der Stel has left his impress deep on the country. Though the vine had been already introduced by Van Riebeck, it is to Van der Stel that the special features of Cape scenery are due, for we owe to him the splendid groves of oak of to−day, and he originated the Dutch Colonial type of building, of which so many fine specimens still remain. These old Dutch houses are a constant puzzle to me. In most new countries the original white settlers content themselves with the most primitive kind of dwelling, for where there is so much work to be done the ornamental yields place to the necessary; but here, at the very extremity of the African continent, the Dutch pioneers created for themselves elaborate houses with admirable architectural details, houses recalling in some ways the *chateaux* of the Low Countries. Where did they get the architects to design these buildings? Where did they find the trained craftsmen to execute the architects' designs? Why did the settlers, struggling with the difficulties of an untamed wilderness, require such large and ornate dwellings? I have never heard any satisfactory answers to these questions. Groot Constantia, originally the home of Simon Van der Stel, now the government wine−farm, and Morgenster, the home of Mrs. Van der Byl, would be beautiful buildings anywhere, but considering that they were both erected in the seventeenth century, in a land just emerging from barbarism seven thousand miles away from Europe, a land, too, where trained workmen must have been impossible to find, the very fact of their ever having come into existence at all leaves me in bewilderment.

These Colonial houses, most admirably adapted to a warm climate, correspond to nothing in Holland, or even in Java. They are nearly all built in the shape of an H, either standing upright or lying on its side, the connecting bar of the H being occupied by the dining−room. They all stand on stoeps or raised terraces; they are always one−storied and thatched, and owe much of their effect to their gables, their many−paned, teak−framed windows, and their solid teak outside shutters. Their white−washed, gabled fronts are ornamented with pilasters and decorative plaster−work, and these dignified, perfectly proportioned buildings seem in absolute harmony with their surroundings. Still I cannot understand how they got erected, or why the original Dutch pioneers chose to house themselves in such lordly fashion. At Groot Constantia, which still retains its original furniture, the rooms are paved with black and white marble, and contain a wealth of great cabinets of the familiar Dutch type, of ebony mounted with silver, of stinkwood and brass, of oak and steel; one might be gazing at a Dutch interior by Jan Van de Meer, or by Peter de Hoogh, instead of at a room looking on to the Indian Ocean, and only eight miles distant from the Cape of Good Hope. How did these elaborate works of art come there? The local legend is that they were copied by slave labour from imported Dutch models, but I cannot believe that untrained Hottentots can ever have developed the craftsmanship and skill necessary to produce these fine pieces of furniture. I think it far more likely to be due to the influx of French Huguenot refugees in 1689, the Edict of Nantes having been revoked in 1685, the same year in which Simon Van der Stel began to build Groot Constantia. Wherever these French Huguenots settled they brought civilisation in their train, and proved a blessing to the country of their adoption. In England they taught us silk−weaving and clock−making, starting the one in Spitalfields, the other in Clerkenwell. In Dublin, where a strong colony of them settled, they introduced the making of tabinet, or Irish poplin, and I am told that the much−sought−after Irish silver was almost entirely the work of French Huguenot refugees. Here, at the far−off Cape, the Huguenots settled in the valleys of the Drakenstein, of the Hottentot's Holland, and at French Hoek; and they made the wilderness blossom, and transformed its barren spaces into smiling wheatfields and oak−shaded vineyards. They incidentally introduced the dialect of Dutch known as The Taal, for when the speaking of Dutch was made compulsory for them, they evolved a simplified form of the language more adapted to their French tongues. I suspect, too, that the artistic impulse which produced the dignified Colonial houses, and built so beautiful a town as Stellenbosch (a name with most painful associations for many military officers whose memories go back twenty years) must have come from the French. Stellenbosch, with its two−hundred−year−old houses, their fronts rich with elaborate plaster scroll−work, all its streets shaded with avenues of giant oaks and watered by two clear streams, is such an inexplicable town to find in a new country, for it might have hundreds of years of tradition behind it! Wherever they may have got it from, the artistic instinct of the old Cape Dutch is undeniable, for a hundred years after Van der Stel's time they imported the French architect Thibault and the Dutch sculptor Anton Anreith. To Anreith is due the splendid sculptured pediment over the Constantia wine−house illustrating the story of Ganymede, and all Thibault's buildings have great distinction; but still, being where they are, they are a perpetual surprise, for in a new country one does not expect such a high level of artistic achievement.

Many of the fine old Colonial homesteads are grouped together in what are now the Rhodes Fruit Farms in the Drakenstein. So attractive are they that I do not wonder that a very near relative of mine has bought one of them for his son; and I envy my great−nephew who will one day sit under the shadow of his own vines and fig trees at Lormarins, amongst groves of peaches, apricots and plums. I cherish pleasant recollections of a visit to Boschendaal, also in the Fruit Farm district, a delightful old house, standing over a jungle of a garden where a brook babbles through thickets of orange and lemon trees, and amongst great tangles of bougainvillaa and pink oleanders, and in whose shady dining−hall I was hospitably entertained by a Dutch farmer on an omelette of ostrich's egg (one egg is enough for six people), on most−bolajie (bread made with sweet new wine instead of with water), and other local delicacies, including mabos, or alternate slices of dry salted peaches and dry sweetened apricots. This condiment is cynically known as married life. In the *voorhuis* of Boschendaal lay nineteen fine leopard skins, and Mr. Louw, the courtly mannered old farmer, who would be described by his countrymen as an oprechter Burger, explained to me in slow and laborious English that he had killed every one of these leopards with his own hand within one mile of his own house.

A most attractive land were it not for the aridity. Should I settle there I should be forever regretfully recalling the lush greenery of English meadows in June, or of English woods in spring−time.

Just conceive of Van der Stel's astonishment when he first reached the Cape! He must have been used to a small, dead−flat, water−logged land, with odoriferous canals at every turn, and thousands of windmills pumping day and night for all they were worth to keep the country afloat at all; after a voyage of seven thousand miles he found himself in a land of mighty mountain ranges, of vast, illimitable distances, parched by a fierce sun, and nearly waterless. It must have needed immense courage to start the founding of a New Holland in such (to him) uncongenial surroundings. As a tribute to the adaptable South African climate, I may say that I have myself seen, on Sir Thomas Smartt's well−watered farm, apple trees and orange trees fruiting and ripening in the same field.

When I was invited to go surf−bathing at Muizen−berg, I rubbed my eyes, for I had vague ideas that this pastime was confined to South Sea Islanders. Recollections of Ballantyne's books crowded in on me; of apparently harmless sandal−wood traders, who unblushingly doubled the part of bloodthirsty pirates with their peaceful avocations; of bevies of swarthy but merry maidens rolling in on their planks on the top of vast surges; of possibly some hideous banquet of taro roots and long pig (baked over hot stones under a cover of plantain leaves) to follow on these primitive pastimes; even perhaps of some coloured captive maiden, wreathed in hibiscus flowers, loudly proclaiming her distaste at the idea of being compulsorily converted into long pig. I should, of course, have had to rescue her after exhibiting prodigies of valour, to find this dumb but devoted damsel clinging to me like a leech, remaining a most embarrassing appendage until she had learned sufficient English to answer I will, when I could have united her to a suitable mate, a copper−coloured yet contented bride.

When Capetown swelters in heat, Muizenberg is generally ten degrees cooler, though, most obligingly, the water of the Indian Ocean at Muizenberg is ten degrees warmer than that of the Atlantic at Capetown, owing to the Antarctic current setting in to the latter.

At Muizenberg we found half the population of South Africa in the water in front of the biggest bathing−house I have ever seen. The handling of the surf−plank requires some care, for it is a short, heavy board, and in the back−wash is apt to fly back on the unwary, hitting them on their food−receptacle, and effectually (to use a schoolboy term) bagging their wind. You walk out in the shoal water up to your shoulders, and as a big sea comes in, you throw yourself chest foremost on to your plank, and are then carried along on the top of the roller at the pace of a leisurely train (an Isle of Wight train), to be deposited with a bang on the sandy beach. It is really capital fun, but alas for my flower−wreathed South Sea Island maidens! Excluding our own party I only saw many amply waisted ladies disporting themselves staidly in the water, and the surrounding cinemas and tea−shops might have been at Brighton, except that they were far smarter and much better kept. Owing to the strongly marked facial characteristics of some of the customers in these places, who were mostly from Johannesburg, I at first imagined that I must have wandered inadvertently into Jerusalem, or that I had perhaps drifted to some

fashionable health resort on the shores of the Dead Sea.

Groote Schuur, the stately house built by Cecil Rhodes for himself, and by his will bequeathed as the official home of the Premier of South Africa, became very familiar to me. These modern adaptations of the Dutch Colonial style have one marked advantage over their originals. In the old houses the stoep is merely an uncovered terrace on which the house stands. In the modern houses the stoep is a shady, pillared, covered gallery, which in hot weather becomes the general living−room of the family. Having built his house, Cecil Rhodes employed agents to hunt up in Holland fine specimens of genuine old Dutch furniture with which to plenish it. Some of these agents surely exceeded their instructions in the matter of grandfather clocks. They must have absolutely denuded the Low Countries of these useful timepieces, for at every step at Groote Schuur a fresh solemn−faced Dutch clock ticks gravely away, to remind one how time is passing. Rhodes collected a very fine library, but he had a curious fad for typewritten copies of his favourite books, which fill an entire bookcase in the library. Rhodes paid an immense price for the splendid set of seventeenth−century Brussels tapestries in the dining−room, illustrating the Discovery of Africa, and the magnificent Cordova leather in the drawing−room must also have been a costly acquisition. The deep ravine running beside the house he had planted with blue hydrangeas throughout its length; when these are in flower, interspersed with scarlet and orange cannas, they form the most glorious mass of colour imaginable, as do the hedges of pink and white oleanders in the garden, each one with its smaller, attendant clipped hedge of pale−blue plumbago.

To me, I confess, the most interesting thing in the house was General Botha himself. When he talked of the future of South Africa in slow, rather laboured English (for this medium was always a little difficult for him), one felt that one was in the presence of a really great man. His transparent honesty, and his obvious sincerity of purpose, stood out as clearly as his strong common sense. On looking at his powerful, almost stern, face, one realised that here was a man who would allow nothing to turn him from his purpose once he was convinced that he was right; a man, too, to whom anything in the way of underhand intrigue, or backstairs negotiations, would be temperamentally repugnant. The chivalrous foeman had become the most loyal ally, and an ally of whom the entire British Empire should be proud. There was nothing tortuous about the farmer turned soldier, and the soldier turned statesman.

Of Mrs. Botha I should not like to say too much, lest I might be accused of flattery. As I shall presently relate, she was wonderfully kind to a very sick lad whom I brought out to Africa with me.

There is a curious custom in South Africa of drinking tea at eleven o'clock in the morning. So engrained is the habit that the streets of Capetown at eleven o'clock are black with business men rushing from their offices to the nearest tea−shop in search of this reviving draught; in fact, I believe that in offices there is a rigid line of demarcation between the seniors who go out for this indispensable cup of tea and the juniors who have to have it brought them.

At Groote Schuur at eleven o'clock there was always a great gathering for this important ceremony, and naturally the Dutch element usually predominated. I could never find any trace of racial bitterness amongst the men; with some of the women it was rather different. Onlookers are apt to be more bitterly partisan than those who have taken actual part in the conflict.

A mile or so from Groote Schuur House stands the beautiful Rhodes Memorial, on the slopes of the Devil's Peak. This austere temple of milk−white granite, with the great flight of steps flanked by bronze lions leading up to it, and its backing of pine trees, is in absolute harmony with its surroundings, and its very severity seems typical of the rugged energy of the man whose memory it commemorates. I cannot help wishing, though, that Mr. Herbert Baker, its architect, had built it on rather a larger scale, for its gigantic environment appears to dwarf the monument when seen from a few miles off. Watts's figure of Physical Energy, to be appreciated, must be seen here in the position for which it was designed. Standing at the foot of the great flight of stairs, with its background of purple mountain, and Africa stretching away endlessly below it, it is really magnificent. The replica erected in

Kensington Gardens, and placed with singular infelicity on grass between an avenue of elm trees, gives but little idea of the effect of the original, towering high over what Rhodes maintained was the finest view in the world, a view extending over the immense expanse of the Cape Flats, and embracing two oceans, with the splendid mountains of Hottentot's Holland in the background. If the bronze rider, gazing with shaded eyes over the Africa that Rhodes loved, is typical of his life, the calm white austerity of the temple in the background seems symbolical of the peace which that restless soul has now found.

The vineyards, oaks and wheatfields of the comparatively well−watered Cape peninsula are not representative of the rest of the Union. Once the train has laboriously clambered 3,000 feet up the Hex River Pass, real Africa commences. Endless tracts of rolling arid veld, with an atmosphere so clear that it is impossible for a newcomer to determine whether the kopje seen in the distance is five miles, ten miles, or twenty miles away. I quite understand the fascination of these bare stretches of veld and the irresistible attraction which Africa exercises over her children, for it is unlike anything else in the world.

I have a theory that when Moses removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, he banished them to the southern extremity of the continent, where the flies, imagining that their services might some day be required again to plague the Egyptians, have kept themselves in a constant state of mobilisation ever since. In no other way can the plague of flies in South Africa be accounted for.

The wonderful effect of the dry air of the Cape peninsula, and of the drier air of the High Veld in cases of tuberculosis is a matter of common knowledge, for was not Cecil Rhodes himself a standing example of an almost miraculous recovery? All of which brings me to the episode of the Sick Boy, and if I dwell on it at some length I do so intentionally for the comfort and better encouragement of those battling with the same disease. I first met the Sick Boy (hereinafter for the sake of brevity termed the S.B.) at the house of one of my oldest friends, who had an annual cricket−party for the benefit of his son. Amongst the schoolboy eleven staying in the house was a tall and very thin lad of sixteen, who showed great promise as a bowler. My hostess told me that this boy was suffering from tuberculosis, that he had had to leave Eton at fifteen to undergo a very severe internal operation from which he had only just recovered, and that when the party broke up, he was going straight into a nursing−home to prepare for another equally severe operation. Every time he played cricket he had to be put to bed at once after the match, and to be fed on warm milk. The lad had tremendous pluck; in spite of his weakness he insisted on taking part in the games and amusements of the other boys, and proved very good at all of them.

Three years later I met the S.B. again. He had spent the interval entirely in sanatoria and nursing−homes, except for a few months at St. Moritz in the Engadine, and had undergone six major operations, the last one entailing the removal of his left ear, though the external ear had been left. The unfortunate lad, who seemed to have had most of the working spare parts of his anatomy removed, was a walking triumph of modern operative surgery, but his disease had clearly made advances. He was then living in an open−air hut at his father's place, and his condition was obviously critical. As I was myself going to South Africa, I proposed to his father (he had lost his mother as a child) that the boy should accompany me, pointing out the wonders the dry South African climate had effected in similar cases, and the advantages of a long sea−voyage. So it was settled. As I was fully alive to the responsibilities I was incurring I took my valet with me, in case additional help should be required. Billy, the S.B., came on board, long, lanky, and pitiably emaciated. His abnormally brilliant colour, and his unnaturally bright eyes betrayed the progress the disease had made with him. He revived at once in the warmth, and I had considerable difficulty in restraining his super−abundant vitality, for he played deck−cricket all day, and entered himself for every single event in the ship's sports, regardless of his very narrow available margin of strength. After arriving in Africa, as the S.B. could not have stood the noise and racket of a big hotel, we found most comfortable quarters in a quiet little place in the delightful suburb of Rondebosch. I wished to go up−country, and as it was obvious that the S.B. could never have stood the heat, fatigue, and dust of long railway journeys during the height of the South African summer, I found myself in a difficult position. I had the most stringent directions from the doctors as to what the S.B. might or might not do. He was on no account to ride, either a horse or a bicycle; bathing might prove instantly fatal to him; he was only to play cricket, golf, or lawn−tennis in strict

moderation, followed each time by a compulsory rest. I knew the S.B. well enough by now to realise that, the moment my back was turned, he would want to do all these things, if merely to show that he could do them as well as anybody else, quite regardless of consequences. Mrs. Botha came to the rescue, and with extraordinary kindness, told me to send the S.B. to Groote Schuur, where she would undertake to look after him. As I have hinted earlier, I have seldom come across so delightful a family as the Bothas, father, mother, sons and daughters alike; so fortunate Billy the S.B. was transferred with his belongings to Groote Schuur, where he was immensely elated at being allowed to use Cecil Rhodes' sumptuous private bathroom. This bathroom was entirely lined with Oriental alabaster; the bath itself was carved out of a solid block of green marble, and the very bath−taps were exquisitely chiselled bronze Tritons, riding on dolphins. When I returned to Capetown I found the S.B. quite one of the Botha family, being addressed by everybody by his Christian name. He played lawn−tennis and billiards daily with the General, and should he prove refractory (a not infrequent occurrence) the General had only to threaten, I shall have to make you smoke another of my black cigars, Billy, for the S.B. to capitulate instantly with a shudder, for he had gruesome recollections of the effects one of these powerful home−grown cigars had produced on him upon a previous occasion.

When we sailed from South Africa, Mrs. Botha came down herself to the liner to see that Billy's cabin was comfortable, and that he had all the appliances he required, such as hot−water bottles, etc., and she presented him with a large parcel of home−made delicacies for his exclusive use on the voyage home. Nothing could have exceeded her kindness to this afflicted lad, of whose very existence she had been unaware three months earlier.

Before we had been at sea a week, the S.B. managed to get a sunstroke. He grew alarmingly ill, and the ship's doctor told me that he had developed tubercular meningitis, and that his recovery was impossible. I gave the S.B. a hint as to the gravity of his case, but the boy's pluck was indomitable. I am going to sell that doctor, he said, for I don't mean to die now. I have sold the doctors twice already when they told me I was dying, and I am going to make this chap look silly, too, for I don't intend to go out. Soon after he relapsed into unconsciousness. Meningitis affects the eyes, and the poor S.B. could not bear one ray of light, so the cabin was carefully darkened, and the electrician replaced the white bulbs in the cabin and alley−way with green ones. As we were approaching the equator the heat in that closed−up cabin was absolutely suffocating, the thermometer standing at over 100 degrees. Still the sick lad felt chilly, and had to be surrounded with hot−water bottles, whilst an ice−pack was placed on his head. I and my valet took it in turns to sit up at nights with him, as every quarter of an hour we had to trickle a teaspoonful of iced milk and brandy into his mouth. As each morning came round, the doctor's astonishment at finding his patient still alive was obvious, and he assured me again and again that it could only be a question of hours. One morning my valet, whose turn as night−nurse it was, awoke me at 4 a.m. with the news that Mr. William has come to again, and is screaming for beef−tea. I went into the cabin, where I found the S.B. quite conscious, and insistently demanding beef−tea. By sheer grit and force of will the lad had pulled himself out of the very Valley of the Shadow. We got him the best substitute for beef−tea to be obtained on a liner at 4.30 a.m., and two hours later he was clamouring for more. His progress to recovery was uninterrupted as soon as we were able to carry him into the open air, his eyes protected by some most ingenious light−proof goggles, cleverly fashioned on board by the second engineer. The S.B. had learnt from the doctor of some strictly private arrangements which I had made with the captain of the ship should his disease unfortunately take a fatal turn. I found him one morning rolling about in his bunk with laughter. It is really the most comical idea I ever heard of in my life, he spluttered, shaking with merriment. Fancy carrying me home in the meat−safe! Just imagine father's face when you told him that you had got me down in the refrigerator! I never heard anything so d d funny, and as fresh humorous possibilities of this novel form of home−coming occurred to him, he grew quite hysterical with laughter. He was immensely amused, too, at learning that during the most critical period of his illness I had got the captain to stop the ship's band, and to rope−off the deck under his cabin window. I will not deny that the S.B. required a good deal of supervision; for instance, when at length allowed a little solid food, I found that he had selected as a suitable invalid repast, some game−pie and a strawberry ice, which had, of course, to be sternly vetoed; he had entered, too, for every event in the ship's sports, and though he was so weak that he could barely stand, he had every intention of competing. I have seldom met any one with such wonderful personal courage as that boy, and he would never yield one inch to his enemy; the strong will was for ever dominating the

frail body.

On this voyage we had a number of young people on board who were crossing the equator for the first time, so Neptune kindly offered to leave his ocean depths and to board the ship in the good old−fashioned orthodox style to further these young folks' education. Just as we crossed the Line, the ship was hailed from the sea, her name and destination were ascertained, and she was peremptorily ordered to heave to, Neptune naturally imagining that he was still dealing with sailing ships. The engines were at once stopped, and Neptune, with his Queen, his Doctor, his Barber, his Sea Bears and the rest of his Court, all in their traditional get−up, made their appearance on the upper deck, to the abject terror of some of the little children, who howled dismally at this alarming irruption of half−naked savages with painted faces. I myself enacted Neptune in an airy costume of fish−scales, a crown, and a flowing beard and wig of bright sea−green. Of course my Trident had not been forgotten. Amphitrite, my queen, was the star−comedian of the South African music−hall stage, and the little man was really extraordinarily funny, keeping up one incessant flow of rather pungent gag, and making the spectators roar with laughter. All the traditional ceremonies and good−natured horseplay were scrupulously adhered to, and some twenty schoolboys and five adults were duly dosed, lathered, shaved, hosed, and then toppled backwards into a huge canvas tank of sea−water, where the boys persisted in swimming about in all their clothes. The proceedings were terminated by Neptune and his entire Court following the neophytes into the tank, and I am afraid that we induced some half−dozen male spectators to accompany us into the tank rather against their will, one old German absolutely fuming with rage at the unprecedented liberty that was being taken with him. During these revels the S.B., though only just convalescent, and still in his bunk, had to be locked into his cabin, or he would have insisted on taking part in them, and would have certainly died an hour afterwards.

Upon the outbreak of war in August, 1914, the S.B. made three attempts to obtain a commission, only to be promptly rejected by the medical officers when they examined him. He then tried to enlist as a private, under a false name, but no doctor would pass him, so he went as a workman into a Small Arms' Factory, and made rifle−stocks for a year. The indoor life and the lack of fresh air aggravating his disease, he was forced to abandon this work, when, by some means which I have never yet fathomed, he managed to get a commission in the Royal Air Force. The doctors, being much overworked, let him through without a medical examination, and in due time the S.B. qualified as a pilot, when, owing to engine trouble, he promptly crashed in his seaplane into the North Sea, in January, and was an hour in the water before being rescued. This icy bath somehow arrested the progress of his disease, and he was subsequently sent to the Dardanelles. Here, whilst attempting to bomb Constantinople, the S.B. got shot down and captured by the Turks. During his eighteen months of captivity he underwent the greatest privations from cold and hunger, being insufficiently clad and most insufficiently fed. Upon his release after the Armistice, he was examined by a British doctor, who told him, to his amazement, that every trace of his dire disease had vanished, nor were the most eminent specialists of Harley Street subsequently able to distinguish the faintest lingering signs of tuberculosis. He was completely cured, or rather by his strong willpower he had completely cured himself.

Billy (the term of S.B. being clearly no longer applicable) is now married to a pretty and charming wife; he is the proud father of a sturdy son, and is putting on weight at an alarming rate, his waistcoat already exhibiting a convexity of outline that would be justifiable only in the case of an alderman. He is a partner in a prosperous West End business, and will be most happy to book any orders you may give him for wine.

I have purposely dwelt at length on the case of the S.B. in order to encourage other sufferers from this disease to realise how strong the personal factor is in their cases, and how much they can help themselves. Here was an apparently hopeless case of tuberculosis, and yet a lad by his indomitable grit and personal courage fought his enemy, continued to fight him, and finally conquered him, all by sheer determination never to give in. Let others in his position take heart of grace and continue the struggle, and may they, too, rout their enemy as the S.B. did. Nil desperandum! I may add that an ice−cold bath of an hour in the North Sea in January, and eighteen months' incarceration in a Turkish prison, are not absolutely essential items in the cure.

CHAPTER X

In France at the outbreak of war The *tocsin* The Voice of the Bell at Harrow Canon Simpson's theory about bells His five−tone principle Myself as a London policeman Experiences with a celebrated church choir The Grillroom Club Famous members Arthur Cecil Some neat answers Sir Leslie Ward Beerbohm Tree and the vain old member Amateur supers Juvenile disillusionment The Knight The Baron Age of romance passed.

In July, 1914, I was in Normandy, undergoing medical treatment for a bad leg. Black as the horizon looked towards the end of that month, I personally believed that the storm would blow over, and that the clouds would disperse, as had happened so often previously when the relations between Germany and France had been strained almost to the breaking−point by the megalomaniac of Potsdam.

On the fateful Saturday, August 1, 1914, I was at a little old Norman chateau standing on the banks of the placid river Mayenne. It was a glorious afternoon, and I was in a boat on the river fishing with the two daughters of the house. We suddenly saw the local station−master running along the bank in a state of great agitation, brandishing a telegram in his hands. He asked us where he could find M. le Maire, for my host, amongst other things, was mayor of the little neighbouring town, and added with a despairing gesture, Helas! C'est la guerre! showing us the official telegram from Paris. We at once landed and accompanied the station−master up to the house, where our host was dumbfounded at the news, for, like me, he had continued to hope against hope. Five minutes later he was knotting the official tricolour scarf round his waist, for it fell to his duty as Maire to read the Decree of Mobilisation in the town, and I accompanied him there. I shall never forget that sight. Sobbing and weeping women everywhere; the older men, who remembered 1870 and knew what this mobilisation meant, endeavouring to master their emotion and to keep up an appearance of calm; the younger men, who were to be thrust into the furnace, standing dazed and anxious−eyed at the prospect of the unknown to−morrow which they were to face. My host, after reading the Decree, added a few words of his own, such words as appeal to the French temperament; brief, full of hope and courage, and breathing that intensely passionate love of France which lies at the bottom of every French soul. The Maire then ordered the *tocsin* to be sounded in half an hour's time, when it would also ring out from every church steeple in France.

The rolling Normandy landscape lay bathed in golden sunshine, the wheatfields ripe for the sickle, and the apple orchards rich in their promise of fruit. There was not one breath of wind to ruffle the sleek surface of the Mayenne, and the wealth of timber of leafy Normandy stood out faintly blue over the tawny stretches of the wheatfields. The whole scene, flooded with mellow sunshine, seemed to breathe absolute peace.

Suddenly, from a distant church steeple, came two sharp strokes from a bell, then a pause, and then two strokes were repeated. The town we had just left rang out two louder notes, also followed by a pause. It was the *tocsin* ringing out its terrible message; and yet another steeple sounded its two notes, and another and another. The news rung out by those two sharp strokes is always bad news. The *tocsin* rings for great fires, for revolution, or, as in this case, for a Declaration of War. Before us lay Normandy, looking inexpressibly peaceful in the evening sunlight, and over that quiet countryside the *tocsin* was sending its tidings of woe, as it was from every church tower in France. Next morning the only son, the gardener, the coachman, and the man−servant left the old Norman chateau to join their regiments; the son and the gardener never to return to it. To the end of my life I shall remember the weeping women, and the haggard−eyed men in that little town, and the two sharp strokes of the *tocsin*, sounding like the knell of hope.

Nothing can carry a more poignant message than a bell. In my time at Harrow, should a member of the school actually die at Harrow during the term, the school bell was tolled at minute intervals, from 10 to 10.30 p.m., with the great bass bell of the parish church answering it, also at minute intervals. The school bell, which rang daily at least ten times for school, for chapel, for Bill, or for lock−up, had an exceedingly piercing voice. We were used to

hearing it rung quickly, so when it sent out its one shrill note into the unaccustomed night, a note answered in half a minute by the great boom of the bourdon from the Norman church steeple, the effect was most impressive. In my house it was the custom to keep absolute silence during the tolling of the passing−bell. The British schoolboy is really a highly emotional creature, though he would sooner die than betray the fact. When the tolling began, boys would troop in their night−clothes into one another's rooms for companionship, and remain there in silence, ill at ease, until the tolling, to every one's relief, ceased. There was another ordeal to be faced, too, at the final concert. Amongst our school songs was one called The Voice of the Bell, describing the various occasions on which the school bell rang. It had a bright, cheery tune, and was very popular, but there was a special verse, only sung when a boy had actually died at Harrow during the term. The melody of the special verse was the same as that of the other verses, but the harmonies were quite different. It was sung very slowly as a solo to organ accompaniment, and it touched every one. The words were:

Hard to the stroke, another and another,
Ding, ding, ding.
Tolling at night for the passing of a brother,
Ding, ding, ding,
One more life from our life is taken,
Work all done, and fellowship forsaken,
Playmate sleep and far away awaken,
Ding, ding, ding;

the ding, ding, ding being taken up by the chorus.

All the boys dreaded the singing of this verse, at least I know that I did, for no one felt quite sure of himself, and the little fellows cried quite openly. Three times it was sung during my Harrow days, and always by the same boy, chosen on account of his very sweet voice. He was a friend of mine, and he used to tell me how thankful he was to get through his solo without breaking down, or, as he preferred to put it, without making an utter ass of myself. I think that this special verse is no longer sung, as being too painful for all concerned.

Whilst on the subject of bells, I may say that the late Canon Simpson of Fittleworth was a great friend of mine. Canon Simpson was an enthusiast about bells, not only about change−ringing, on which subject he was a recognised authority, but also about the designing and casting of bells. He would talk to me for hours about them, though I know about as much of bells as Nebuchadnezzar knew about jazz−dancing. The Canon maintained that very few bells, either in England or on the continent, were in tune with themselves, and therefore could obviously not be in tune with the rest of the peal. Every bell gives out five tones. The note struck, or the tonic (which he called the fundamental"), the octave above it, termed the nominal, and the octave below it, which he called the hum note. In a perfect bell these three octaves must be in perfect unison, but they very seldom are. The nominal, or upper octave, is nearly always sharper than the fundamental, and the hum note is again sharper than that, thus producing an unpleasant effect. Any one listening for it can detect the upper octave, or nominal, even in a little handbell. Let them listen intently, and they will catch the sharp ting of the octave above. The hum note in a small bell is almost impossible to hear, but let any one listen to a big bass bell, and they cannot miss it. It is the hum note which sustains the sound, and makes the air quiver and vibrate with pulsations. For many years I have lived under the very shadow of Big Ben, and I can hear its hum note persisting for at least ten seconds after the bell has sounded. Big Ben is a notable instance of a bell out of tune with itself. In addition to the three octaves, every bell gives out a third and a fifth above the tonic, thus making a perfect chord, and for the bell to be perfect, all these five tones must be in absolute tune with each other. Space prevents my giving details as to how this result can be attained. Under the Canon's tuition I learnt to distinguish the third, which is at times quite strident, but the fifth nearly always eludes me. During Canon Simpson's lifetime he could only get one firm of bell−founders to take his five−tone principle seriously. I may add that English bell−founders tune their bells to the nominal, whilst Belgian and other continental founders tune them to the fundamental, both, according to Canon Simpson, essentially wrong in principle.

Three days ago I read a leading article in a great morning daily, headed The Renascence of bell−founding in England, and I learnt from it that one English bell−foundry was casting a great peal of bells for the War Memorial at Washington, and that another firm was carrying out an order for a peal from, wonder of wonders, Belgium itself, the very home of bells, and that both these peals were designed on the Simpson five−tone principle. I wish that my old friend could have lived to see his theories so triumphantly vindicated, or could have known that the many years which he devoted to his special subject were not in vain.

Had any one told me, say in 1912, that in two years' time I should be patrolling the streets of London at night in a policeman's uniform as a Special Constable, I should have been greatly surprised, and should have been more astonished had I known of the extraordinary places I should have to enter in the course of my duties, and the curious people with whom I was to be brought into contact. I had occasion one night, whilst on my beat, to enter the house of a professional man in Harley Street, whose house, in defiance of the Lighting Orders, was blazing like the Eddystone Lighthouse. I gave the doctor a severe lecture, and pointed out that he was rendering himself liable to a heavy fine. He took my jobation in very good part, for I trust that as a policeman I blended severity with sympathy, and promised to amend his ways, and then added hospitably, As perhaps you have been out some time, constable, you might be glad of some sandwiches and a glass of beer. If you will go down to the kitchen, I will tell the cook to get you some. So down I went to the kitchen, and presently found myself being entertained by an enormously fat cook. John Leech's *Pictures from Punch* have been familiar to me since my earliest days. Some of his most stereotyped jokes revolved round the unauthorised presence of policemen in kitchens, but in my very wildest dreams it had never occurred to me that I, myself, when well past my sixtieth year, would find myself in a policeman's uniform seated in a London kitchen, being regaled on beer and sandwiches by a corpulent cook, and making polite conversation to her. I hasten to disclaim the idea that any favourable impression I may have created on the cook was in any way due to my natural charm of manner; it was wholly to be ascribed to the irresistible attraction the policeman's uniform which I was wearing traditionally exercises over ladies of her profession. Between ourselves, my brother Claud was so pleased with his Special Constable's uniform that when a presentation portrait of himself was offered to him he selected his policeman's uniform to be painted in, in preference to that of a full colonel, to which he was entitled, and his portrait can now be seen, as a white−haired and white−moustached, but remarkably erect and alert Special Constable, seventy−five years old.

I had during the war another novel but most interesting experience. A certain well−known West End church has been celebrated for over fifty years for the beauty and exquisite finish of its musical Services. As 1915 gave place to 1916, one by one the professional choir−men got called up for military service, and finally came the turn of the organist and choirmaster himself, he being just inside the limit of age. The organist, besides being a splendid musician, happened to be a skilled mechanic, so he was not sent abroad, but was given a commission, and sent down to Aldershot to superintend the assembling of aircraft engines. By getting up at 5 a.m. on Sundays, he was able to be in London in time to take the organ and conduct the choir of his church. Meeting the organist in the street one day, he told me that he was in despair, for all the men of the choir but two had been called up, and the results of ten years' patient labour seemed crumbling away. He meant, though, to carry on somehow, all the same, and begged me to find him a bass for the Cantoris side. I have hardly any voice at all myself, but I had been used to singing in a choir, and can read a part easily at sight, so I volunteered as a bass, and for two years marched in twice, and occasionally three times, every Sunday into the church in cassock and surplice with the choir. The music was far more elaborate and difficult than any to which I had been accustomed, but it was a great privilege and a great delight to sing with a choir trained to such absolute perfection. The organist could only spare time for one short practice a week, during which we went through about one−third of the music we were to sing on Sunday, all the rest had to be read at sight. Had not the boys been so highly trained it would have been quite impossible; they lived in a Resident Choir School, and were practised daily, and never once did they let us down. I do not think that the congregation had the faintest idea that half the elaborate anthems and Services they were listening to, though familiar to the boys, had never been seen by the majority of the choir−men until they came into church, and that they were being read at sight. One particularly florid Service, much beloved by the congregation, was known amongst the choir as Chu Chin Chow in E flat. The organist always managed

somehow to produce a really good solo tenor, as well as an adequate second tenor, mostly privates and bluejackets for the time being, but professional musicians in their former life. It was a point of honour with this scratch−choir to endeavour to maintain the very high musical standard of the church, and I really think that we did wonders, for we gave a very good rendering of Cornelius' beautiful but abominably difficult eight−part unaccompanied anthem for double choir, Love, I give myself to thee, after twenty minutes' practice of it, and difficult as is the music, we kept the pitch, and did not drop one−tenth of a tone. At times, of course, the scratch−choir made mistakes, and then the organ crashed out and drowned us. The congregation imagined that the organist was merely showing off the power and variety of tone of his instrument; we knew better, and understood that this blare was to veil our blunder. It was really absorbingly interesting work. During Lent we sang, unaccompanied, Palestrina and Vittoria, and this sixteenth−century polyphonic music requires singing with such exactitude that it needs the utmost concentration and sustained attention, if the results are to be satisfactory. The organist was quite pleased with his make−shift choir; though, as a thorough musician, he was rather exacting. At choir−practice he would say, Very nicely sung, gentlemen, so nicely that I want it all over again. Try and do it a little better this time, and with greater accuracy, please. It is the custom in this church to sing carols from a chamber up in the tower on the three Sundays following Christmas. They are sung unaccompanied, and almost in a whisper, and the effect in the church below is really entrancing. To reach this tower−chamber we had to mount endless flights of stairs to the choir−boys' dormitory, and then to clamber over their beds, and squeeze ourselves through an opening about a foot square (built as a fire−escape for the boys) in our surplices. After negotiating this narrow aperture, I shall always sympathise with any camel attempting to insinuate itself through the eye of a needle. In a small, low−roofed chamber, where there is barely standing−room for twenty people, it is difficult even for a highly trained choir to do itself justice. The low roof tends to deaden the pitch, and in so confined a space the singers cannot get into that instinctive touch with each other which makes the difference between a good and a bad choir; still, people in the church below told me that the effect was lovely. On one occasion, owing to force of circumstances, it had been impossible for the men to rehearse the carols, though the boys had been well practised in them. We sung them at sight unaccompanied; rather a musical feat to do satisfactorily.

I would not have missed for anything my two years' experience with that church choir; every Sunday it was a renewed pleasure.

During 1915 and 1916 one got used to meeting familiar friends in unfamiliar garbs, and in a certain delightful club, not a hundred miles from Leicester Square, which I will veil under the impenetrable disguise of the Grill−room Club, I was not surprised to find two well−known and popular actors, the one in a naval uniform, the other in an airman's. I might add that the latter greatly distinguished himself in the air during the war.

The Grill−room is quite a unique club. It consists of one room only, a lofty, white−panelled hall, with an open timber roof. Nearly every distinguished man connected with the English stage for the last forty years has been a member of this club; Henry Irving, Charles Wyndham, Arthur Sullivan, W. S. Gilbert, George Grossmith, Corney Grain, George Alexander, Herbert Beerbohm Tree, and Arthur Cecil are only a few of the celebrities for whom this passing show is over, but who were members of the club. It is unnecessary for me to give a list of the present members; it is enough to say that it comprises every prominent English actor of to−day.

Arthur Cecil had a delightful nature, with a marked but not unpleasant old−maidish element in it. For instance, no mortal eye had ever beheld him without a little black handbag. Wherever Arthur Cecil went the little bag went with him. There was much speculation amongst his friends as to what the contents of this mysterious receptacle might be. Many people averred, in view of his notoriously large appetite, that it was full of sandwiches, in case he should become smitten with hunger whilst on the stage, but he would tell no one. As I knew him exceedingly well, I begged on several occasions to have the secret of the little black bag entrusted to me, but he always turned my question aside. After his death, it turned out that the little bag was a fully fitted−up medicine−chest, with remedies for use in every possible contingency. Should he have fancied that he had caught a chill, a tea−spoon of this; should his dressing−room feel over−hot, four drops of that; should he encounter a bad smell, a table−spoonful of a third mixture. Poor Cecil's interior must have been like a walking drug−store. He was quite

inimitable in eccentric character parts, his Graves in *Money* being irresistibly funny, and his Baron Stein in *Diplomacy* was one of the most finished performances we are ever likely to see, a carefully stippled miniature, with every little detail carefully thought out, touched up and retouched. I do not believe that the English stage has even seen a finer *ensemble* of acting than that given by Kendal as Julian Beauclerc, John Clayton as Henry Beauclerc, and Squire Bancroft as Count Orloff when the piece was originally produced at the Hay−market, in the great three−men" scene in the Second Act of *Diplomacy*, the famous Scene des trois hommes of Sardou's *Dora*; nothing on the French stage could beat it. Arthur Cecil bought a splendid fur coat for his entrance as Baron Stein, but after the run of the piece nothing would ever induce him to wear his fur coat, even in the coldest weather. He was obsessed with the idea that should *Diplomacy* ever be revived, his fur coat might grow too shabby to be used for his first entrance, so it reposed perpetually and uselessly in camphor. Arthur Cecil was cursed with the Demon of Irresolution. I have never known so undecided a man; it seemed quite impossible for him to make up his mind. Sir Squire Bancroft has told us in his *Memoirs* how Cecil, on the night of the dress rehearsal of *Diplomacy*, was unable to decide on his make−up. He used a totally different make−up in each of the three acts, to the great bewilderment of the audience, who were quite unable to identify the white−moustached gentleman of the First Act with the bald−headed and grey−whiskered individual of the Second. This irresolution pursued poor Cecil everywhere. Coming in for supper to the Grill−room after his performance, he would order and counter−order for ten minutes, absolutely unable to come to a decision. He invariably ended by seizing a pencil, closing his eyes tightly, and whirling his pencil round and round over the supper−list until he brought it down at haphazard somewhere. As may be imagined, repasts chosen in this fashion were apt to be somewhat incongruous. After the first decision of chance, Cecil would murmur to the patient waiter, Some apple−tart to begin with, Charles. Then another whirl, and some stuffed tomatoes, a third whirl, and salt fish and parsnips, Charles, please. It's a thing that I positively detest, but it has been chosen for me, so bring it. Cecil went for an annual summer holiday to France, but as he could never decide where he should go, the same method came into play, and with a map of France before him, and tightly closed eyes, the whirling pencil determined his destination for him. He assured me that it had selected some unknown but most delightful spots for him, though at times he was less fortunate. The pencil once lit on the mining districts of Northern France, and Cecil with his sunny nature professed himself grateful for this, declaring that but for the hazard of the whirling pencil, he would never have had an opportunity of realising what unspeakably revolting spots Saletrousur−Somme, or Saint−Andre−Linfecte were. He was a wonderfully kind−hearted man. Once, whilst playing at the Court Theatre, he noticed the call−boy constantly poring over a book. Cecil, glancing over it, was surprised to find that it was not *The Boy Highwayman of Hampstead*, but a treatise on Algebra. The call−boy told him that he was endeavouring to educate himself, with a view to going out to India. Cecil bought him quite a library of books, paid for a series of classes for him, and eventually, thanks to Cecil, the call−boy passed second in a competitive examination, and obtained a well−paid appointment in a Calcutta Bank. Cecil, or to give him his real name, Arthur Blount, was also an excellent musician, and his setting of *The Better Land* is to my mind a beautiful one. He was an eccentric, faddy, kindly, gentle creature.

At the Grill−room, actor−managers are constantly pouring out their woes. One well−known actor−manager came in full of a desperate row he had had with his leading lady because the printer in the bills of the new production had forgotten the all−important and before her name. She merely appeared at the end of the list of characters, whereas she wanted AND Miss Lilian Vavasour. Such a ridiculous fuss to make about an 'and,' grumbled the actor−manager. Yes, retorted Comyns−Carr, and unfortunately 'and and 'art do not always go together on these occasions.

The neatest answer I ever heard came from the late Lord Houghton. Queen Victoria's predilection for German artists was well known. She was painted several times by Winterhalter, and after his death was induced by the Empress Frederick to give sittings to the Viennese artist, Professor von Angeli. Angeli's portrait of the Queen was, I think, exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1876. Some one commenting on this, said that it was hard that the Queen would never give an English artist a chance; after Winterhalter it was Angeli. Yes, said Lord Houghton, I fancy that the Queen agrees with Gregory the Great, and says, 'non Angli sed Angeli.'

Of minor neatness was an answer made to my mother by a woodman at Baron's Court. Apparently at the time of her marriage the common dog−wood was hardly known in England as a shrub, although in the moist Irish climate it flourished luxuriantly. Every one is familiar with the shrub, if only on account of its bark turning a bright crimson with the early frosts. My mother on her first visit to Baron's Court saw a woodman trimming the dog−wood, and inquired of him the name of this unfamiliar red−barked shrub. On being told that it was dog−wood she asked, Why is it called dog−wood? It might be on account of its bark, came the ready answer.

Pellegrini the caricaturist, the celebrated Ape of *Vanity Fair* , was a member of the Grill−room, as is his equally well−known successor, Sir Leslie Ward, the Spy of that now defunct paper, who has drawn almost every notability in the kingdom. Sir Leslie is, I am glad to say, still with us. Leslie Ward has the speciality of extraordinary accidents, accidents which could befall no human being but himself. For instance, in pre−taxi days Ward was driving in a hansom, and the cabman taking a wrong turn, Ward pushed up the little door in the roof to stop him. The man bent his head down to catch his fare's directions, and Leslie Ward inadvertently pushed three fingers right into the cabman's mouth. The driver, hotly resenting this unwarranted liberty, bit Leslie Ward's fingers so severely that he was unable to hold either pencil or brush for a fortnight. This is only one example of the extraordinary mishaps in which this gifted artist specialises.

In the recently published *Life of Herbert Beerbohm Tree*, the collaborators do not allude to that curious vein of impish humour which at times possessed him, turning him into a sort of big rollicking schoolboy. There was one episode which I can give with Tree's actual words, for I wrote them down at the time, as a supreme example of the art of leg−pulling. Amongst the members of the Grill−room Club was an elderly bachelor, whom I will call Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith, who has now been dead for some years, was wholly undistinguished in every way. He ate largely, and spoke little, but Tree had discovered that under his placid exterior he concealed a vein of limitless vanity. One evening Mr. Smith startled the club by breaking his habitual silence, and bursting into poetry. Apropos of nothing at all, he suddenly declaimed two lines of doggerel, which, as far as my memory goes, ran as follows:

I and my doggie are now left alone,
Johnstone, to−morrow, will give him a bone.

He then relapsed into his ordinary placid silence, and soon after went home. Beerbohm Tree made at once a bet of 5 pounds with another member that he would induce old Mr. Smith to repeat this rubbish lying at full length under the dining−table, seated in the firegrate (it was summer−time), and hidden behind the window−curtains. The story got about until every one knew of the bet except Mr. Smith, so next night the club was crowded. The unsuspecting Smith sat silently and placidly ruminating, when Tree appeared after his performance at His Majesty's and lost no time in approaching his subject. My dear Smith, he began, you repeated last night two lines of poetry which moved me strangely. The recollection of them has haunted me all day; say them again, I beg of you. The immensely gratified Smith at once began:

I and my doggie are now left alone,
Johnstone, to−morrow, will give him a bone.

Exquisite! murmured Tree. Beautiful lines, and distinctly modern, yet without the faintest trace of decadence. It is the note of implied tragedy in them that appeals to me, for were Johnstone unfortunately to die in the night there would, of course, be no bone for the faithful four−footed friend. Repeat them again, please. After a second repetition Tree went on: You have *l'art de dire* to an amazing extent, Smith, and you have the priceless gift of *les larmes dans la voix*. I know that no pecuniary inducements I might offer would make any appeal to you; still, could I but get you to repeat those beautiful lines on the stage of my theatre, all London would flock to hear you. I should wish now for them to float vaguely to my ears, as the sound of village chimes borne on the breeze; out of the vague; out of the unknown. Ha! I have it! Would you mind, Smith, lying under the table here, and exercising

your gift as a reciter from there. I, on my side, will put myself into a fitting frame of mind by eschewing such grossly material things as tobacco and alcohol, and will eat of the simple fruits of the earth. Waiter, apples, many apples! Now, Smith, I beg of you, and Tree, munching an apple, made a gesture of appeal, and stood on the table, a second apple in his left hand.

Really I, faltered Mr. Smith with a gratified smile, really... Well... do you mean it? and he slid obediently under the table, and repeated the idiotic lines. Gorgeous! Positively gorgeous! sighed Tree. Now, Smith, Bismarck once, when at the zenith of his power, electrified an audience of German *savants* by repeating two simple lines of German poetry seated in the fireplace. I must emphasise the fact that it was when he was at the very zenith of his power, for otherwise, of course, he would have been unable to produce this effect. I should like to see whether your touching lines would move me as strongly coming from so unexpected a quarter. See! I will place *The Times* for you to sit on, the *Daily Telegraph* for you to lean against. Two of the most powerful organs of public opinion both equally proud to minister to your comfort. I beg of you, Smith. Really... it's rather unusual... but if you want it, smirked Mr. Smith, and the doggerel was duly repeated from the fireplace. Now, Smith, I want those haunting lines to reach me faintly, as from some distant ocean cavern, or like the murmurs sea−shells whisper into the ear. Ha! the window−curtains will muffle the sound; say it from behind them, I pray. When this was over Tree buried his face in his hands, feigning deep emotion, and Mr. Smith regained his place wreathed in smiles, convinced that he had achieved an unparalleled triumph as a reciter, but Tree had won his 5 pounds.

That gifted man Charles Brookfield was also a member of the Grill−room. There was a slight note of cynicism, and a touch of bitterness in his humour, for he was quite conscious that he had not achieved the success that his brilliant abilities seemed to promise. It was characteristic of Brookfield that when attacked with the tuberculosis to which he eventually succumbed, he should draw up the prospectus and rules of the Ninety−nine Club (those who have ever had their lungs tested will understand the allusion), a document in which he gave full rein to his vein of cynical and slightly *macabre* humour.

Some twenty−five years ago, I and another member of the Grill−room Club used occasionally to walk−on in the great autumn Drury Lane melodramas. We knew the manager well, and upon sending in our cards to him, we could figure as guests at a ball, or as two of the crowd on a racecourse. I liked seeing the blurred outlines of the vast audience over the dazzling glare of the footlights, and the details of the production of these complicated spectacular pieces amused me when seen from the stage. In one of these melodramas, I think the *Derby Winner* , there was a spirited auction scene on the stage, when Mrs. John Wood bid 30,000 pounds for a horse. I had an almost irresistible impulse to over−bid her and to shout forty thousand pounds. Mrs. John Wood would have proved, I am sure, equal to the emergency, and would have got the better of me. Between us, we should probably have run the horse up to a quarter of a million, and the consternation of the rest of the company would have been very amusing to witness, but it would not have been quite fair on our friend the manager, so I refrained.

A great−nephew of mine, then an Eton boy of fifteen, had heard of these experiences and longed to share them; so, with the manager's consent, I took him on the first day of his holidays. He was one of the crowd at an imaginary Oxford and Cambridge boat−race, cheering for all he was worth, when he suddenly saw four of his Eton friends sitting together in the front row of the stalls, and nodded to them. The astonishment of these youths at seeing the boy they had travelled up with that morning, moving about the stage of Drury Lane Theatre as though he were quite at home there, was most comical. They gaped round−eyed, refusing to believe the evidence of their senses.

I believe that the appeal of the theatre is simply due to the fact that the majority of human beings retain the child's love of make−believe but are too unimaginative to create a dream−world for themselves. Having lost the child's power of creation, a more material dream−world has to be elaborately constructed for them, with every adjunct that can heighten the sense of illusion, an element the unimaginative are unable to supply for themselves. They require all their i's carefully dotted and their t's elaborately crossed; so they love real water on the

stage, and real leaves falling in a forest scene, and genuine taxi−cabs rumbling about the stage so realistically that no strain need be put on their imagination.

At the age of seven or eight I came to the conclusion that one would go through life shedding illusions as trees shed their leaves in November. I had an illustrated *History of England* which contained a picture of knights tilting; splendid beings all in armour, with plumes waving from their helmets, seated on armoured horses and brandishing gigantic lances. I asked my governess whether there were any knights left. She, an excellent but most matter−of−fact lady, assured me that there were plenty of knights still about, after which I never ceased pestering her to show me one. One day she delighted me by saying, You want to see a knight, dear. There is one coming to see your father at twelve o'clock to−day, and you may stand on the staircase and see him arrive. This was an absolutely thrilling episode! One of these glorious creatures of Romance was actually coming to our house that day! I may add that my mother was unwell at the time, and that the celebrated doctor Sir William Jenner, who had then been recently knighted, had been called in for a consultation. At Chesterfield House there is a very fine double flight of white marble stairs, and, long before twelve, wild with excitement, I took my stand at the top of it. How this magnificent being's armour would clank on the marble! Would he wear a thing like a saucepan on his head, with a little gate in front to peep through? It would be rather alarming, but the waving plumes would look nice. Supposing that he spoke to me, how was I to address him? Perhaps Grammercy, Sir Knight! would do. I was rather hazy as to its meaning, but it sounded well. It might also be polite to inquire how many maidens in distress the knight had rescued recently. Would he carry his lance upstairs and leave it outside my father's door? If so, I could play with it, and perhaps tilt at the footman with it. Would he leave his prancing charger in the courtyard in the care of his esquire? The possibilities were really endless. Presently our family doctor came upstairs with another gentleman, and they went into my father's room. I said Good−morning to our own doctor, but scarcely noticed the stranger, for I was straining my ears to catch the first clank of the knight's armour on the marble pavement of the hall below. Time went on; our doctor and the stranger reappeared and went downstairs, and still no knight arrived. At last I went back to my governess and told her that the knight must have forgotten, for he had never come. I could have cried with disappointment when told that the frock−coated stranger was the knight. That a knight! Without armour, or plumes, or lance, or charger! To console me for my disappointment I was allowed to see my father in his full robes as a Knight of the Garter before he left for some ceremony of the Order. This was the first intimation I had received that we could include a knight in our own family circle. My father's blue velvet mantle was imposing, and he certainly had plumes; but to my great chagrin he was not wearing one single scrap of armour, had no iron saucepan on his head, and was not even carrying a gigantic lance. It seemed to be the same with everything else. In my illustrated *History* there was a picture of the Barons forcing King John to sign Magna Charta at Runnymede. They had beards, and wore long velvet dressing−gowns, with lovely, long, pointed shoes, and carried swords nearly as big as themselves. I asked my governess if there were any barons left, and she told me that Lord B , a great friend of my family's, was a baron. This was dreadful. Lord B was dressed like any one else, had no beard, and instead of beautiful long shoes shaped like toothpicks, with flapping, pointed toes, he had ordinary everyday boots. He never wore a velvet dressing−gown or carried a big sword, and no one could possibly imagine him as coercing King John, or indeed any one else, to do anything they did not want to do. I asked to see a noble; I was told that I met them every day at luncheon. Like all properly constituted boys I longed to live on an island. I was told that I already enjoyed that privilege. It really was a most disappointing world!

To remedy this state of things, and as a protest against the prosaic age in which we lived, my youngest brother and I devised some strictly private dramas. One dealing with the adventures of Sir Alphonso and the lovely Lady Leonora lingers in my memory, and I recall every word of the dialogue. This latter was peculiar, for we had an idea that to be archaic all personal pronouns had to be omitted. Part of it, I remember, ran, Dost love me, Leonora? Do. Wilt fly with me? Will. Art frightened, fair one? Am. Everything in this thrilling drama led up to the discovery of the hidden treasure which the far−seeing Sir Alphonso had prudently buried in the garden in case of emergencies. Treasure had, of course, to consist of gold, silver, and coin. Some one had given me a tiny gold whistle; though small, it was unquestionably of gold, and my brother was the proud possessor of a silver pencil−case. These unfortunate objects must have been buried and disinterred countless times

in company with a French franc−piece. To the eye of faith the whistle and the pencil−case became gleaming ingots of gold and silver, and the solitary franc transformed itself into iron−bound chests gorged with ducats, doubloons, or pieces−of−eight: the last having a peculiarly attractive and romantic sound.

In such fashion did we make our juvenile protest against the drab−coloured age into which we had been born.

CHAPTER XI

Dislike of the elderly to change Some legitimate grounds of complaint Modern pronunciation of Latin How a European crisis was averted by the old−fashioned method Lord Dufferin's Latin speech Schoolboy costume of a hundred years ago Discomforts of travel in my youth A crack liner of the eighties Old travelling carriages An election incident Headlong rush of extraordinary turnout The politically minded signalman and the doubtful voter Decent bodies Confidence in the future Conclusion.

To point out that elderly people dislike change is to assert the most obvious of truisms. Their three−score years of experience have taught them that all changes are not necessarily changes for the better, as youth fondly imagines; and that experiments are not invariably successful. They have also learnt that no amount of talk will alter hard facts, and that the law that effect will follow cause is an inflexible one which torrents of fluent platitudes will neither affect nor modify. Even should this entail their being labelled with the silly and meaningless term of reactionary, I do not imagine that their equanimity is much upset by it. It is, perhaps, natural for the elderly to make disparaging comparisons between the golden past and the neutral−tinted present; so that one shudders at reflecting what a terrific nuisance Methuselah must have become in his old age. One can almost hear the youth of his day whispering friendly warnings to each other: Avoid that old fellow like poison, for you will find him the most desperate bore. He is for ever grousing about the rottenness of everything nowadays compared to what it was when he was a boy nine hundred years ago.

What applies to Methuselah may apply, in a lesser degree, to all of us elderly people, though I think that we are justified when we lament a noticeable decline in certain definite standards of honour which in our day were almost universally accepted both in private and in public life. Even then some few may have bowed the knee at the shrine of Monseigneur l'Argent ; but it was done almost furtively, for people on the make, or unblushingly out for themselves, were less to the fore then than now, and were most certainly less conspicuous in public life.

We can also be forgiven for regretting a marked decline in manners. Possibly in hurried days when every one seems to crave for excitement, there is but little time left for those courtesies customary amongst an older generation.

There is no need to enlarge on the immense changes the years have brought about during my lifetime. Amongst the very minor changes, I notice that when my great−nephews quote any Latin to me, I am unable to understand one single syllable of it, and between ourselves I fancy that this modern pronunciation of Latin would be equally unintelligible to an ancient Roman.

Our old−fashioned English pronunciation of Latin may have been illogical, but on one occasion it helped to avert a European war. The late Count Benckendorff, the last Russian Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, a singularly fascinating man, was protocolist to the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and as such was present at every sitting of the Congress. He told me that at one meeting of the Plenipotentiaries, Prince Gortschakoff announced that Russia, in direct contravention of Article XIII of the Treaty of Paris of 1856, intended to fortify the port of Batoum. This was expressly forbidden by the Treaty of Paris, so Lord Beaconsfield rose from his chair and said quietly, Casus belli, *only* he pronounced the Latin words in the English fashion, and Count Benckendorff assured me that no one present, with the exception of the British delegates, had the glimmer of an idea of what he

was talking about. They imagined that he was making some remark in English to Lord Salisbury, and took no notice of it whatever. Lord Salisbury whispered to his colleague, and ultimately Prince Gortschakoff withdrew the claim to fortify Batoum. But, added Count Benckendorff, just imagine the consternation of the Congress had Lord Beaconsfield hurled his ultimatum to Russia with the continental pronunciation 'cahsous bellee!' Just picture the breaking up of the Congress, the frantic telegrams, the shrieking headlines, the general consternation, and the terrific results that might have followed! And all these tremendous possibilities were averted by our old−fashioned English pronunciation of Latin!

My old Chief and godfather, the late Lord Dufferin, in his most amusing *Letters From High Latitudes*, recounts how he was entertained at a public dinner at Rejkjavik in Iceland by the Danish Governor. To his horror Lord Dufferin found that he was expected to make a speech, and his hosts asked him to speak either in Danish or in Latin. Lord Dufferin, not knowing one word of Danish, hastily reassembled his rusty remnants of Latin, and began, Insolitus ut sum ad publicum loquendum, and in proposing the Governor's health, begged his audience, amidst enthusiastic cheers, to drink it with a haustu longo, haustu forti, simul atque haustu.

Such are the advantages of a classical education!

My younger relatives, who naturally look upon me as being of almost antediluvian age, sometimes ask me to describe the discomforts of an all−night coach journey in my youth, or inquire how many days we occupied in travelling from, say, London to Edinburgh. They are obviously sceptical when I assure them that my memory does not extend to pre−railway days. I am surprised that they do not ask me for a few interesting details of occasions when we were stopped by masked highwaymen on Hounslow Heath in the course of our journeys.

My father told me that when he first went to Harrow in September, 1823, at the age of twelve, he rode all the way from London, followed by a servant carrying his portmanteau on a second horse. My father's dress sounds curious to modern ears. Below a jacket and one of the big flapping collars of the period, he wore a waistcoat of crimson cut−velvet with gold buttons, a pair of skin−tight pantaloons of green tartan with Hessian boots to the knee, further adorned with large brass spurs with brass chains. A schoolboy of twelve would excite some comment were he to appear dressed like that to−day, though my father assured me that he could run in his Hessian boots and spurs as fast as any of his school−fellows.

Though my recollections may not go back to pre−railway days, the conditions under which we travelled in my youth would be thought intolerable now. No sleeping−or dining−cars, long night−journeys in unheated, dimly lit carriages devoid of any kind of convenience, and sea−passages in small, ill−equipped steamers. All these were accepted as a matter of course, and as inevitable incidents of travel.

The first long−distance voyage I ever made was just forty years ago, and I should like people who grumble at the accommodation provided in one of the huge modern liners to see the arrangements thought good enough for passengers in 1882. Our ship, the *Britannia* of the Pacific Steam Navigation Co., was just over 4,000 tons, and we passengers congratulated each other loudly on our good fortune in travelling in so fast and splendid a vessel. The *Britannia* had no deck−houses, the uncarpeted, undecorated saloon was the only place in which to sit, and its furniture consisted of long tables with swinging racks over them, flanked by benches. This sumptuous apartment was illuminated at night by no less than forty candles, a source of immense pride of the chief steward. The sleeping−cabins for a six weeks' voyage were smaller and less comfortably fitted than those at present provided for the three hours' trip between Holyhead and Kingstown; at night one dim oil−lamp glimmered in a ground−glass case fixed between two cabins, but only up to 10.30 p.m., after which the ship was plunged into total darkness. As it was before the days of refrigerators, the fore part of the deck was devoted to live stock. Pigs grunted in one pen, sheep bleated in another, whilst ducks quacked and turkeys gobbled in coops on either side of them. No one ever thought of grumbling; on the contrary, we all experienced that stupid sense of reflected pride which passengers in a crack liner feel, for the *Britannia* then enjoyed a tremendous reputation in the Pacific. Certainly, seen from the shore, the old *Britannia* was a singularly pleasing object to the eye, with her clipper

bows, the graceful curve of her sheer, and the beautiful lines of her low hull unbroken by any deck−houses or top−hamper.

The traveller of to−day is more fortunate; he expects and finds in a modern liner all the comforts he would enjoy in a first−class hotel ashore; and finds them too in a lesser degree on railway journeys.

The long continental tours of my father and mother in the early days of their married life, were all made by road in their own carriages, and as their family increased they took their elder children with them in their wanderings, so what with children, nurses and servants, they travelled with quite a retinue.

I think that my father must have had a sentimental attachment for the old travelling carriages which had taken him and his family in safety over one−half of Europe, for he never parted with them, and various ancient vehicles reposed in our coach−houses, both in England and Ireland. The workmanship of these old carriages was so excellent that some of them, repainted and re−varnished, were still used for station−work in the country. There was in particular one venerable vehicle known as the Travelling Clarence, which remained in constant use for more than sixty years after its birth. This carriage must have had painful associations for my elder brothers and sisters, for they travelled in it on my parents' continental tours. My mother always complimented their nurse on the extraordinarily tidy appearance the children presented after they had been twelve hours or more on the road; she little knew that the nurse carried a cane, and that any child who fidgeted ever so slightly at once received two smart cuts on the hand from this cane, so that their ultra−neat appearance on arriving at their destination was achieved rather painfully. This Clarence was an unusually comfortable and easy−rolling carriage; it hung on Cee springs, and was far more heavily padded than a modern vehicle; it had vast pockets arranged round its capacious grey interior, and curious little circular pillows for the head were suspended by cords from its roof. On account of its comfort it was much used in its old age for station−work in Ireland. Should that old carriage have had any feelings, I can thoroughly sympathise with them. Dreaming away in its coach−house over its varied past, it must have remembered the vine−clad hills through which it had once rolled on the banks of the swift−flowing, green Rhone. It cannot have forgotten the orange groves and olives of sunny Provence overhanging the deep−blue Mediterranean, the plains of Northern Italy where the vines were festooned from tree to tree, the mountains and clear streams of the Tyrol, or the sleepy old Belgian cities melodious with the clash of many bells. Each time that it was rolled out of its coach−house I imagine that every fibre in its antique frame must have vibrated at the thought that now it was to re−commence its wanderings. Conscious though the old carriage doubtless was that its springs were less lissom than they used to be, and that the axles which formerly ran so smoothly now creaked alarmingly, and sent sharp twinges quivering through its body, it must have felt confident that it could still accomplish what it had done fifty years earlier. I feel certain that it started full of expectations, as it felt itself guided along the familiar road which followed the windings of the lake, with the high wooded banks towering over it, and then along a mile of highroad between dense plantations of spruce and Scotch fir, until the treeless, stonewalled open country of Northern Ireland was reached. The hopes of the old carriage must have risen high as the houses of the little town came into view; first one−storied, white−washed and thatched; then two−storied, white−washed and slated, all alike lying under a blue canopy of fragrant peat smoke. The turn to the right was the Dublin road, the road which ultimately led to the sea, and to a curious heaving contrivance which somehow led over angry waters to new and sunnier lands. No; the guiding hands directed its course to the left, down the brae, and along the over−familiar road to the station. The old Clarence must have recognised with a sigh that its roaming days were definitely over, and that henceforth, as long as its creaking axles and stiffening springs held together, it could only look forward to an uneventful life of monotonous routine in a cold, grey Northern land; and, between ourselves, these feelings are not confined to superannuated carriages.

The old Clarence had one splendid final adventure before it fell to pieces from old age. At the 1892 Election I was the Unionist candidate for North Tyrone. In the North of Ireland political lines of demarcation are drawn sharply and definitely. People are either on one side or the other. I was quite aware that to win the seat I should have to poll every available vote. On the polling day I spent the whole day in going round the constituency and was consequently away from home. Late in the afternoon a messenger arrived at Baron's Court announcing that an

elderly farmer, who lived six miles off and had lost the use of his legs, had been forgotten. As, owing to his infirmity, he was unable to sit on a jaunting−car, it had been arranged that a carriage should be sent for him, but this had not been done. The old man was most anxious to vote, but could only do so were a carriage sent for him, and in less than two hours the poll would close. My brother Ernest, and my sister−in−law, the present Dowager Duchess of Abercorn, were at home, and realising the vital importance of every vote, they went at once up to the stables, only to find that every available man, horse, or vehicle was already out, conveying voters to the poll. The stables were deserted. The Duchess recollected the comfortable old Clarence, and she and my brother together rolled it out into the yard, but a carriage without horses is rather useless, and there was not one single horse left in the stalls. My brother rushed off to see if he could find anything with four legs capable of dragging a carriage. He was fortunate enough to discover an ancient Clydesdale cart−mare in some adjacent farm buildings, but she was the solitary tenant of the stalls. He noticed, however, a three−year−old filly grazing in the park, and, with the aid of a sieve of oats and a halter, he at length succeeded in catching her, leading his two captives triumphantly back to the stable−yard. Now came a fresh difficulty. Every single set of harness was in use, and the harness−room was bare. The Duchess had a sudden inspiration. Over the fireplace in the harness−room, displayed in a glass show−case, was a set of State harness which my father had had specially made for great occasions in Dublin: gorgeous trappings of crimson and silver, heavy with bullion. The Duchess hurried off for the key, and with my brother's help harnessed the astounded mare and the filly, and then put them to. The filly, unlike the majority of the young of her sex, had apparently no love for the pomps and vanities of the world, and manifested her dislike of the splendours with which she was tricked−out by kicking furiously. The unclipped, ungroomed farm−horses, bedizened with crimson and silver, must have felt rather like a navvy in his working clothes who should suddenly find himself decked−out with the blue velvet mantle of a Knight of the Garter over his corduroys. The Duchess proposed fetching the old farmer herself, so she climbed to the box−seat and gathered the reins into her hands, but on being reminded by my brother that time was running short, and that the cart−horses would require a good deal of persuasion before they could be induced to accelerate their customary sober walk, she relinquished her place to him. Off they went, the filly still kicking frantically, the old Clydesdale mare, glittering with crimson and silver, uncertain as to whether she was dragging a plough or hauling the King in his State coach to the Opening of Parliament at Westminster. Once on the level the indignant animals felt themselves lashed into an unaccustomed gallop; they lumbered along at a clumsy canter, shaking the solid ground as they pounded it with their heavy feet, the ancient Clarence, enchanted at this last rollicking adventure, swaying and rolling behind them like a boat in a heavy sea. This extraordinary−looking turn−out continued its headlong course over bog−roads and through rough country lanes, to the astonishment of the inhabitants, till the lame farmer's house was reached. He was carefully lifted into the carriage, conveyed to the polling−place, and recorded his vote at 7.54 p.m., with just six minutes to spare before the poll closed. As it turned out I won the seat by fifty−six votes, so this rapid journey was really superfluous, but we all thought that it would be a much closer thing.

In the North of Ireland where majorities, one way or the other, are often very narrow, electioneering has been raised almost to a fine art. A nephew of mine was the Unionist candidate for a certain city in the North of Ireland during the 1911 election. Here again it was certain that his majority could only be a very small one, and as is the custom in Ulster every individual vote was carefully attended to. One man, though a nominal supporter, was notoriously very shaky in his allegiance. He was a railway guard and left the city daily on the 7.30 a.m. train, before the poll would open, returning by the fast train from Dublin due at 7.40 p.m. He would thus on the polling day have had ample time in which to record his vote. The change in his political views was so well known that my nephew's Election Committee had written off his vote as a hostile one, but they had reckoned without the railway signalman. This signalman was a most ardent political partisan and a strong adherent of my nephew's, and he was determined to leave nothing to chance. Knowing perfectly how the land lay, he was resolved to give the dubious guard no opportunity of recording a possibly hostile vote, so, on his own initiative, he put his signals against the Dublin train and kept her waiting for twenty−two minutes, to the bewilderment of the passengers, until the striking of the clocks announced the closing of the poll. Then he released her, and the train rolled into the terminus at 8.5 p.m., so I fear that the guard was unable to record his vote, hostile or otherwise. I think that this is an example of *finesse* in electioneering which would never have occurred to an Englishman. My nephew won the seat by over fifty votes.

I have again exceeded the space allotted to me, and am reminded by a ruthless publisher of the present high cost of production.

We have strayed together through many lands, and should the pictures of these be dull or incomplete, I can but tender my apologies. I am quite conscious, too, that I have taken full advantage of the privilege which I claimed in the first chapter, and that I have at times wandered wide from the track which I was following. I must plead in extenuation that the interminable straight roads of France seem to me less interesting than the winding country lanes of England. Indeed, I am unable to conceive of any one walking for pleasure along the endless vistas of the French poplar−bordered highways, where every objective is clearly visible for miles ahead; it is the English meandering by−roads, with their twists and turns, their unexpected and intimate glimpses into rural life, their variety and surprises, which tempt the pedestrian on and on. We may accept Euclid's dictum that a straight line is the shortest road between two points; a wandering line, if longer, is surely as a rule the more interesting.

A Scottish clerical friend of mine, the minister of a large parish in the South of Scotland, told me that there were just two categories of people in the world, decent bodies and the reverse, and that the result of his seventy years' experience of this world was that the decent bodies largely predominated.

Although I am unable to claim quite as many years as my friend the old minister, my experience coincides with his, the decent bodies are in a great majority, I have met them everywhere amongst all classes, and in every part of the world, and their skins are not always white.

They may not be conspicuously to the fore, for the decent bodies" are not given to self−advertisement. They have no love for the limelight, and would be distinctly annoyed should their advent be heralded with a flourish of trumpets. In the garden−borders the mignonette is a very inconspicuous little plant, and passes almost unnoticed beside the flaunting gaudiness of the dahlia or the showy spikes of the hollyhock, yet it is from that modest, low−growing, grey−green flower that comes the sweetness that perfumes the whole air, for the most optimistic person would hardly expect fragrance from dahlias or hollyhocks. They have their uses; they are showy, decorative and aspiring, but they do not scent the garden.

Between 1914 and 1918 I, in common with most people, came across countless hundreds of decent bodies, many of them wearing V.A.D. nurse's uniforms. These little women did not put on their nurse's uniform merely to pose before a camera with elaborately made−up eyes and a carefully studied sympathetic expression, to return to ordinary fashionable attire at once afterwards. They scrubbed floors, and carried heavy weights, and worked till they nearly dropped, week after week, month after month, and year after year, but they were never too tired to whisper an encouraging word, or render some small service to a suffering lad. I wonder how many thousands of these lads owe their lives to those quiet, unassuming, patient little decent bodies in blue linen, and to the element of human sympathy which they supplied. And what of the occupants of the hospital beds themselves? We all know the splendid record of sufferings patiently borne, of indomitable courage and cheerfulness, and of countless little acts of thoughtfulness and consideration for others in a worse plight even than themselves. Who, after having had that experience, can falter in their belief that the decent bodies are in a majority?

I know many people looking forward to the future with gloom and apprehension. I do not share their views. For the moment the more blatant elements in the community are unquestionably monopolising the stage and focussing attention on themselves, but I know that behind them are the vast unseen armies of the decent bodies, who will assert themselves when the time comes.

These decent bodies are not the exclusive product of one country, of one class, or of one sex. They are to be found Here, There, and Everywhere.