

Literary Register.

Supplement
to Daily
"Observer."

VOL. V.—TUESDAY, MAY 19, 1891.—No. 42.

Price 12½ cents.
R4 per annum.FROM CALIFORNIA VIA CANADA, TO
FLORIDA ON THE CARS:
A LECTURE.*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My lecture, tonight is, indeed, on a very big subject. The mere thought of a descriptive essay embracing the length and breadth of the United States is enough to frighten any one not enamoured of long journeys. The title of the lecture reads like a big Geography Lesson, and the Maps hung before you lend some colour to that thought. But you will find that I have endeavoured to be very concise in my descriptions and as the travelling will be nearly all by railway train, you will find that we can get over the ground rather quickly.

The home of the American citizen has often been described as "the biggest thing in creation," and certainly in no other part of the world could so long a trip by railway be enjoyed; for I have to take you this evening from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean and from the frozen shores of Lake Ontario to the orange groves of Florida. There may be places mentioned of which you have never heard before and that will be no discredit to you, for America grows so rapidly that even since many of us have left school, large towns have sprung into existence. We may be reminded of Lord Palmerston who when, on one occasion, asked to become Secretary of State for the Colonies, said: "Let us go upstairs to the Map and see where these places are," or of the story of the Duke of Newcastle rushing away to tell King George the 3rd, that "Cape Breton was an island." I daresay some of us may not feel quite sure whether the duke was right or wrong. My endeavour at this time will not be to outline the geography of the trip across the United States from ocean to ocean, and from the frozen neighbourhood of Toronto and Niagara Falls to the orange groves of Florida, but, rather to give you some passing sketches of the scenery, the cultivation, the people and the life encountered by the way.

To begin at the beginning, before entering California, I must mention the "Golden Gate" and port of San Francisco, one of the half-dozen magnificent sights of the world in the shape of harbours. "See Naples and die" is a familiar saying in reference to the view from the Bay of Naples; while I agree with those who have seen both, that Port Jackson, Sydney, the capital of New South Wales, excels in picturesqueness. I have yet to see our own Trincomalee,† the one magnificent

harbour in Asia, and Rio de Janeiro, the finest of South American ports; but I doubt very much if any one of the four—Naples, Sydney, Trincomalee or Rio—can be compared with the golden gate and far-extending bay of this Queen City of the Pacific slope, the Capital of the Golden State of California. Apart from the long winding entrance, the bay itself extends some 30 miles in length parallel with the coast.

San Francisco and its suburbs occupies the peninsula, separating the Bay from the Pacific Ocean, but faces eastwards to the bay from which it rises in successive terraces of streets and buildings until, on the tops of not inconsiderable hills crowned by the residences of Western millionaires, one has a wonderful view over the city and expanse of water to the mainland. Here may be marked the débouchure of the two great rivers of California, the Sacramento and San Joaquin, and a succession of thriving towns in Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda, &c., from which a vapoury line of smoke trending southwards, eastwards and northwards denotes the departure of locomotive trains to all parts of this thriving Californian state. Behind the towns and thriving plains rise hills and mountain slopes, merging eventually in the blue peaks of the distant Sierra Nevada mountains, the highest of which reach to about 14,000 ft. above sea-level. The harbour of San Francisco, I need scarcely say, is a very lively scene, for, besides the ferry steamers crossing in several directions, there are daily departures or arrivals of steamers up and down the Pacific coast as far north as British Columbia and Alaska and south to Panama, Chili or even round Cape Horn to Europe. Then, plying at longer intervals are the steamers for Japan and China; another line communicates with New Zealand and Australia and there is a special service to the Sandwich Islands. I have already recorded pretty fully my first impressions of San Francisco in a letter to the *Observer*, which many of you may have read. I mentioned in connection with the landing of passengers' luggage how the heavy protectionist tariff of the United States made their Customs an abomination of inquisitorial meanness.

One curious first impression formed of San Francisco from the deck of the steamer was that it must be a place full of Roman Catholic cathedrals and churches from the constant ringing of bells in slow solemn tones. On landing, this thought was speedily dissipated by the discovery that these bells belonged to the locomotives on the street railways, and indeed on *all railways* passing through towns, one peculiarity of the United States being the level crossings of even the most important lines through the busy streets of some of the largest cities, while the tracks are seldom sunk even on the grand termini, so that the passenger stands below the level of the rail and has often quite a climb up into the huge, lofty carriages.

I am not going to do more than mention some of the wonders of San Francisco in its palace-hotels,

* This lecture by Mr. J. Ferguson was delivered before gatherings in Colombo, Kandy and Nuwara Eliya at different dates and is now republished by request, in an enlarged form.—ED. L. R.

† Since accomplished,

generally magnificent buildings, cable railways (climbing steep streets, almost hills, far steeper than St. Sebastian or Wolfendahl without any engine or motive power being visible,) its Chinese quarter and 5,000 drinking saloons (for this is the number I saw given the other day), but I have to report that during a fortnight spent passing in and out of the city to various parts of California, I never saw a drunken man nor a bowie-knife nor revolver, although I have landed from steamer or railway at late hours and have had then to walk considerable distances through busy streets to my hotel. I have no doubt drinking, gambling and vice in its multifarious forms prevail here as in nearly all large American cities, but certainly our cousins have learned to keep their weaknesses away from the public gaze. The drinking saloons are, however, mostly underground, reached by steps leading down from the streets, a circumstance which prevents ordinary observation. But to see some hundreds of people dining in the palace hotels of San Francisco, Chicago and New York, with no stronger liquid than milk or iced water, which are at once served by the waiters without being asked for, presents the greatest possible contrast to hotel life in England or in British Colonies.

The second feature I will refer to is the *Fruit Market*, supplied even at the end of the winter with a number and variety of products clearly indicating the wealth of this favoured land.

No city in the world, probably, is more favoured in its supply of vegetables and fruits, and I was charmed with what I saw.

I must, however, give prominence to one sight connected with San Francisco. I had the felicity of a visit to Cliff House and the sea-lions, one of the most curious sights it has ever been my fortune to witness.

The house or hotel, is built on a rocky eminence facing the Pacific Ocean, league-long rolling waves dashing into its very foundations. Three hundred yards from the cliff on which the house stands, a series of rocky boulders rises above the waves, and upon and around these is settled a colony of sea-lions, a species of marine mammals peculiar to the north-western coast of America. These monsters average when full grown about 2,000 lb. in weight and in some solitary cases, double that weight has been authenticated. They subsist entirely on live fish; and when not after their food, they disport themselves on the rocks and make weird and discordant cries in loud chorus which rise above the din of the breaking waves. Their soft, silky skin is more valued than that of the fur seal and the Aleutians of the far north depend on the sea-lions for their staple food; but the colony settled near San Francisco, which is said to number 500, is not allowed to be interfered with, and certainly no aquarium, or zoological collection in the world, is more full of interest. Situated seven miles out from the heart of the city facing the pure ocean breezes, Cliff House is necessarily a favourite place of resort. I was particularly fortunate in having a bright, sunny day, and much as I had read about the sea-lions, I confess I rubbed my eyes again and again as I entered the broad verandah everlooking the Pacific and saw before me some hundreds of animals combining the body of a seal, with the head, features and hair of a bear and sunning themselves on the rocks, gambolling and fighting with the most curious contortions, both in and out of the water, bleating like sheep or barking like dogs, showing their strong, glistening, white teeth, bright eyes, awkward movements on the rock, with short limbs—which are legs, feet and fins all in one,—but in the water darting hither and thither gracefully. Every now and again, a huge monster measuring perhaps 16 ft. from tip of nose

to end of the posterior flippers would rise up from his slumbering position to punish an intruder, and with a grunt which seemed to say "Come youngster, don't be rude," would give a push to the offender and perhaps make him take what seemed a terrific leap into the sea. One old one roared so loudly as to drown the noise of the waves and apparently shake the foundations of Cliff House, while, as I left for the city, the chorus of cries seemed to die away in a plaintive wail, and I departed with the strong impression that in the sea-lion youngsters I had doubtless seen the animal which had given rise to many a sailor's traditional tale of mermaids of the sea.

One of the great sights of California was shut up from me, the still, heavy winter snows forbidding a visit to the *Yosemite Valley*. But I enjoyed some measure of compensation in a trip through the Santa Cruz range of mountains with giant trees, only second to those of the Yosemite, I saw enough of the homesteads, orange groves and vineyards, as well as of the mountain scenery of California to make me fully appreciate the love and admiration of the people for their Golden State. It has between six and seven times the area of Ceylon with a length of 700 miles and mountains rising over 15,000 ft. so there is a great variety of climate while San Francisco, with an average temperature of 54° is favoured beyond most cities on the face of the earth. Before leaving California it will be well to remark how freely the Spaniard has laid his mark on the land. Although they discovered it in 1537, steps to possess and colonize the country were not taken till 1602, while it was more than 200 years later that the Englishmen settled on this part of the Pacific coast, and only in 1846 was it conquered from Mexico by the United States.

Not only does the capital bear the Spanish impress, together with such towns as Alameda, San José (the city of gardens), Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, Monterey, as we read:—

Pious Portala, journeying by land
Reared high a cross upon the heathen strand.
Then far away
Dragged his slow caravan to Monterey,

but in Southern California especially, a considerable number of the people both by name and blood are descendants of the former conquerors and owners of the land, Indians and Spaniards having freely mixed. It was most interesting to me to visit the largest educational institution for girls on the Pacific shores of America, under the management of a former Ceylon missionary and his wife located in a delightful country palace albeit made of wood, and to which pupils come from nearly all the western states, many of them being the daughters of still wealthy Spanish grandees in Southern California or the borders of Mexico.

I booked through from San Francisco to New York, with permission to diverge at certain points and to stay on the way almost as long as I chose. It was the biggest railway ticket, covering 3,000 miles which I have ever possessed and cost a good many dollars, notwithstanding a substantial reduction for *press* privileges. I had occasion to regret this outlay afterwards, in New York, on making the acquaintance of the influential brother of a Ceylon American friend for he said "What a pity I did not know you were crossing the States. I could, as Director, have franked you over." But I may say here that, as a member of the Press, I met everywhere in America with special attention and privileges, and could almost corroborate the experience of the English Doctor of Divinity who found 50 per cent taken off his hotel bill in New York, because he was a clergyman and, on expressing surprise, was told

by the waiter: "Yes we always allow this to clergymen and editors." "Well, it so happens, I am both," said the doctor, "Then if you are we have much pleasure in presenting you with your bill fully receipted." (By and by when all the debt is wiped off and 10 per cent dividends become the rule, with the Ceylon proprietors, I have no doubt that this excellent plan will commend itself to the Managing Director of the Palace Hotel of Colombo as well as the franking of editors and clergymen to the General Manager of Ceylon Railways when once the line to Uva is completed and prosperity fully restored!)

(To be continued.)

ON QUIET RIVERS IN CEYLON.

(From the "Cornhill Magazine" for April 1891.)

(Concluded from page 323.)

Curiously enough, it is proved that whereas the annual consumption of salt in India is less than six pounds per head, that in Ceylon is just double, averaging twelve pounds per head. Whether this implies a peculiarly strong craving for salt in these islanders I know not, but its importance is so fully recognised that on various occasions both the Dutch and the Portuguese contrived to bring the King of Kandy (i. e. of the mountain province in the heart of the isle) to terms by blockading every route by which salt could be carried from the sea-coast to the mountains.

The price of the article of course varies enormously with the distance to which it has to be carried. To fish-curers on the coast it is supplied almost gratis, with a view to its encouragement as an island industry, instead of as at present importing large quantities of salt fish from India. In the towns on the seaboard, to which salt is conveyed by boat, the addition of freight is not very serious, but in inland districts, which can only be supplied by toilsome bullock cart and coolie transport, the price is enormously increased, and in the hill districts the difficulty and cost of transport are so great that the salt, which at the salt-pans sells for two cents per pound, may fetch from one to two rupees* in the mountains. It is hoped that ere long a branch railway may greatly facilitate the traffic.

Besides these salt-works on the west coast, there are others at Hambantotte in the southern province, and smaller ones on the north and east sea-coast.

Sunday proved anything but a day of rest for the Bishop, who had come to Puttalam in order to consecrate the new church, and who in the course of the day held all possible services in English and in Tamil, beginning with a baptism in the early morning and ending with a confirmation in the evening. Amongst the candidates were several very smart Tamil ladies, who wore short-sleeved jackets of bright-colored silk and muslin skirts which by no means veiled their bare brown feet and ankles. According to oriental custom, their large muslin veils duly concealed their faces till the moment of confirmation, when the veils were thrown back.

We were glad to end the evening by a stroll on the sea-beach, watching a lovely sunset; but we were assured that this would not be so pleasant at all seasons, as in one monsoon shoals of jelly-fish are washed ashore, and lie rotting in the sun, poisoning the whole atmosphere. A pleasanter gift of the sea is the oyster crop, which here is said to be excellent. We passed through the fish-market and saw a great variety of fishes—some odd, some beautiful; but both these we saw in larger numbers a few days later at Chilaw, a very pretty village

* Two rupees for 1lb. salt! Some great mistake.—ED. L. R.

lying between the sea and a river, only separated from one another by a very narrow belt of sand. The coast there is infested by sharks, and monstrous saw-fish, fully fifteen feet in length, are sometimes captured.

In that market we saw young sharks of three distinct species, saw-fish, dog-fish, and many more—some of the most vivid scarlet with sky-blue spots some scarlet shaded with crimson, others mauve and silvery grey, like the doves of the sea. There was every shade of colour, in every conceivable combination and variety of marking, with odd scales and fins. In the fish world, as elsewhere, the gaudiest are by no means the best. Those most in favour for the table are the seir, soles, mullet, whiting, mackerel, dories, and good little sardines.

But for gorgeous colouring we turn to the family of parrot-fishes of lustrous green, gold, purple, or crimson, varied by bands of the richest scarlet, grey, and yellow, the whole being toned by cross-stripes of velvety black. Then there are great fire-fish of vivid flame-colour, and Red Sea perch of dazzling scarlet. One lovely fish, about eighteen inches long, is specially sacred to Buddha, being clothed in his colours of lovely gold barred with rich brown sienna. The red pahaya is also brilliant red, tinted with gold; it grows to about two feet in length, and is excellent to eat. The basket-parrot has a green back fading into yellow, with yellow fins; but the whole is covered with straight lines and cross-patches, giving the exact effect of wicker-work.

A very handsome parrot-fish about two feet in length has a dove-grey body with black spots, fins brown with rows of dainty little black spots; the ventral fin is edged with delicate green, while that on the back is edged with scarlet; the tail is scarlet with a white edge; the eye is bright gold, set in a golden head with blue-green stripes. Altogether, one almost fancies that a ray of prismatic light must rest upon it. Then there is the worm-parrot,* so called from a fancied resemblance to the worm which bores holes in palm-trees. Its body is of a dark claret colour, crossed by five bars of delicate yellow, while each separate scale is edged with green. Bands of yellow edged with pale blue meander over the head.

When one hears of a squirrel-parrot,† one naturally expects to see something grey or brown, but this is by no means the case. It is a gorgeous fish, about eighteen inches in length, of beautifully shaded green with longitudinal stripes and dots of crimson; its head is likewise green and crimson, and its tail fin striped scarlet and gold on a green ground. The pumpkin-parrot, which averages three feet in length, has a blue-green back and bright green tail, grey underside and yellow head, with sienna fins; but it is covered all over with a honeycomb pattern of bright yellow.

A very lady-like looking member of this family is the balistes, robed in delicate silver; its eyes are bright golden with large black pupils. The green tulip-parrot, is also a dainty little fish, only about six inches in length, apparelled in lovely shaded green, while the coco-nut sparrow‡ is a small creature with head, tail, fins and cross-bars of yellow on a claret-coloured ground.

Perhaps the most marvellously variegated of all these creatures is the flower-parrot, which chiefly frequents the coral-reefs off the south of the isle, its lustrous robe has horizontal bands of silver, blue, crimson, bright green and dark green, covered by black bands and patches of yellow. The fins are straw-coloured, the head has crimson and bright green stripes radiating from the eye.

* Panoo Girawah.

† Lena Giraweh.

‡ Pol-Kitchyah.

Even the excellent herring of Ceylon displays an oriental love of colour, for its silvery body is striped with red, and some of its fins are yellow, while the others are dark steel-grey. But the triumph of fish-millinery is reserved for a lovely, very rare perch, dressed in silvery grey, with tail, fins and crown of the head of vivid gold, just tipped with velvety black.

Another radiant butterfly of the deep is the malkotah, which is apparelled in green satin striped with scarlet, its fins and tail being also scarlet.

But for oddity nothing can excel the various members of the chetodon family or 'moon-stones,' as they are called by the Singhalese, because of their globular form. One is just a ball of bright golden, yellow, with glittering yellow eyes and enormous brown fins. Another has a yellow body with curved lines of purple, black and gold tail and fins, and a black band on the face. One little gem about four inches in diameter is silvery grey shaded with bands of darker grey and silvery eyes. Another equally tiny is of bright gold with a blue back and gold dorsal fin.

There are also crabs innumerable of all shapes and sizes, from the largest edible crabs down to little tiny hermits which scamper about the shore in thousands, hiding during the heat of the day under the cool shade of the marine convolvulus, each tenanted some empty shell which it has selected from the multitude which strew the beach. But I must not linger too long over the wonders of the fish-market and of the sea-shore, which so specially attracted us at Chilaw, from being so close to that of the river where our boat lay anchored.

Here we were taken to see some fine wood-carving in the Roman Catholic Church, where we were told the Sunday congregation averaged nine hundred persons, for here, as elsewhere in Ceylon, a large proportion of the fishers and many of the coast population are Roman Catholics—descendants of the Portuguese converts. Chapels are numerous, all built by the people themselves, and devout congregations attend Mass daily at 4 a. m. The fishers give their priest a tithe of their daily catch and in stormy weather will never put to sea till he has sprinkled the boats with holy water. Not one boat puts to sea on Sunday—a deference for the day in honourable contrast with the enormous amount of Sunday labour exacted at the ports where foreign vessels call, and where the toil of shipping and unshipping cargo goes on without intermission.*

Having been converted by the Portuguese, the Roman Catholics in Ceylon have ever continued subject to the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa, whence also their priests have been chiefly supplied. The French and Italian priests and vicars apostolic sent from Rome have found less favour with the people, who have shown themselves in no wise disposed to accept the dogma of 'Papal infallibility,' more specially since the Pope decreed that in September 1884 the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa, should cease and the Goanese clergy be no longer competent to dispense the Holy Sacraments, unless they would submit themselves to the Pope's representative—a change of allegiance to which they very seriously objected.†

The strife born of these disputes was most unedifying. Thus we were shown an Island near Negombo (Dhuwa Island) to which some notion of special sanctity attaches, and there the different orders have had serious conflicts as to which should say Mass first. The year before our visit thousands had assembled, quite prepared for a free fight in support of their respective spiritual leaders; but the British

authorities having got wind of their intentions, a body of police took possession of the chapel and ordered which should take precedence. Afterwards the others held their service, although greatly incensed at the preference shown to their rivals.

I heard much of the miracle-plays performed on Good Friday in a building adjoining the chapel. The room was chemically darkened, leaving only sufficient light to distinguish three great crucifixes; all other figures were real. The Blessed Virgin was personated by a Singhalese woman. Afterwards an image representing the dead Christ was carried on a bier through the streets of the city, which were lined with thousands of kneeling women all dressed in black and wailing aloud. At Chilaw on Palm Sunday processions of large images of our Lord riding the ass, and of the twelve Apostles, are paraded on wheels, just as the Hindoos parade their gods. At Jaffna the processions might well be mistaken for those of Juggernaut's cars and, no heathen idol could be more repulsive than are the images of many of the Christian saints as here displayed.

Leaving pleasant Chilaw, we rowed back in glorious moonlight (oh! so beautiful as seen from beneath the dark over-arching fronds of tall cocoa-palms!) to the lovely Luna-Oya, and there anchored that we might get full enjoyment of the early morning light on its beautiful foliage and tangled creepers, and on the wealth of reeds, acanthus and innumerable water-plants on its sedgy shores. The men camped on shore, rigging up the brown sail as their tent and kindling a bright fire beneath the trees.

Again with the dawn we rejoiced in all the voices of the wakening jungle life: monkeys and jolly old wanderers, parrots, kingfishers, barbets, jungle, fowl—notes of all sorts, harsh and liquid, the most attractive being those of a cheery black-and-white bird, which Europeans call a robin, because it has something of the friendly demeanour to human beings which endears our own little redbreast.

All day long we sailed or rowed, and at sunset neared the village of Maraville, but catching sight of a crowd of natives preparing decorations in honour of the Bishop's visit, we pretended not to have arrived, and turning back, anchored for the night near a grand old banyan-tree, amid whose dark foliage flashed fire-flies innumerable.

Immediately after early coffee, Mr. de Soyza, the fine old village 'moodliar,' came to fetch us, and showed us over his splendidly kept cocoa-palm-estate, watered by the aid of a steam-engine, an outlay well repaid by the luxuriant growth of the trees, young ones about eleven years of age having fronds of from twenty to twenty-five feet in length while on an average each full-grown tree yields twenty nuts six times a year.

These fine fronds, torn into shreds and plaited, figured largely in the decorations at the landing-place and at church, mingling with the large fan-shaped leaves and rich glossy brown fruit of the Palmyra palm, the scarlet screw-pine and curiously woven pendent bird's-nests, the general effect being very light and pretty.

The congregation being all Singhalese, the Bishop of course conducted the service in that language. The interest centred in the baptism of two adults, converts from Buddhism.

In the afternoon we resumed our voyage, sailing down stream between beautifully wooded banks where we saw several great ungainly kabra-goyas and numerous small lovely lizards. We attempted to capture a bright green tree-snake about four feet long, which was twined round a branch with a crested bird dead in its mouth, but at our approach it dropped into the water and swam to shore. Though not venomous, it is dreaded by the islanders

* Not so now; many steamers do no work on Sunday in Colombo Harbour.—Ed. L. R.

† Only a small minority, ultimately.—Ed. L. R.

because of its habit of darting at the eyes of man or bird.

A sunset in which every gorgeous colour blended was succeeded by an afterglow still more exquisite, and ere its brilliancy had faded the moon shone gloriously, its light blending with that of the sheet lightning, while the glaring torches of the men fishing cast long fiery reflections and showers of sparks, as the fishers passed in and out beneath the overhanging branches of the dark trees.

We anchored for the night where the placid waters of the Ging-Oya mingle with those of the Maha-Oya, and together flow silently into the ocean, the point of union being marked only by the upheaval every other minute of the majestic green wave, which curls and breaks in dazzling surf and with thunderous roar—a vision of lovely peace blended with resistless force.

Sailing in the early dawn, we passed from the calm river to a still calmer canal, and thence into the Lake of Negombo, where we found a most picturesque native town and fishing village with a great variety of boats, most fascinating to a sketcher. A hearty welcome awaited us in a pleasant bungalow between the sea and the lake, and close to an old Dutch fort and a magnificent banyan-tree with innumerable stems—one of the finest I have ever seen. Beneath its shadow sat groups of Singhaiese, waiting their summons on business to the court-house within the old fort.

Long before sunrise we found our way to the palm-fringed shore, and enjoyed the rare luxury of a delicious bathe in the warm sea—rare because there are so few places on these shores where we could feel safe from sharks; but here the water lies so clear above the firm yellow sand that sharks seem afraid to approach, so our enjoyment of the perfect morning was unalloyed.

But the subsequent delight of lying idly at rest in the verandah during the noonday heat was tempered by alarming stories of the terrible results of such indulgence should the breeze happen to be blowing from the north-west,* in which case it is known as the 'land wind,' which blowing over feverish Indian jungles, arrives here hot and dry, and shrivels up whatever it touches. Half an hour of this delicious but treacherous breeze blowing on a sleeper, or even on a person lying at rest, often proves worse than a sunstroke, and is quite as permanent in its effects. Animals suffer from it as severely as human beings, horses and deer being often crippled with rheumatism or even blinded from this cause. Its effect on vegetation is also most baneful, and even furniture shrinks and splits under its drying influence.†

One of the objects of interest near Negombo is a coco nut palm with several heads, a growth so rare that we were taken up the lake to see it, but found it as hideous as are most other deformities. I saw similar hydra-headed palms on one of the Fijian Isles,‡ where it was equally prized by the natives on account of its singularity.

I found a more attractive object for pencil and brush in the majestic banyan-tree, which claimed all my available time at charming Negombo, to which we bade adieu with infinite regret; my companions returning to Colombo by land, while I preferred returning by water and sailing down the lake in clear moonlight. It was an evening much to be remembered on account of the wonderful phosphorescence of the water, the brilliancy of

* North-east.—Ed. L. R.

† In the moist south-west portions of the island furniture is rarely thus affected.—Ed. L. R.

‡ This reference renders it certain that Miss Gordon Cumming wrote the paper.—Ed. L. R.

forked and sheet lightning, and the utter stillness broken only by the deep growling of distant thunder. There was also something of novelty in finding myself alone with a crew of Singhaiese of whose language I scarcely knew six words!

We anchored at Tarracoolie, a very pretty spot with rich foliage and deep reflections, of which I secured an early sketch; then once more sailed by lovely river and canal, and ere the sun set the 'Castle Jermyn' was safe back at her old moorings, and all her passengers (bipeds and quadrupeds) were in comfortable quarters at St. Thomas's College under the Bishop's hospitable roof.

ENGLISH AS SHE IS WROTE.

12th November 1890.
Rio de Janeiro.

I come to pray to you if you desire aquist of the "Dalmatien Produkt Grisantemo Flower" of which been produkt the *Insecticidas Pulver* used to preserve the manufacture or pelisse ect...of the some dangerous insect and specialy: the *Louse* or *Milleped*.

I kan furnish you of the first qualitate gender at conveniently price about 11-12-13 English Pound Sterling p. 100 Kgr. (one qte)

I am able to fourward you of very good and stronge of first qualitate Wine, *White & Black* produced in Dalmatien at conveniently price about two or two pass. half Engl. Pound. Sterling. p. 100 Liter (one HL)

I kan furnish you of very good and of first qualitate "Extracte of *Quintasentium* " *Rosmarinus officinalis*," whero was used for some misture in the *Chemick & Pharmaceutik* labour.

I have also of the "*Gripola*" of stronge Dalmatienische Wine of which used in the labour *Chemick & Pharmaceutik* misture. I kan give you those gender at very lower price.

When you desire aquist give me an order and I forward you at quickly as receiving you note.

I pray to give me the awknowledge in Where artikel you are okupied so as was awknoledging.

I salute you.
Believe me to be
My ders. Mr. s.....
Your

P. S. In the combination that you do not mater in those artikel please me to indicate me the names of the Commercialhouses which was doening about the op esponet gender.

In the hofnung of receiving a fowareble your replies
I am my dears Mr. s
Your very truly freund.

—Rio News.

A STRANGE RELATIONSHIP.

TWIN-IDOLS; HINDU AND CHRISTIAN.
Editor, Indian Watchman.

Dear Sir,—A curious dispute is reported as having occurred on the Eastern coast of India a few years ago. It was in regard to a rivalry between a party of Hindus with their *Karupannaswamy* procession and a similar one of Roman Catholics with their St. Anthony's procession. The facts briefly stated are as follows:—

A Hindu gave a Carpenter a piece of wood to make an idol called *Karupannaswamy*, and whilst this was being done a Romanist came to the same carpenter to have an image of St. Anthony made. Fancying the wood out of which the *Karupannaswamy* was being cut, he requested the Carpenter to form a St. Anthony from that kind of wood. A piece of the same stick having remained after *Karupannaswamy* was completed, the Carpenter used it for St. Anthony's image. Now it happened that when both of these idols were carried out in procession, they met in a certain street, whereupon the Roman Catholics objected to having the procession of the Hindu God in the same street at

the same time as their ceremony. The Hindus claimed precedence for Karupannaswamy on the ground that he was the elder brother of St. Anthony. The Roman Catholics not understanding the force of this remark, felt highly insulted. The matter was subsequently put in court, but was dismissed, it having been proved by the carpenter that the two idols were "Brothers" having been cut out of the same piece of wood. After such a disclosure, I should like to know whether the Roman Catholics kept the same twin-heathen "Saint" idol in their chapel, or had it replaced by another wooden stick.

Yours in Christ of the overthrow of all idolatry.

T. FRANCIS.

VALENTYN'S HISTORY OF COFFEE.

(Continued from page 328.)

PART III.

M. Paschius who maintained that Coffee was known in the time of King David—Parallel passages from Scripture—The Author's own opinion about it—Du Four's Book on Coffee—The Parisians believe Coffee to be a species of Mulberry—The opinions pro and con of divers Philosophers, Apothecaries and Physicians as to the effects of Coffee drinking—Nicholas de Blegny's Treatise on Coffee, Tea and Chocolate which appeared in 1687—Mr. Anthony Galland's Book on Coffee—Abdulcader Mohamed and Abdul Gaffar the earliest writers on the subject—One Mohamel Ibu Saib of Dhabban in Arabia Felix goes over to Persia in 1466, and finds some of his brethren there in the habit of drinking Coffee; on his way back, feeling sick, he thinks of it, takes a good *strong draught* and finds it very efficacious in raising his *drooping spirits*—How the people of Mecca prepared Coffee from the husk, and how they played Chess and Tjonka and kept attention awake by taking sundry sips of the beverage—The use of Coffee prohibited in Egypt by the Sultan Kair Beg, and, in Mecca, by its Governor, who, despite the arguments of the learned, believed that Coffee like Wine was intoxicating—The Governor summons an assembly of Divines who state their opinion—The matter is then referred to two eminent Persian Physicians of Mecca, brothers, who are both opposed to the use of Coffee—Oae Benjaazlah, however, comes out strong in favor of the beverage and is backed by a powerful majority; but the Persians insist that Benjaazlah knows nothing about it—All concur however that Coffee has the effect of disordering the "*Organs of the Brain*," the Mufti of Mecca alone dissenting; and the use of Coffee is accordingly prohibited and put down by the strong Arm of the Law—Coffee Bibbers of Mecca persist nevertheless in sipping the beverage by stealth, at the risk of losing their necks, and of being paraded thro' the Town *on the back of a Jack-Ass*—The Sultan of Egypt takes unbrage at certain *assinine* proceedings of his Deputy at Mecca and orders him *forthwith* to rescind the obnoxious decree—The Deputy obeys and rescinds it accordingly—The Persian brothers, thus discomfited, betake themselves to Cairo, where they amuse themselves by lampooning the Grand Signeur Selim, and lose their necks in the bargain.

"A certain gentleman M. Paschius by name maintains in his Latin Work published at Leipsic in A. D. 1700, that the parched corn spoken of in 1st Samuel xxv. 18. which Abigail, amongst her other gifts, presented to David to appease and avert his wrath, was no other than Coffee beans.

Of such parched meal &c. we read in God's Holy Word more than once, as in Lev. vi. 21. vii. 12. and 1st Chron. xxiii. 29; but I cannot admit however, that by that gift of Abigail we can understand anything else than what the word implies, to wit, parched corn more especially as I find in 2nd Samuel xvii. 28, the distinction clearly drawn; for, amongst the presents of Berzillai and other friends of David, mention is made of roasted wheat, barley, and meal, and of parched beans and lentiles; and hence I opine that they were all parched or roasted, not excepting the meal and the wheat, and the passage in question

therefore cannot be understood as having reference to Coffee beans in *particular*.

Hence it is clear on the one hand with reference to these nice distinctions, that the parched corn and parched beans in Abigail's gifts, cannot be understood to mean Coffee beans; but on the other hand howevre it appears quite evident from the same passage 2nd Sam. xvii. 28. that the ancients were wont to go in quest of a certain species of beans and lentiles (the same distinction being observed between *beans* and *lentiles*.) Ever since I became acquainted with Coffee I was inclined to believe that the beans referred to in this verse could be none other than Coffee beans, or at least some sort of beans used in a similar manner as the Coffee. I was not, however, led to this belief by the strong opinions expressed by M. Paschius or any other person; but this idea occurred to me whilst I was occupied in translating the Bible into the Malay language about the year 1690, and it was not till after a careful consideration of the verse referred to that the idea forced itself upon me, (*opgeborreld*, literally, bubbled up.) I have since adhered to this opinion. There are others again who went still farther and insisted that the red pottage, which Esau longed for Gen. xxv. 30., was nothing more or less than liquid Coffee, though this does not seem to me quite as probable as the foregoing supposition.

But to return to Du Four, who asserts that Coffee was not known in France till after 1645, and that when he wrote his Book, only 25 years had elapsed since Coffee began to be used there; that even its proper name was not known then, and that when it was first used in Paris, it was believed to be a species of the mulberry.

At a later period when Coffee became more widely known, the Philosophers, Apothecaries, and Physicians were not unanimous in their opinion respecting its quality or its effects. Some rejected it altogether as a *Caput Mortuum*, and hence as prejudicial to health.

Others again, more grave and less choleric, were of opinion, that Coffee even after it had undergone the process of roasting still retained many of its oily and wholesome properties, and that tho' it might not tend to improve the health of persons of a delicate frame, it was very beneficial to persons of a sound and vigorous constitution who used the same moderately and did not overload their stomachs with too copious draughts, nor with too strong infusions. Coffee like medicine however healing in its effects might, otherwise, prove injurious to health if used immoderately.

In 1687, a small Book appeared which professed to treat of Coffee, Tea, and Chocolate, by Nicholas de Blegny, but it consisted in the main of extracts from Du Four's Pamphlet.

Mr. Anthony Galland who was also a Traveller in the Levant and well skilled in the oriental languages wrote likewise a treatise on the origin and progress of Coffee.

He obtained all his information from a manuscript in the King's Library and afterwards sold his Book in Paris in 1699. The writer of that manuscript was one Abdulcader Mohamed, whose ancestors were natives of Medina. He was born in Mesopotamia and was of the sect or persuasion of Henbeli well known amongst the Moors. The Title of this Book was "What behoves one most to consider and believe concerning the true nature and efficacy of Coffee." That is "Whether it was lawful for the *Mohammedans* to use it."

This little work which consisted of seven chapters dwelt on the Etymology of the word *Caweh*, the virtue of Coffee, and the land where that beverage was first used.

It was written in Egypt, Anno Hegiræ 996 or in the year of the flight of Mahomed from Mecca which according to the reckoning of some (tho' there exists a great difference in the calculations) would answer perhaps to the year of Our Lord 1578.* It seems after all, the Abdulcader Mohamed himself borrowed the subject from the writings of one Szeich Abeddien Ibu Abdul Gaffar, who wrote on the subject long before him.

But in order to point out the exact time when a

* A. D. 622. Era of the Hegyra or flight of Mahomet from Mecca to Medina. Tytler's Table of Chronology.

right knowledge of Coffee drinking was established, it is necessary to seek for information from a remote period.

Dzemaleddien Aboe Abdullah Mohamed Ibu Saib, of Dhabban, a town in Arabia Felix, then Mufti of Aden, repaired about the middle of the year 1466 to Persia and during his sojourn there, found some of his countrymen take Coffee; but he paid no particular attention to the circumstance at the time; on his return however homewards to Aden, finding himself in a very weak state, he thought of the Coffee which he saw used, by his countrymen and tried some in the hope that it might do him some good and experienced the relief that he sought. He further discovered many other qualities in the Coffee, viz., that it was efficacious in removing head-aches, enlivening the spirit, and keeping off drowsiness. These stimulating qualities induced him and a Dervise to partake of the beverage when they went to prayers at night.

He likewise partook of it during the performance of many other of his devotional exercises, and since that time this drink became more general in Aden amongst all people of consequence, partly upon the recommendation of Dzemaleddien himself and partly upon that of Mohamed of Hadramaut a town in Arabia Felix.

Prior to this period, Coffee was not known in Arabia where this bean grows, nor elsewhere in the East, but according to this Arabian writer, Coffee was long before this in use in Abyssinia, although Messrs. Jobus Ludolf, Piere Telles, and many others who had written accounts of Ethiopia made no mention thereof.

From Aden this beverage was introduced into Mecca in 1500 where it was not then prepared from the beans, but from the shells (husks) which were brought from Yemen; for Mecca lies not (as many suppose) properly in Arabia Felix, but in the Government and deputyship of a stony region of Arabia which some call Tahamah and others Hidzaar and which is situated on it's border.

The use of Coffee now became more general and almost every body partook of it, as he whiled away his time in a game of chess, tzonka, the game of beans or some other amusement of the kind.

From Mecca it passed to the other towns of Arabia, and thence to Egypt especially to Grand Cairo; all which took place not long after 1511. But shortly after this the use of Coffee (which was introduced somewhat later from Cairo into Turkey) was prohibited in Egypt by the Sultan Khair Beg. The Governor of Mecca also who held office under the Prince of the Circassian Mammelukes, then Masters of Egypt, prohibited it's use there, imagining it was wine, for he found some people partook of this liquor in the Temple to keep themselves awake during the recitation of their orations. In spite, however, of the explanation given him of the harmless qualities of Coffee, he was obstinate, and being, at the time, quite ignorant of the innocuous qualities of the beverage which he supposed like wine had an intoxicating effect (and the use of wine was forbidden by their Law) he instantly ordered the offenders to quit the Temple and warned them against a recurrence of similar conduct.

On the following day he summoned an assembly of divines and related to them what had occurred. They were all unanimously of opinion that Coffee drinking was opposed to the Mohammedan Law and consequently that it ought to be suppressed.

They carried this matter, however, to far greater lengths here. An investigation was to take place in order to ascertain whether or not Coffee was detrimental to the *body* as well as the *spirit*; and it was accordingly judged expedient to refer the matter to the Faculty and take their opinion upon the point.

Hereupon the Governor sent for two Persian brothers, the principal Physicians of Mecca, who had but a superficial knowledge, of the art and one of whom had already written something disparagingly of Coffee, and submitted the case to them for opinion. They said that the Coffee husks being in their nature very cold and dry were detrimental and injurious to health; but a Physician of Bagdad named Benjaazlah, who was one of the assembly, observed, that Coffee promotes the digestion of the phlegm, and that according to his

opinion it was hot and dry (contrary to the opinion of the two others.) The rest concurred with him, and the opinion that it was not injurious prevailed.

The Persians then said, that Benjaazlah was mistaken, and that they spoke of another plant altogether, which he mistook for Coffee.

Finally, they came to the conclusion, that be the effects of the Coffee good or bad, it would be the safest plan for a Mohammedan to abstain from the use of it, especially as there were some amongst them, who placed Coffee amongst the things which disordered and confused the brain. (*Te meer, alzoer zommige waren, die de Coffi onder de dingen stelden, die de hersenen bedwelmden.*)

The Mufti of Mecca alone, a great Jurist and Divine, ventured to argue with some vehemence in favor of Coffee, despite the Governor and the whole assembly; but his opinion and arguments were rejected and laid aside by the Zealots of their Law, and the use of and all dealings in Coffee were prohibited under severe punishment. Injunctions were given to the Chief Magistrates to watch against all infractions of the order, and all the Coffee found in Mecca was directed to be burnt and destroyed, not excepting the Coffee in the Warehouses, the property of the Merchants. But these rigorous and severe measures did not either prevent or restrain those who were already strongly addicted to Coffee, from continuing the use of it stealthily in their houses, under a consciousness, that the prohibition was the result of an ill-judged sentence of the assembly, especially knowing, as they did, that the Mufti himself was so strenuous an advocate for it.

In the mean time an unfortunate delinquent fell into the hands of the Magistrate. The offender after being severely punished was as a warning to others, mounted upon an Ass, and paraded through all the streets of Mecca (*op een Ezel sittende, door alle de straaten van Mekka wierd geleid.*) But this state of things did not continue long, for the Sultan of Egypt far from approving the indiscreet zeal on the part of his Governor, was much surprised to find so severe a punishment inflicted on Coffee drinkers, inasmuch as in Cairo, where there were so many abler Physicians than at Mecca, the opinion was in favour of Coffee drinking, and besides none of the teachers of the Mohammedan Law there considered Coffee drinking as opposed to the doctrines inculcated in the Koran. For these reasons, he ordered his Governor to recall and rescind the Decree, which he was obliged to do, tho' much against his will.

The two Persian Physicians finding themselves much despised and looked down upon, since the recall of the Decree, left Mecca for Cairo, and were there put to death for the imprecations hurled by them at the head of the Grand Signeur Selim 1st, who came to wrest Egypt from Campsoni al Gauri, and who was the last Sultan who restored the practice of Coffee drinking in Mecca."

PART IV.

The good people of Mecca sip Coffee *ad libitum* until a certain Cadi shuts up all the Coffee shops; but his successor, a better man, gets them all open again—Soliman the Great sends forth an Edict denouncing the use of Coffee in Mecca, and it is generally believed that his Sultana is at the "*bottom of the dodge*"—The Pacha of Egypt who is rather fond of Coffee confers with his wise men on the subject and comes to the conclusion that the Great Soliman is a "*fool and a knave*"—Mr. Anthony Galland again; and some choice verses on the virtues of Coffee by a Turkish Bard—Constantinople—How Sjenis and Hekem flourished there and how their Coffee houses happened to be always choke-full of Poets, Philosophers and Chess players—The Mosques begin to be neglected the Turkish Divines sound the "*Tocsin of alarm*," and the Mufti or Pope thinks it high time to shut up the Coffee shops, and they are shut up accordingly—The Turks get to be excessively fond of the beverage and won't give it up for "*love or money*"—Of a Vizier who attempted to suppress the free expression of public opinion and of his two sons who played the part of eaves-droppers and

brought certain *innocent* people into scrape—And lastly of certain honest shop-keepers who took advantage of the Coffee drinking mania and sold their goods at a high premium.

“After the conquest—of Egypt by Selim (which took place in 1516,) it appears that Coffee drinking was more properly understood in Turkey, and by degrees the use of it became known throughout the country, especially as the use of Coffee was re-established and restored in Mecca, and no further questions were raised there up to the year 1524. The Cadi or Judge of that town, however, caused all the Coffee-houses to be closed up that very same year owing to the great irregularities which took place daily, but without preventing, in particular, any person using the drink in his own house. His successor however, ordered the re-opening of the Coffee-houses, forbidding only the recurrence of similar irregularities and disturbances.

From Cairo the use of the Coffee spread gradually, 'ere it was known in Turkey, first to Damascus, and then to Aleppo, and eventually to Constantinople.

Subsequently in 1541, a caravan from Damascus reached Mecca with an Edict from Soliman the Great denouncing the use of Coffee, but this order was not strictly observed, as it was generally known that it emanated from the Turkish Sultana, in her overwhelming solicitude for the Emperor, who indulged in the drink. Whilst at the same time the Bashaw of Egypt took the opinion of all the Teachers of their Law in writing, shewing the *vanity* of such an order, and the *ignorance* of those who condemned this drink.

Howbeit there prevailed some years afterwards a great diversity of opinion in respect of the use of Coffee at Mecca; the people of that town being divided into two parties each maintaining a different opinion.

Thus far proceeds the account of the aforesaid Arabian whose manuscript Mr. Galland have availed himself of, as also that of a Turkish writer named Pitsjevelli (after Pitsjeri a Town in Hungary) one of the three Treasurers of the Turkish Empire. Mr. Galland also obtained some information from a Poem written by Belligi, a Turkish Poet, which agrees, *in substance*, with the foregoing account, and of which I subjoin a *poetical* translation:

Tot Halep vind m', en tot Damascus by de Grooten
En ook tot Cairo (daar m' al mede weet te ontblooten
De Coffi—Boon van hare schil) de Coffi—vrugt
Die lieve en diere drank, die wel zoo'n diepe zugt
Uit menig angstig hart na boven wist te haalen,
Eer die by 't Turks Serail begon te Zegepraalen.
* * * * *

[The following, it must be confessed, is rather a free rendering of the Dutch version of this short Turkish Poem, from which a few lines have been given above. Your readers will, of course, excuse the shortcomings of the Translator in his attempt to give, at least, the *spirit* of the original in English verse.]

I sing the Coffee Plant, which, tho' oppos'd by Fate,
Has spread thro' ev'ry Country, City, State,
At Halep, Cairo and Damascus too
It has secur'd the fame which was its due.
Say, who could estimate
The virtues of that drink
Which made not one,
But many thousands think,
And write such works as made the vulgar stare
And fill'd the world with disputations rare!!
Say, who could well describe its wondrous pow'r
To cheer the heart in "sorrow's lonely hour"
Sustain the drooping spirits of the fair
Who cag'd in Harems, pine in sadness there;
(Unhappy birds, I wish I had the key
To open wide your doors and bid you all be free
Coffee! rare plant
Where'er thou deign'st to grow,
The source of wealth
To hundreds here below:
Some thought that thou did'st *once*
The place of wine supply,
As well as Beer
As some will scarce deny.
Whate'er thou art, fair plant,
Of whatsoever clime,
Thy virtues great have puzzl'd oft
The wits of olden time;
But now we know thee well, fair plant,
And all thy virtues too:—
My task is o'er, farewell my muse
Ye Coffee, plants adieu!!!

Prior to the year 1554 very little was known of Coffee at Constantinople and still less of Coffee houses. It was the Sultana who did her best to put a stop to Coffee drinking at Mecca, but in the same year nearly a century after Coffee had begun to be first used in Aden, and in the reign of Soliman the Great, two individuals named Sjenis and Hakem, the former of Damascus, and the latter of Aleppo established Coffee houses in Constantinople in a certain quarter called Tahhta-Calah, and sold the liquid to people of learning, Poets, Chess Players (more properly Szah-Players or lovers of the King's Game, for *Szah* signifies a King in the Persian language) or others who were inclined to amuse themselves with some such games.

These houses were afterwards greatly multiplied and the very Turkish Courtiers resorted to them to regale themselves with a cup of *Caweh*.

As the use of Coffee became now more general and extended, these gentry were oftener to be found in the Coffee shops than at their Mosques. This gave rise to no small stir and grumbling amongst the Turkish, Divines, who loudly declaimed the practice as repugnant to the tenets of their Law, and got the Mufti on their side, who gave his assent to the shops being closed.

Hereupon, all the Coffee houses were immediately shut up, and instructions conveyed to the Chief Magistrates to see this order strictly enforced. Stern and absolute as this order was, it had not the effect of altogether putting an end to the use of Coffee.

Under Amureth the III. this order was again revived, but the abandonment of so agreeable a beverage was not to be endured by the Turks, who, by bribes and the connivance of those whose duty it was to watch over it, still carried on the practice of Coffee drinking, though not so publicly as before, the order being entirely disregarded.

This order was still less regarded during the time of the succeeding Mufti (or Turkish Pope) who was not as solicitous about it as his predecessors. He sat aside this order, and not only permitted a free and undisputed use of Coffee, but he himself and the rest of the fraternity indulged in it and their example was immediately followed by the countries, &c.

It is also worthy of remark that these Coffee houses brought great gain to the Prime Minister or Chief Vizier, who got from each house from one to two ducats daily, besides the one Asdar* hitherto levied on every cup of Coffee.

Mr. Galland further narrates that since the war of Candia when State affairs were discussed with some freedom of speech in these Coffee-houses by those who frequented them, the same were directed to be closed by the Grant Vizier Koeproeli, or Kioeperli, who with his two sons, who acted the part of vigilant informers, spared no pains in visiting these houses *incognito*, and listening to all slanderous discourses against the Government, in order to punish the delinquents with great rigour—and the same vizier during the minority of Mohammed the 4th caused all these houses to be closed up, regardless of the great loss which this proceeding entailed upon himself.

Although the Coffee houses were suppressed there was no diminution in the consumption of that beverage, for it was now carried to the public market and about the principal streets, *fresh* and *hot*, and sold to the public, who partook of it in the neighbouring shops, where the consumers were very welcome, as it was one of the means whereby the shopkeepers succeeded in drawing their attention to the goods exposed by them for sale, and which these Coffee-quaffers were obliged, *nolens volens*, to purchase."

(To be continued.)

* A Turkish coin equivalent to three farthings of our money.