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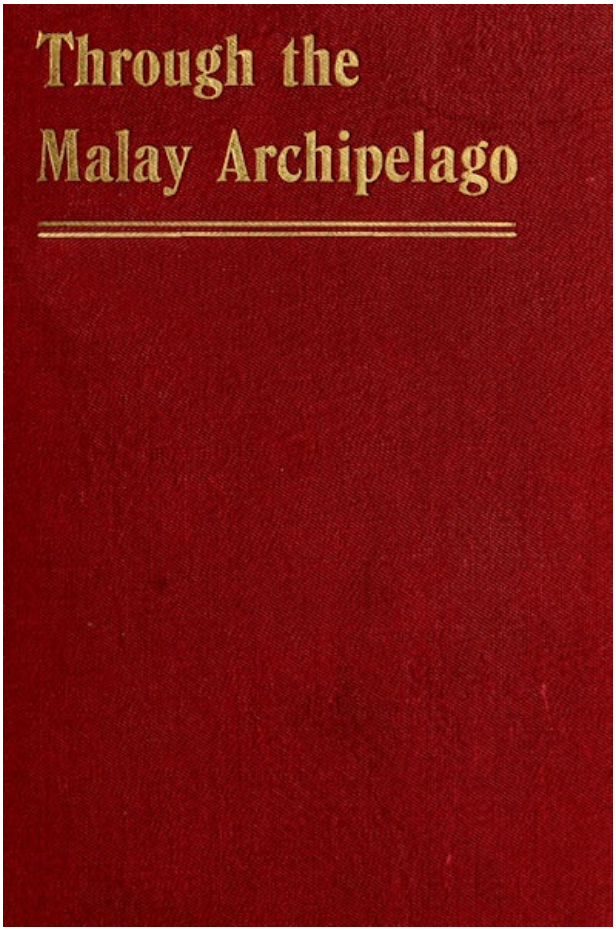

Through the

Malay Archipelago.

BY

EMILY RICHINGS.

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"Sir Walter's Wife," "In Chaucer's Maytime," &c.

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O hundred shores of happy climes!
How swiftly streamed ye by the bark!
At times the whole sea burned—at times
With wakes of fire we tore the dark.

New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lightened into view;
They climbed as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.

We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless East we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker sweep
The nutmeg rocks, and isles of clove.

For one fair Vision ever fled
Down the waste waters day and night,
And still we followed where she led,
In hope to gain upon her flight.

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PROLOGUE.

The traveller who reaches those enchanted gates of the Far East which swing open at the palm-girt shores of Ceylon, enters upon a new range of thought and feeling. The first sight of tropical scenery generally awakens a passionate desire for further experiences of the vast Archipelago in the Southern Seas which girdles the Equator with an emerald zone. Lured onward by the scented breeze in that eternal search for perfection destined to remain unsatisfied where every step marks a higher ideal than the one already attained, the pilgrim pursues his endless quest, for human aspiration has never yet touched the goal of desires and dreams. The cocoanut woods of Ceylon and her equatorial vegetation lead fancy further afield, for the glassy straits of Malacca beckon the wanderer down their watery highways to mysterious Java, where vast forests of waving palms, blue chains of volcanic mountains, and mighty ruins of a vanished civilisation, loom before the imagination and invest the tropical paradise with ideal attractions. The island, seven hundred miles long, and described by Marianne North as "one magnificent garden of [8] tropical luxuriance," has not yet become a popular resort of the average tourist, but though lacking some of those comforts and luxuries found under the British flag, it offers many compensations in the wealth of beauty and interest afforded by scenery, architecture, and people. The two days' passage from Singapore lies through a green chain of countless islets, once the refuge of those pirates who thronged the Southern seas until suppressed by European power. The cliffs of Banka, honeycombed with tin quarries, and the flat green shores of Eastern Sumatra, stretching away to the purple mountains of the interior, flank the silvery straits, populous with native *proas*, coasting steamers, *sampans*, and the hollowed log or "dug-out" which serves as the Malayan canoe. Patched sails of scarlet and yellow, shaped like bats' wings, suggest gigantic butterflies afloat upon the tranquil sea. The red roofs of whitewashed towns, and the tall shafts of white lighthouses emphasise the rich verdure between the silvery azure of sky and water. The little voyage ends at Tandjon Priok, nine miles from Batavia, for a volcanic eruption of Mount Salak in 1699 filled up the ancient harbour, and necessitated the removal of shipping to a deep bay, as the old city was landed high and dry through the mass of mud, lava, and volcanic sand, which dammed up the lower reaches of the Tjiligong river, and destroyed connection with the [9] sea. The present model harbour, erected at tremendous cost, permits ships of heavy burden to discharge passengers and cargo with comfort and safety at a long wharf, without that unpleasant interlude of rocking *sampans* and reckless boatmen common to Eastern travel. A background of blue peaks and clustering palms rises beyond the long line of quays and breakwaters flanked by the railway, and a wealth of tropical scenery covers a marshy plain with riotous luxuriance. No Europeans live either in Tandjon Priok or Old Batavia, and the locality was known for two centuries as "the European graveyard." Flourishing Arab and Chinese *campongs* or settlements appear immune from the terrible Java fever which haunts the morasses of the coast, and the industrial Celestial who absorbs so much of Oriental commerce, possesses an almost superhuman imperviousness to climatic dangers.

In the re-adjustment of power after the Fall of Napoleon, Java, invaded by England in 1811, after a five years' interval of British rule under the enlightened policy of Sir Stamford Raffles, was restored to the Throne of Holland. The supremacy of the Dutch East India Company, who, after a prolonged struggle, acquired authority in Java as residuary legatee of the Mohammedan Emperor, ended at the close of the eighteenth century. Perpetual warfare and rebellion, which [10] broke out in Central Java after the return of the island to the Dutch, taxed the resources of Holland for five years. Immense difficulties arrested and delayed the development of the fertile territory, until the "culture system" of forced labour within a certain area relieved the financial pressure. One-fifth of village acreage was compulsorily planted with sugar-cane, and one day's work every week was demanded by the Dutch Government from the native population. The system was extended to tea and coffee; and indigo was grown on waste land not needed for the rice, which constitutes Java's staff of life. Spices and cinchona were also diligently cultivated under official supervision, and the lives of many explorers were lost in search of the precious Kina-tree, until Java, after years of strenuous toil, now produces one-half of that quinine supply which proves the indispensable safeguard of European existence on tropic soil. The ruddy bark and scarlet branches of the cinchona groves glow with autumnal brightness amid the evergreen verdure of the Javanese hills, and the "culture system," as a financial experiment, proved, in spite

of cavillers, a source of incalculable benefit to the natives as well as to the colonists of Java. As we travel through the length and breadth of an island cultivated even to the mountain tops with the perfection of detail common to the Dutch, as the first horticulturists of the world, we realise [11] the far-reaching wisdom, which in a few decades transformed the face of the island, clearing vast tracks of jungle, and pruning that riot of tropical nature which destroys as rapidly as it creates. A lengthened survey of Java's political economy and past history would be out of place in a slight volume, written as a "compagnon de voyage" to the wanderer who adds a cruise in the Archipelago to his Eastern itinerary, but the colonial features of Dutch rule which have produced many beneficial results demand recognition, for the varied characteristics of national genius and racial expansion suggest the myriad aspects of that creative power bestowed on humanity made in the Divine Image, and fulfilling the great destiny inspired by Heavenly Wisdom.

JAVA. [13]

BATAVIA AND WELTEVREDEN.

From the railway station at Batavia the comfortless "dos-a-dos," colloquially known as the *sado*, a vehicle resembling an elementary Irish car, and drawn by a rat-like Timor pony transports us to the fashionable suburb of Weltevreden, away from the steamy port and fever-haunted commercial capital. The march of modern improvement scarcely affects old-world Java, where jolting *sado* and ponderous *milord* remain unchanged since the early days of colonisation, for time is a negligeable quantity in this lotus-eating land, too apathetic even to adopt those alleviations of tropical heat common to British India. The Java of the ancient world was considered "The Jewel of the East," and possesses many claims to her immemorial title, but the stolid Dutchman of to-day contents himself with the domestic arrangements which sufficed for his sturdy forefathers, scorning the mitigations of swinging punkah or electric fan. The word Batavia signifies "fair [14] meadows," and these swampy fields of rank vegetation, exhaling a deadly miasma, were considered such an adequate defence against hostile attack, that forts were deemed unnecessary in a locality where 87,000 soldiers and sailors died in the Government Hospital during the space of twenty years. Batavia proper is a commonplace city of featureless streets, brick-walled canals, and ramshackle public buildings, but the residential town of Weltevreden, suggesting a glorified Holland, combines the quaint charm of the mother country with the Oriental grace and splendour of the tropics. The broad canals bordered by colossal cabbage-palms, the white bridges gay with the many coloured garb of the Malay population, the red-tiled roofs embowered in a wealth of verdure, and the pillared verandahs veiled with gorgeous creepers, tumbling in sheets of purple and scarlet from cornice to floor, compose a characteristic picture, wherein Dutch individuality triumphs over incongruous environment. Waving palms clash their fronds in the sea-breeze; avenues of feathery tamarind and bending waringen trees surround Weltevreden with depths of green shadow; the scarlet hybiscus flames amid tangled foliage, where the orange chalices of the flowering Amherstia glisten from sombre branches, and hang like fairy goblets from the interwoven roofs of tropical tunnels, pierced by broad red roads. On this Sunday afternoon of the waning year which introduces us to Weltevreden, family groups are gathered round tea tables [15] canopied with flowers and palms, in the white porticos of the Dutch villas, and the startling déshabille adopted by Holland in the Netherlands India almost defies description. The ladies, with stockingless feet thrust into heelless slippers, and attired in the Malay *sarong* (two yards of painted cotton cloth), supplemented by a white dressing-jacket, display themselves in verandah, carriage, or street, in a garb only fit for the bath-room; while the men, lounging about in pyjamas, go barefoot with the utmost *sangfroid*. The *sarong*, as worn by the slender and graceful Malay, appears a modest and appropriate garb, but the grotesque effect of native attire on the broad-built Dutchwoman affords conclusive proof that neither personal vanity nor a sense of humour pertain to her stolid personality. Dutch Puritanism certainly undergoes startling transformations under the tropical skies, and the Netherlands India produces a modification of European ideas concerning what have been called "the minor moralities of life," unequalled in colonial experience. An identical exhibition fills the open corridors of the Hotel Nederlanden, built round a central court, and the general resort of the guests during the hot hours of the January days. Evening dress is reserved for State occasions, and though *sarong* and *kabaja* be discarded at the [16] nine o'clock dinner, the blouse and skirt of morning wear in England suffices even at this late hour for the fair Hollander, who also concedes so far to the amenities of civilisation as sometimes to put on her stockings. So much of life in Java is spent in eating, sleeping, and bathing, that but a small residuum can be spared for those outside interests which easily drop away from the European when exiled to a colony beyond the beaten track of travel, and destitute of that external friction which counteracts the enervating influence of the tropics. Comfort is at a discount according to English ideas, but the arrangements of the Hotel Nederlanden, under a kindly and capable proprietor, render it an exception to the prevailing rule. Each guest is apportioned a little suite, consisting of bedroom, sitting-room, and a section of the verandah, fitted up with cane lounge, table, and rocking-chair. The bathrooms, with porcelain tank and

tiles, leave nothing to be desired, and the "dipper-bath," infinitely cooler than the familiar tub, becomes an unfailing delight. Ominous prophecies have emphasised the rashness of coming to Java in the rainy season, but it has expended its force before January arrives, and though daily showers cool the air, and the sky is often overcast, no inconvenience is experienced. Lizards and mosquitoes are few, and in the marble-floored dining hall of cathedral proportions the absence of a punkah is generally unfelt, though the fact of a tropical climate is realised at the slightest [17] exertion. The day begins at 6 a.m. with a cup of the Java coffee, which, at first unpalatable, reveals by degrees the hidden excellence of the beverage, brought cold in a stoppered cruet, the potent essence requiring a liberal admixture of boiling water. At 9 a.m. a solid but monotonous breakfast of sausage, bacon, eggs, and cheese is customary, with the accompaniment of iced water, though tea and coffee are provided for the foreign traveller, unused to the cold comfort which commends itself to Dutch taste. The mid-day *riz-tavel* from beginning to end of a stay in Java, remains the terror of the English visitor. Each plate is heaped with a mound of rice, on which scraps of innumerable ingredients are placed—meat, fish, fowl, duck, prawns, curry, fried bananas, and nameless vegetables, together with chilis and chutneys, sembals, spices, and grated cocoanut, in bewildering profusion. The Dutch digestion triumphantly survives this severe test at the outset of the meal, and courageously proceeds to the complementary courses of beefsteak, fritters and cheese. Fortunately for those of less vigorous appetite, mine host of the Nederlanden, far in advance of his Javanese fraternity, kindly provides a simple "tiffin" as an alternative to this Gargantuan repast. Afternoon tea is served in the verandah, and at eight o'clock the Dutch contingent, having slept off the effects of the rice table, prepares with renewed energies to [18] attack a heavy dinner. New Year's Eve is celebrated by a very bombardment of fireworks from the Chinese *campong*, and crowds hasten to the fine Roman Catholic church for Benediction, Te Deum, and an eloquent, though to me incomprehensible, Dutch sermon. Crisp muslins and uncovered heads for the women, and white linen garb for the men, are the rule in church, for the slatternly undress of *sarong* and pyjamas is happily inadmissible within the walls of the sanctuary, where the fair fresh faces and neat array compose a pleasing picture which imagination would fail to evolve from the burlesque ugliness of the slovenly déshabille wherewith the Dutch colonist disguises every claim to beauty or grace. On alluding to the shock experienced by this grotesque travesty of native garb, a Dutch officer asserts that there are in reality but few Dutch ladies in Java of pure racial stock, for one unhappy result of remoteness from European influence is shown by the gradual merging of the Dutch colonists into the Malay race by intermarriage. Exile to Java was made financially easy and attractive by the Dutch Government, but it was for the most part a permanent separation from the mother country, and a long term of years necessarily elapsed before the colonial planter could even return for a short visit to his native land. The overwhelming force of public opinion against mixed marriages, and the [19] consequent degeneration of type, from a union which lowers one of the contracting parties without raising the other, beats but faintly against these remote shores, cut off from associations which mould and modify the crudities of individual thought in regions swept by the full tide of contemporary life. The idea of welding European and Asiatic elements into one race, as a defence against external aggression, possesses a superficial plausibility, but ages of historical experiment only confirm the unalterable truth of the poetic dictum that

> East is East, and West is West,
> And never the two shall meet.
> Until they stand on either hand,
> At God's great Judgment Seat!

The sudden rise of an Oriental race to the position of a great world-power, and the apprehensions of coming struggles for supremacy in Eastern waters, present many future complications concerning Java, even if not weakened by the assimilation of her European colonists to an inferior race.

Neither landlord nor secretary of the Hotel Nederlanden spare time or trouble in arranging the programme of sight-seeing, and but for their kindly help, only a partial success would be possible, owing to the difficulties presented by the two unknown tongues of Dutch and Malay. Ignorance of the former involves separation from the world as revealed by newspapers, and though a smattering of "coolie Malay" is picked up with the aid of a handbook, and the "hundred [20] words" mastered, sanguinely asserted to suffice for colloquial needs, there are many occasions when even the practice of this elementary language requires a more extensive vocabulary. At a New Year's fête given by the proprietor of the hotel to his numerous Malay employés, we make our first acquaintance with native music. Dancing girls, in mask and tinsel, gyrate to the weird strains of the *Gamelon*, an orchestra of tiny gongs, bamboo tubes, and metal pipes. Actors perform old-world dramas in dumb show, and conjurors in gaudy attire attract people of all ages to those time-honoured feats of legerdemain which once represented the sorcery of the mystic East. The simple Malay has not yet adopted the critical and unbelieving attitude which rubs the gilt off the gingerbread or the bloom off the plum, and his fervid faith in mythical heroes and necromantic exploits gives him the key to that kingdom of fancy often closed to a sadder if wiser world. The electric tram provides an excellent method of gaining a general idea of Batavia and Weltevreden; the winding route skirting canals and palm groves, *campongs* of basket-work huts, and gay *passers*, the native markets, with their wealth of many-coloured fruit. Stacks of golden bananas, olive-tinted dukus, rambutans like green chestnut-shells with scarlet prickles, amber star-fruit, brown salak, the "forbidden apple," bread-fruit, and durian offer an embarassing [21] choice. Pineapples touch perfection on Java soil; cherimoya and mango, papaya and the various custard-fruits, the lovely but tasteless rose-apple, and the dark green equatorial orange of delicious flavour, afford a host of unfamiliar experiences. The winter months are the season of

the peerless mangosteen, in beauty as well as in savour the queen of tropical fruits. The rose-lined purple globes, with the central ball of ivory whiteness in each fairy cup, suggest fugitive essences of strawberry and nectarine combined with orange to produce this equatorial marvel, also considered perfectly wholesome. The mangosteen, ripening just north or south of the Equator, according to the alternations of the wet and dry seasons, cannot be preserved long enough to reach the temperate zone, and though every year shows fresh varieties of tropical fruit successfully transported to European markets, the mangosteen remains unknown outside the narrow radius of the equatorial region to which the tree is indigenous. The flower markets blaze with many-coloured roses, tons of gardenias and a wealth of white heavy-scented flowers, such as tuberoses and Arabian jasmine. All the spices of the East, in fact, seem breathing from these mounds of blossom, as well as from gums and essences distilled from them in archaic fashion. Transparent sachets, filled with the scented petals of *ylang-ylang*, fill the air with intoxicating [22]
sweetness, and outside the busy *passer*, a frangipanni-tree, the native *sumboya* or "flower of the dead," just opening a white crowd of golden-hearted blossoms to the sun, adds another wave of perfume to the floral incense, steaming from earth to sky with prodigal exuberance.

Batavia possesses few objects of interest. The dismal green-shuttered Stadkirche, a relic of Dutch Calvinism; the earliest warehouse of the Netherlands Company, a commonplace lighthouse, and the gate of Peter Elberfeld's dwelling (now his tomb), with his spear-pierced skull above the lintel, as a reminder of the sentence pronounced on traitors to the Dutch Government, comprise the scanty catalogue. Antiquities and archæological remains fill a white museum of classical architecture on the Koenig's Plein, a huge parade ground, flanked by the Palace of the Governor-General. Gold and silver ornaments, gifts from tributary princes, shield and helmet, dagger, and *kris*, of varied stages in Malay civilisation, abound in these spacious halls, where every Javanese industry may be studied. Buddhist and Hindu temples have yielded up a treasury of images, censers, and accessories of worship, the excavations of ruined cities in Central Java, long overgrown with impenetrable jungle, opening a mine of archæological wealth in musical instruments, seals, coins, headgear, chairs and umbrellas of State. Golden pipes and betel-boxes [23]
show the perfection of the goldsmith's art, and metal statues vie with those of sculptured wood or stone. Here Captain Cook left his treasure trove from the Southern seas, and the Council Chamber of the Museum contains portraits and souvenirs of the great navigators who sailed into the uncharted ocean of geographical discovery, and in various stages of their adventurous careers anchored at Java, to display the wondrous trophies of unknown lands in the island then regarded as the farthest outpost of contemporary civilisation.

The *toelatingskaart*, or Javanese passport, formerly indispensable for insular travel beyond the radius of forty miles from Batavia, though not yet obsolete, proves practically needless, and is never once demanded during a six weeks' stay. The small addition contributed to the rich revenue by this useless official "permit," appears the sole reason for retaining it, now that vexatious restrictions are withdrawn. In the intervals of arranging an up-country tour from monotonous Weltevreden, destitute of any attraction beyond the white colonnades and verdant groves flanking sleepy canals and quaint bridges, the local industry of *sarong* stippling affords a curious interest. Every city in Java possesses a special type of this historic dress, represented on the walls of temples dating before the Christian era, and worn by the Malay races from time [24]
immemorial. This strip of cotton cloth, which forms the attire both of men and women, is twisted firmly round the body, and requires no girdle to secure it. Palm-fronds, birds, and animals, geometric patterns, religious emblems, fruits and flowers, are represented in bewildering confusion. The girls, with flower-decked hair and scanty garb, occupy a long, low shed, filled with rude frames for stretching the cloth, painted in soft-tinted dyes—brown, blue, and amber for the most part—with tapering funnels. These waxed cloths allow infinite scope for native imagination, only a small panel of formal design being obligatory, the remaining surface fancifully coloured at will in harmonious hues. No two *sarongs* are alike, and the painted *battek*, notwithstanding the simplicity of the cotton background, represents an amount of labour and finish which makes the archaic garment a costly, though almost indestructible production. The graceful *slandang*, a crossed scarf of the same material, only serves as a shoulder-strap, wherein the brown Malay baby sits contentedly, for the ugly white jacket of the Dutchwoman is now compulsory on the native. Every variety of *battek*, basket-work, mats, and quaint silver or brass ware, is brought by native peddlers to the broad verandahs of the hotel, the patient and gentle people content to spend long hours on the marble steps, dozing between their scanty bargains, or crimsoning their months with the stimulating morsel of betel-nut, said to allay the hunger, thirst, and exhaustion [25]
of the steaming tropics. The conquered race, cowed by ages of tyranny under native princes, possesses those mild and effeminate characteristics fostered by a languid and enervating climate. That the salient angles of the sturdy Dutch character, which accomplished so many feats of endurance in the earlier days of the colony, should undergo rapid disintegration by intermarriage with the native stock, must arouse regret in all who realise the claims to respect possessed by the fighting forefathers of Holland's tropical dependencies.

Educational matters were for centuries in abeyance, and until 1864 the Malays were forbidden to learn the language of their European rulers. Many dialects are found in Java's wide territory, but Low Malay has been declared the official tongue, and with the advance of public opinion, wider views prevail concerning the rights of the subject race. A good Roman Catholic priest, one of the most enlightened and liberal Dutchmen encountered in Java, asserts that in the schools of the Colonial Government, the Malay boy possesses a mathematical facility superior to that of the Dutch scholar, in spite of the advantage accruing from hereditary education.

At the sunset hour, Batavian life awakens from the long slumbers of the tropical afternoon, and

as the golden light filters through the waving palms, the long Schul-Weg, beside the central canal, fills with saunterers, enjoying the delights of that brief spell, when peace and coolness fall on the world before the sudden twilight drops veil after veil of deepening gloom, merging into the "darkness which may be felt," for the twelve hours of the tropical night. Gathering clouds reveal but scanty glimpses of the moon in these January weeks, but through rifts in the sombre canopy, the Southern stars hang low in the dome of heaven, and shine like burning lamps, appearing almost within reach of an outstretched hand. [26]

BUITENZORG. [27]

The first destination of the up-country traveller in Java is Buitenzorg, the Dutch "Sans Souci," containing the Governor-General's rural Palace, the houses of Court officials, and the superb Botanical Garden, which ranks first among the horticultural triumphs of the world. The two hours' journey by the railway, which now traverses the whole of Java, shows a succession of tropical landscapes, appearing unreal in their fantastic and dream-like beauty. The glowing green of rice-fields, the dense forests of swaying palms, the porphyry tints of the teeming soil, and the purple mountains, carved into the weird contours peculiar to volcanic ranges, frame myriad pictures of unfamiliar native life with dramatic effect. Villages of woven basket-work cluster beneath green curtains of banana and spreading canopies of palm, the central mosque surmounting the tiny huts with many-tiered roofs, and walls inlaid with gleaming tiles of white and blue. Brown figures, with gay *sarong* and turbaned headgear, bring bamboo buckets to moss-grown wells, gray water-buffaloes crop marshy herbage, a little bronze-hued figure seated on each broad back, and busy workers stand knee-deep in slush, to transplant emerald blades of rice [28] or to gather the yellow crops, for seedtime and harvest go on together in this fertile land. Our train halts at Depok, a Christian village unique in Java, for the religious history of the island shows little missionary enterprise among a race strangely indifferent to the claims of faith, and lightly casting away one creed after another, with a carelessness which has ever proved a formidable bar to spiritual progress. The Portuguese Jesuits were expelled by the Dutch, and English efforts at conversion were succeeded by a general exclusion of foreign missionaries. Public opinion eventually prevented the continuance of this despotic rule, and at the present day a certain number of Roman and Protestant clergy are supported by the Government, but Roman zeal outstrips the niggardly spiritual provision, and proves the appreciation in which it is held by full churches and devout worshippers. The Mohammedanism of the Malay lacks the fiery fervour common to Islam, and his slack hands are ever ready to forego all symbols of faith. From the region of rice and tapioca, maize and sugar-cane, we reach the great cacao plantations, hung with chocolate-coloured pods, and the ruddy kina-groves on the lower slopes of the mountain chain. The palms are everywhere, clashing their huge fronds, and undulating in waves of fiery green, the light and shadow of the golden evening reflected on the swaying foliage. Stately [29] Palmyra, slender areca, graceful pandang with a length of scarlet crowning each smooth grey stem, the mighty royal palm, king of the forest, spreading cocoanuts, and a hundred unknown varieties, soaring among bread-fruit and teak, nutmeg and waringen, reveal the inexhaustible powers of tropical Nature. Buitenzorg occupies an ideal position between the blue and violet peaks of Gedeh and Salak, the guardian mountains of the fairy spot, perennially green with spring-like freshness, from the daily showers sweeping across the valley from one or other of the lofty crests, and possessing a delicious climate at an altitude of eight hundred feet. The Hotel Bellevue, where *back* rooms should be secured on account of a superb prospect, comprising river, mountain and forest, stands near the great entrance of the world-famous Gardens, and our balcony commands a profound ravine, carved by a clear river, winding away between forests of palm to the dark cone of Mount Salak, the climax of the picture. The artist destined to interpret the soul of Java is yet unborn, or unable to grasp the character of her unique and distinctive scenery, but a village of plaited palm-leaves, accentuating this tropical Eden, brings it down to the human level, where soft Malay voices, glimpses of domestic life, and a canoe afloat on the brimming stream, remind us that we are still on *terra firma*, and not gazing at a dreamland [30] Paradise beyond earthly ken. Sleeping accommodation in the hills suggests little comfort. A hard mattress beneath a sheet is the sole furniture of the huge four-poster, surrounded by thick muslin curtains to exclude air and creeping things; pillows are stuffed hard with cotton-down, and no coverings are provided—an unalterable custom possessing obvious disadvantages in a climate reeking with damp, where the walls of a room closed for a day or two become green with mould. Rheumatic stiffness on waking is a matter of course in humid Java, for the hour between darkness and dawn contains a concentrated essence of dew, mist, and malaria, which penetrates to the very marrow of unaccustomed bones, even when it lacks the frequent accompaniment of the violent cascade known as "a tropical shower." The glorious Botanical Garden is approached by a mighty avenue of colossal kanari-trees, over a hundred feet high, with yellow light filtering through the fretted roof of interlacing boughs, which suggests a vast aisle in some primeval forest. Stately columns and spreading roots garlanded with stag-horn ferns, waving moss, white and purple orchids, or broad-leaved creepers, falling in sheets and torrents of shining foliage and knitting tree to tree, attest the irrepressible growth of vegetation, which flings a many-coloured veil of blossom and leaf over root, branch, and stem. A fairy lake glows with the pink and crimson [31] blossoms of the noble Victoria Regia, the huge leaves like green tea-trays floating on the water,

where a central fountain adds prismatic radiance to the scenic effect of the splendid lilies. Climbing palms and massive creepers, splashed with orange, scarlet, and gold, tumble in masses from lofty branches, and the dazzling Bougainvillea flings curtains of roseate purple over wall and gateway. A dense thicket of frangipanni scents the air with the symbolic blossoms, shining like stars from grey-green boughs of sharp-cut leaves. A copse of splendid tree-ferns flanks the forest-like plantation known as "The Thousand Palms," and beneath dusky avenues of waringen (a variety of the banyan species, which strikes staff-like boughs into the earth and springs up again in caverns of foliage), herds of deer are wandering, snatching at drooping vines, or sheltering from the fierce sun in depths of impenetrable shade. Tufts of red-stemmed Banka palms cluster on the green islets of lake and river, vista after vista opens up, each mysterious aisle appearing more lovely than the last, and luring the wanderer to the climax formed by a terraced knoll, commanding a superb view of Gedeh and Salak, the twin summits of chiselled turquoise, gashed by the amethyst shadows of deep ravines, with Gedeh's curl of volcanic smoke staining the lustrous azure of the sky. Many-coloured tree carnations, gorgeous cannas and calladiums, [32]
copses of snowy gardenia, and flowering shrubs of rainbow hues, blaze with splendour, or exhale their wealth of perfume on the languid air, thronged with the invisible souls of the floral multitude. Graceful rattans shoot up in tall ladders of foliage-hidden cane, climbing to the topmost fronds of the loftiest palm, and, unless ruthlessly cut down, overthrowing the stately tree with their fatal embrace. Sausage and candle trees, with strange parodies of prosaic food and waxen tapers, climbing palms, sometimes extending for five hundred feet, and gigantic blossoms like crimson trumpets, or delicately-tinted shells of ocean, comprise but a tithe of Nature's wonders, crowned by the mighty "Rafflesia," the largest flower in the world, with each vast red chalice often measuring a circumference of six feet. A hundred native gardeners are employed in this park-like domain, and seventy men work in the adjacent culture-garden of forty acres, where experiments in grafting and acclimatizing are carried on, as well as in the supplementary garden of Tjibodas, beautifully situated on the lower slopes of Mount Salak. The white palace of the Governor-General faces the lake, fed by the lovely river Tjiligong, winding in silver loops round verdant lawn and palm-clad hill, or expanding into bamboo-fringed lakes, and bringing perennial freshness into the tropical Eden of sun-bathed Java.

Beyond the fretted arches of the great kanari avenue, the white tomb of Lady Raffles, who died [33]
during her husband's term of office in the island, forms a pathetic link with the past. When the colony was restored to Holland, a clause in the treaty concerning it, made the perpetual care of this monument, to one deeply loved and mourned, binding upon the Dutch Governor—a condition loyally observed during the century since the cessation of English rule. Cinnamon and clove scent the breeze which whispers mysterious secrets to the swaying plumes of the tall sago-palms, and dies away in the delicate foliage of tamarind and ironwood tree. A network of air roots makes a grotesque circle round the spreading boughs of the banyan grove, mahogany and sandal-wood, ebony and cork, ginger-tree and cardamom, mingle their varied foliage, the translucency of sun-smitten green shading through deepening tones into the sombre tints of ilex and pine with exquisite gradation. Flamboyant trees flaunt fiery pyramids of blossom high in the air, and the golden bouquets of the salacca light up dusky avenues, where large-leaved lianas rope themselves from tree to tree in cables of vivid green. Bare stems, except in the palms, are unknown in this richly-decorated temple of Nature; climbing blade-plants with sword-like leaves of gold-striped verdure, huge orchids like many-coloured birds and butterflies fluttering in the
wind, wreathe trunk and branch with fantastic splendour, and matted creepers weave curtains of [34]
dense foliage from spreading boughs. The austere and scanty vegetation of Northern climes, which gives a distinct outline and value to every leaf and flower, has nothing in common with the prodigal and passionate beauty of the tropical landscape, where the wealth of earth is flung broadcast at our feet in mad profusion. Day by day the marvellous gardens of Buitenzorg take deeper hold of mind and imagination. The early dawn, when the dark silhouettes of the palms stand etched against the rose-tinted heavens, the hot noontide in the shadows of the colossal kanari-trees, the sunset gold transfiguring the foliage into emerald fire, and spilling pools of liquid amber upon the mossy turf, or the white moonlight which transmutes the forest aisles into a fairy world of sable and silver, invest this vision of Paradise with varied aspects of incomparable beauty. The surrounding scenery, though full of interest, seems but the setting of the priceless gem, and when inexorable Time, the modern angel of the flaming sword, at length bars the way, and banishes us from our Javanese Eden, the exiled heart turns back perpetually to the floral sanctuary, the antitype of that Divinely-planted Garden on the dim borderland of Time which revealed and fulfilled the primeval beauty of earth's morning hours.

SOEKABOEMI AND SINDANGLAYA. [35]

Soekaboemi (Desire of the World), a favourite sanatorium of the Dutch, is approached by an exquisite railway, curving round the purple heights of forest-girt Salak. The usual afternoon deluge weeps itself away, palm plumes and cassava boughs, overhanging the silvery Tjiligong, drop showers of diamonds into the current, and giant bamboos creak in the spicy wind, redolent of gardenia and clove. The hills, scaled by green rice-terraces, each with tiny rill and miniature cascade, are vocal with murmuring waters. Lilac plumbago, red hybiscus, and golden allemanda mingle with pink and purple lantana, yellow daisies, and hedges of scarlet tassels, enclosing

wicker huts in patches of banana and cocoanut. Brown girls, in blue and orange *sarongs*, occupy the steps of a basket-work shrine, from whence an unknown god, smeared with ochre, extends a sceptred hand, for Hinduism left deep traces on inland Java, dim with the dust of vanished [36] creeds. The expense and trouble of former travel by the superb post-roads, made at terrible sacrifice of life in earlier days, is now done away with, though the noble avenues and picturesque shelters, erected for protection from sun or rain, suggest a pleasant mode of leisurely progress. No trains may run at night, not only on account of native incompetence, but from dangers caused by constant geographical changes on this volcanic soil, where rivers suddenly alter their course, and earthquakes obstruct the way with yawning chasms or heaps of debris. A paternal Government provides the traveller with a half-way house, erecting a large hotel at Maos, with uniform rates, entirely for the benefit of the passenger by rail. Trains are built on the American plan, stations are spacious and airy, refreshments easily secured, and every halting-place offers an *embarras de richesses* in the shape of tropical fruits, wherewith to supplement or replace the solidity of the Dutch commissariat. Coffee and tea plantations in ordered neatness, contrast with the untamed profusion of forest vegetation, clothing sharp promontory and shelving terrace. Dusky villages cling like birds' nests to ledges of rock, screw-palms with airy roots frame mountain tarns, and a Brazilian Emperor-palm, with smooth column bulging into a pear-shaped base, accentuates the sunset glory from a crag crowned by the black canopy of colossal fronds. [37] The Preanger Regency was the heart of ancient Mataram, that historic kingdom of old-world Java round which perpetual warfare waged for centuries.

Language and customs change as we cross the saddle between the blue peaks of Salak and Gedeh; gay crowds bring fruits to picturesque wayside markets, bearing bamboo poles laden with golden papaya and purple mangosteen, or plaited baskets containing the conglomerate native cuisine. The elastic and gracefully-modelled figures of the Soendanese populace betoken a purer race than that of the steamy Batavian lowlands, where foreign elements deteriorate the native stock. The Hotel Victoria at Soekaboemi consists of detached white buildings round tree-filled courts, erected on the "pavilion system." Every two visitors occupy a tiny bungalow of two bedrooms, opening on a spacious verandah divided by a screen, and each section provided with lamp, rocking-chair, and tea-table, the long public dining hall being approached by a covered alley. The rain, swishing down through the night in torrents and cataracts, clears at sunrise, and though heavy clouds still veil the heights of Salak, the transparent beauty of the morning crystallises the atmosphere, and sharply defines every feature of the landscape. The country roads, shaded by towering palms and fruit-laden mangos, glow with a continuous procession of brown figures, the women clad in the universal *sarong*, but men and children often in Nature's [38] garb, with touches of orange or crimson in scarf and turban. Water-oxen and buffaloes, goats and sheep, vary the throng, but cattle fare badly in fertile Java, where the all-pervading rice ousts the pasture-land. Glorious bamboos form arches of feathery green meeting across the road, and the busy China *campong*, or *désar* in Preanger parlance, is full of life and movement with the first streak of day, for all trade in Java depends upon the indefatigable industry of the Celestial. The idle gambling Malay, though an expert hunter and fisher, takes no thought for the morrow, and is protected by the Dutch Government from ruin by an enforced demand of rice for storage, according to the numbers of the family. Every village contains the great Store Barn of plaited palm leaves, so that, in case of need, the confiscated rice can be doled out to the improvident native, who thus contributes to the support of his family in times of scarcity. This regulation relieves want without pauperising, the common garner merely serving as a compulsory savings bank. Many salutary laws benefit the Malay, possessing a notable share of tropical slackness, and the lack of initiative partly due to a servile past under the sway of tyrannical native princes. The little brown people of Java, eminently gentle and tractable, are honest enough for vendors of eatables to place a laden basket at the roadside for the refreshment of the traveller, who drops a [39] small coin into a bamboo tube fastened to a tree for this purpose. The customary payment is never omitted, and at evening the owner of the basket collects the money, and brings a fresh supply of food for future wayfarers. Country districts demonstrate the fact of Java being a creedless land. This is Sunday, and the Feast of the Epiphany, but the only honour paid to the day consists in a gayer garb, and a band playing for an hour in the palm-shaded garden. Work goes on in rice-field and plantation, but no church bell rings from the closed chapel outside the gates, and no sign of religion is evident, whether from mosque, temple, or church. Lovely lanes form alluring vistas. The pretty *désas* of plaited palm and bamboo, hiding in depths of tropical woodland, with blue thunbergia clambering over every verandah, and the Preanger girls, with their brilliant *slandangs* of orange and scarlet, amber and purple, make vivid points of colour in the foreground of blue mountain and dusky forest. A copper-coloured boy carries on his head a basket of gold-fish large as salmon, the westering sun glittering on the ruddy scales.

Traditional servility remains ingrained in Preanger character, and the crouching obeisance known as the *dodok*, formerly insisted upon, is still observed by the native to his European masters, the humble posture giving place to kneeling on a nearer approach. The kind proprietor [40] of the Soekaboemi Hotel offers every facility to those guests anxious to penetrate below the surface of Soendanese life, placing his carriage and himself at the disposal of the visitor, and affording a mine of information otherwise unattainable, for books on Java are few and far between, and the work of Sir Stamford Raffles continues the best authority on island life and customs, though a century has elapsed since it was written. Why, one asks in amazement, did England part with this Eastern Paradise? rich not only in vegetation, but containing unexplored treasures of precious metal and the vast mineral wealth peculiar to volcanic regions, where valuable chemical products are precipitated by the subterranean forces of Nature's mysterious laboratory. In the far-off days when "the grand tour" of Europe was the climax of the ordinary

traveller's ambition, beautiful Java was relinquished on the plea of being an unknown and useless possession, too far from the beaten track of British sailing ships to be of practical value. The remonstrances of Sir Stamford Raffles, and his representations of future colonial expansion, were regarded as the dreams of a romantic enthusiast, and the noble English Governor, in advance of his age, while effecting during his brief tenure of office results unattainable by a century of ordinary labour, found his efforts wasted and his work undone. Instead of returning home, he applied himself heroically to the developement of Singapore, the eternal monument of patriotic devotion and invincible courage. [41]

The line to Tjandjoer, the starting point for Sindanglaya, traverses one of the exquisite plains characteristic of Java. Mountain walls, with palm-fringed base and violet crest, bound a fertile expanse, where myriad brooks foam through fairy arches of feathery bamboo and long vistas of spreading palm fronds. Rice in every stage of growth, from flaming green to softest yellow, covers countless terraces, the picturesque outlines of their varied contours enhancing the beauty of the fantastic scene. A *sado*, with a team of three tiny ponies, dashes up the long avenue leading to the palm-fringed hills, the mighty Amherstia trees forming aisles of dark green foliage, brightened with the vivid glow of orange red blossoms. The broad road is a kaleidoscope of brilliant colour, for native costume vies with the dazzling tints of tropical Nature as we advance further into the Preangers. The gay headgear, worn turbanwise, with two ends standing upright above plaited folds, and magenta *kabajas*, with *slandangs* of apple green, amber or purple, make a blaze of colour against the forest background, or glow amidst the dusky shadows of palm-thatched sheds, where thirsty travellers imbibe pink and yellow syrups, the favourite beverages of the Malay race. The ascending road commands superb views of the mountain chain, and the rambling two-storied hotel, widened by immense verandahs, stands opposite cloud-crowned Gedeh, half-veiled by the spreading column of volcanic smoke. The misty blue of further hills leads the eye to the three weird peaks of the Tangkoeban Prahoe, the boat-shaped "Ark" regarded as the Ararat of Java, for the universal tradition of the great Deluge underlies the religious history welded from Moslem, Buddhist, and Hindu elements. Legendary lore clusters round the petrified "Ark" in which the progenitors of the Malayan stock escaped from the Noachian flood. The storm-tossed and water-logged boat, lodged between jutting rocks, was reversed that it might dry in the sun, but the weary voyagers who traditionally peopled the Malay Archipelago remained in the lotus-eating land, and the disused "Ark" or *Prau*, fossilizing through the ages, became a portion of the peaks whereon it rested. The sacred mountain developed into a place of pilgrimage and prayer, and the ruins of richly-carved temples, together with four broken flights of a thousand steps, denote the former importance ascribed to the great Altar of Nature, and the power of religion on the social life of the past. Generations of later inhabitants, dwelling in flimsy huts of bamboo and thatch, regarded the mysterious ruins of the Tankahan Prahoe as the work of giants or demons, and the haunted hill as a mysterious resort of evil spirits. In lofty Sindanglaya, the swaying palms of the lowlands yield to glorious tree-ferns, shading road and ravine with feathery canopies of velvet green. A lake of azure crystal mirrors a thick fringe of the great fronds, and on every parapet of the ruddy cliffs the living emerald of the lanceolated foliage glows in vivid contrast with the splintered crags. Sindanglaya is the refuge of fever-stricken Europeans from malarial coast or inland swamp, but the hotel is now empty of invalids. The kind proprietor lavishes time and care on English guests, and the attentive Malay "room-boys," squatting on the verandah outside our doors, fear to lose sight of their charges for a moment, lest some need of native help should arise. They watch hand and eye like faithful dogs, for their language is unintelligible to us as ours to them, and the only attempt at speech is "*Chow-chow, mister!*" when the dinner-bell rings, the mystic words accompanied by a realistic pantomime of mouth and fingers. [42] [43]

The following morning dawns like an ideal day of June, and we start in chairs, carried by four coolies, for the beautiful Falls of Tjibereum. A mountain road winds through rice-fields and tree-ferns towards fold upon fold of lilac peaks, until we reach the mountain garden of Tjibodas, the beautiful supplement of incomparable Buitenzorg. A strange sense of remoteness belongs to this lonely pleasaunce of the upper world, on a sheltered slope of ever-burning Gedeh, quiescent now save for the blue curl of sulphurous smoke, which gives perpetual warning of those smouldering forces ever ready to devastate the surrounding country. Subterranean activity increases during the rainy season, and tremors of earthquake occasionally startle the equanimity of those unused to the perils of existence on this thin crust of Mother Earth, for Java's teeming soil and population rest upon an ominous fissure of the globe's surface, and twelve of the forty-five volcanos on this island of terror and beauty are still moderately active, sometimes displaying sudden outbursts of energy. The green lawns and towering camphor trees of Tjibodas suggest the spellbound beauty of some enchanted spot, unprofaned by human foot. A glassy lake mirrors the tall bamboos and feathery tamarinds, their slender and sensitive foliage motionless in the still air of the dewy dawn. Huge coleas accentuate the spring verdure with heavy masses of bronze and crimson, and magnolias exhale intoxicating odours from snowy chalices. Blue lilies and flaxen pampas grass grow in thickets upon the emerald slopes, and the ordered loveliness of the mountain Paradise, walled in by dense jungle and savage precipice, brings the glamour of dreamland into the stern environment of mysterious forest and frowning peak. A rudely-paved and mossy path, shadowed by the black foliage of stately casuarinas, leads into the gloomy jungle. The forest monarchs are curtained with tangled creepers and roped together with serpent-like lianas, stag-horn ferns, and green veils of filmy moss fluttering from every bough. A swampy path through rank grass and rough boulders pierces the dense thickets, matted together with inextricable confusion, teak and tamarind, acacia and bread-fruit, palm and tree-fern losing their own characteristics and merging themselves into concrete form. The appalling stillness and solemnity of the dense jungle appears [44] [45]

emphasised by a solitary brown figure, with pipe and betel-box, beneath a thatched shed at an angle of the narrow track, where he presides over a little stall of cocoanuts, bananas, and coloured syrups, for the refreshment of coolies on their way from the Tjibodas garden to villages across the heights of Gedeh. No voice ever seems raised in these remote recesses of the mountains, where even the children of each brown hamlet play silently as figures in a dream. Our bearers, swishing through wet grass and splashing across brimming brooks, push with renewed energies up a steep ascent to the heart of the wild solitude, where three mighty waterfalls dash in savage grandeur from a range of over hanging cliffs into a churning river, descending by continuous rapids over a stairway of brown-striped trap-rock and swirling between lichen-clad banks, to lose itself in the green gloom of the impenetrable woods. One of these huge cascades [46] would make the fortune of a Swiss valley, and we need no further efforts of our willing bearers in the cause of sight-seeing, but as neither words nor gestures prove intelligible to Western obtuseness, a brown coolie seizes each arm, and rushes us up a grassy hill to a huge cavern, hung with myriad bats, and containing a pool of crystal water. The simple minds of these kindly mountaineers shirk no trouble for the benefit of the stranger, who, though regarded as a madman, must be humoured as such, not only to the top of his bent, but often beyond it. A descent through rice-fields and *désas* skirts the serrated cliffs of Gedeh's northward side, though tree-ferns growing in thousands afford shelter from the daily showers. The sudden passion of tropical rain dies away, leaving an atmosphere of unearthly transparency. Gedeh, carved in amethyst, leans against a primrose sky, streaked by the puff of white smoke from the crater. Villagers returning from work brighten the road with patches of scarlet and yellow; children, clad only in necklaces of red seeds and silver bangles, running about amid groups of women in painted *battek*, with brown babies carried in the orange or crimson folds of the *slandang*, pause before the doorways of woven basket-work huts, or carry crates of yellow bananas and strings of purple mangosteens, to supplement the "evening rice" of their frugal meal. The Malay races have been called "the flower of the East," noted for their soft voices and courteous manners in the [47] days of old, but European intercourse obliterates native characteristics, and the inhabitant of the sea-coast, or of the larger towns, unpleasantly imitates the brusquerie of his Dutch masters, and even exaggerates it. The Soendanese of the Preanger hills, less in contact with the external world, retains traces of life's ancient simplicity, and though a keen intelligence forms no part of his mental equipment, his desire to please and satisfy his employer is of pathetic intensity.

The Governor-General of Java, whose stipend is of double the amount received by the American President, owns a country palace at Sindanglaya, in addition to the splendid official residences at Batavia and Buitenzorg. A lovely walk leads from this flower-girt mansion to a pavilion on the Kasoer hill, commanding a prospect of four mountain ranges, outlined in tender hues of lavender and turquoise against the cobalt sky. In the foreground stretches a fertile plain, with bamboo and sugar-cane varying the eternal rice in brilliant shades of green and gold, always decorative, from the first emerald blade to the amber-tinted straw, for the sacred grain possesses a beauty far exceeding that of wheat, barley, or rye.

Undulating lines and ascending terraces break the uniformity of the lovely plains with the fascination of weird contour and fanciful design, intricate as the pattern traced on the native [48] *sarong*. The rice-culture of these fields and valleys is a perfect survival of the primeval system, unchanged since the days when "the gift of the gods" was first bestowed on primitive man in this land of plenty. The peasant, toiling in the flooded *sawas*, and occupied from seedtime to harvest in the arduous labour demanded by the rice-field, combines with his agricultural work the idea of a sacred duty to the divinities who gave him the staple commodity whereon his life mainly depends. Cocoanut and sugar-cane, maize and tapioca, banana and cassava, supplement the rice, but it ranks above all other products of the teeming soil, for sacramental efficacy and supernatural origin have hallowed the "grain of heaven" from the very dawn of history, and the hereditary belief in the efficacy of the sacred crop still remains mystically rooted in the sub-consciousness of the Malay race.

GAROET AND HER VOLCANO. [49]

The occasional drawback of weeping skies is counterbalanced by the gorgeous vegetation only seen to perfection in the rainy season, and that clouds should sometimes veil the burning blue to mitigate Equatorial sunshine proves a source of satisfaction to those who fail to appreciate the Rip Van Winkle life of womankind in Java. The journey to Garoet supplies a succession of vivid pictures, illustrating the individuality of the insular scenery. The weird outlines of volcanic ranges, shading from palest azure to deepest plum-colour, the dreamlike beauty of Elysian plains, and the stately palm-forests extending league upon league, with mighty vans clashing in the mountain breeze, assume magical charm as we penetrate into the heart of the alluring land. Two pyramidal peaks, Haroeman and Kaleidon, rise sheer from the fair plain of Lelés in colossal stairways of green rice-terraces. Knots of palm shelter innumerable villages which dot the mountain flanks, the woven huts fragile as houses of cards, but built up on identical sites through [50] countless ages, recorded in perennial characters of living green on these twin trophies of primitive agriculture. Many travellers have commented on the strange undertone of music, echoing from a thousand silvery rills and tiny cascades, which follow the verdant lines of terrace

or parapet, and make the shimmering air vocal with melody, like the distant song of surf on a coral reef. Variety of form belongs to all Javanese agriculture as the result of handicraft, for the peasant unconsciously puts his own personality into his toil. The exquisite tints of the rice in different stages of growth display a translucence indescribable except in terms of light and fire. The amber gleam of young shoots, the green flames of the springing crop, the pulsating emerald of later growth, and the golden sheen of ripened ears, invest the "gift of the gods" with unearthly radiance. The Eastern mind has ever responded to Nature's touch, for the great Mother whispers her closest secrets to simple hearts, and science now realises that civilisation has broken many of the subtle links which in earlier days were mystic bonds of union between man and the universe.

Malay idiosyncracy evidences the survival of many primal influences forgotten or denied by races of higher type and deeper culture. Very little is known concerning the Malayan people who mingled with almost every Oriental stock. Amphibious tastes suggest picturesque traditions of [51] prolonged voyaging in search of fresh fishing grounds to supply the needs of a rapidly multiplying population. A strong Malay element exists even in far-off Japan, and the wide ramifications of the nomadic stock can be traced to broad rivers encountered on the southward journey, and luring stragglers from the main body by the mysterious glamour of winding water-ways piercing the tangled forests, and pointing to unknown realms of hope or promise. The Malay retains many of the hereditary gifts bestowed on the untaught children of Nature, and, in spreading his language and customs far over the vast Pacific, adopted few extraneous ideas from the world through which he wandered. His primeval instincts still sway his life under other conditions. Marvellous skill in hunting, fishing, boat-building, and navigation in tornado-swept waters, remains to him. The deft weaving of palm-leaf hut and wall of defence creates a village or destroys it at lightning speed. Even now his basket-work home is never built on dry land, if water can be found wherein to plant the supporting poles of the fragile dwellings, suggesting the impermanence of a nomadic race. The Malay never travels on foot to any place which can possibly be reached by water, his native element; winds and tides have imbued him with something of their own unstable and changing character, and the sea which nurtured him is still the supreme factor in his life. Feet vie [52] with fingers in marvellous capacity, and to see a native cocoanut gatherer run up the polished stem of a swaying palm, with greater ease and swiftness than anyone shows in mounting a ladder, transports thought to the distant past, when the ancestral stock, disembarking from the rude canoes at nightfall, sought an evening meal on the edge of the palm-forest, bowed beneath the weight of green and yellow nuts a hundred feet overhead. What wonder if in lands of perpetual summer the syren song of some "long bright river" should lure the storm-tossed mariners from the perilous seas to the comparative security of inland life! The stern environment of Northern poverty stands out in terrible contrast with the teeming prodigality of tropical Nature, offering all the richest fruits of earth in full measure to these early wanderers across the Southern seas.

The mountain railway, curving round ridge or precipice and spanning sombre gorge with bridge and aqueduct, affords superb views of the unrivalled plains. Waterfalls foam over granite cliffs; a sinuous river flings a silver chain round the symmetrical base of Kaleidon, and from our lofty vantage point we gaze into the luminous green of a million palms, where the warm heart of a deep forest opens to display the lustre and colour of molten emeralds. The Soendanese quarter of [53] the island gives place to the ancient Javanese territory, and Malay characteristics, though underlying and mingling with every insular stock, are here modified by a strain of Hindu ancestry, which gives refinement of feature and grace of carriage. Well-modelled figures and delicate hands and feet are attributed to the liberal admixture of royal and noble blood with that of the peasantry, for the ancient Rulers of Java respected no rights but their own, and the domestic arrangements of King Solomon prevailed in a kingdom of tyrants and slaves. Hindu thraldom was intensified under Arab priests, who, following in the train of piratical Moormen, claimed the sovereignty of Java under their protection. The gold-embroidered jacket of civil or military rank, with the *kris* thrust into a brilliant sash, here supplements the universal *sarong*, itself of bolder design and glowing colour in this old-world realm of Mataram, the centre of Java's historic interest. The crooked blade of the *kris* is still used in divination, light and shadow playing over the wavy steel, ever suggesting cabalistic signs inscribed by an invisible hand on the azure surface. The *kris* is popularly endowed with healing efficacy, and the availing touch of the sacred talisman is an article of Javanese faith. A hundred varieties of the weapon are found in the Malay Archipelago, from the gold-hilted and diamond-studded royal *kris* to the boat-handled dagger of [54] common use, permitted to all but peasants; women of the higher class wear it in the girdle, and though unrepresented in the sculpture of Javanese temples, the *kris* is ascribed to the days of Panji, a Hindu warrior whose feats form the libretto of a popular drama, though his authenticity appears uncertain. The changes in local costume and character, as seen in wayside villages, enliven the journey until we reach the mountain gateway of Tjadas Pangeran, "the Royal Stone," flanked by flashing waterfalls, and forming the entrance to the region supreme in natural scenery, archaic art, and literary interest. The black cone of Goentoer, "the thunder peak," accentuates the red blaze of the declining sun on the intricate rice-mosaic of green and gold in the divinely beautiful plain revealed through the rocky cleft. Amid the many glories of Javanese landscape, the poetic glamour of these palm-girt levels lingers longest in the memory, for the world-famed picture known as "The Plains of Heaven" might have been inspired by the haunting loveliness of these rolling uplands. Our railway carriage contains a native Regent, his principal wife, and a pretty daughter. Javanese princes are made ostensible rulers of native districts, but associated with Dutch Residents as "Elder Brothers," who may be more accurately termed compulsory advisers. Without a measure of despotic authority exercised by the fraternal partner, the spendthrift Malay would cause perpetual hindrance to insular development and commercial [55]

prosperity. The old Regent, with embroidered military jacket glittering above his elaborately-patterned *sarong*, looks a grim and forbidding figure, and evidently regards his womenkind as beneath notice. His head is tied up in a black kerchief, and a brilliant Order conferred by the Queen of Holland adorns his breast. Madame, in magenta shawl and purple gown, travesties European costume. Diamonds blaze incongruously on arms and neck, a scarlet flower in oily black braids completing her startling attire. The girl, in yellow *sarong* and pink cotton jacket glorified with rubies and pearls, shows her high breeding in slender wrists, delicate hands, and bare feet of exquisite modelling, a red stain of henna drawing attention to their statuesque contour. She staggers beneath a load of impedimenta belonging to her princely father: bags, bundles, and a heavy cloak. Javanese parents of exalted rank treat their daughters with disdain, the approved discipline of family life consisting in stamping an impression of abject insignificance deeply on the plastic mind of girlhood. Fertile plain and wooded slopes are alike destitute of domestic animals. The sheep was unknown to native races in this pastureless land, and, though introduced by the earliest colonists, is still spoken of as "the Dutch goat," no other term existing for it in Malay parlance. Monkeys chatter and rustle in forest trees, gorgeous birds flit past on [56]
jewelled wings, and frogs in this rainy season make a deep booming like the tuning of numerous violoncellos. At length the little town of Garoet appears in a green valley, encircled by a diadem of peaks which suggest a tropical Engadine. Volcanic mountains replace Alpine crests, but the white battlements of Papandayang's smoking crater give the effect of distant snow, and the dark pines of the Swiss valley are merely translated into the lustrous green of crowding palms. Brawling river, rustic bridge, and brown hamlets foster the strange illusion, and if it be true that somewhere in the wide world every face finds a counterpart, natural scenery may be subject to an identical law, and various ice-bound landscapes be mirrored under Southern skies in pictures wreathed with palm-fronds and tropic flowers. The Hotel Rupert, garlanded with creepers, the open lattices trellised with ivy and roses, shows a more poetic aspect than any hostelry of the distant Engadine. Our hostess is the widow of a German physician, and her fair young daughter, alert and capable as the typical *Hausfrau* of her native land, has established a reputation for supplying the guests with the home comforts and restful atmosphere which make the Hotel Rupert an ideal abiding-place in stagnant Java, where as a rule the sole luxuries are out-of-doors, and of Nature's providing. That the Dutchman flourishes on his diet of tinned meat, his appalling [57]
rice-table, and the extraordinary sequence of dishes which probably belonged to the early days of colonisation, either proves herculean strength or the triumph of mind over matter, but to those of less heroic mould the unwonted amenities of a more familiar civilisation are welcome as a green oasis in a sandy desert. A cool and healthy mountain climate gives unwonted zest for the lovely excursions of which Garoet is the centre. From the little lake Setoe Bajendit, a covered raft plies to a cupola-crowned hill, facing a noble panorama of volcanic peaks the Soendanese *désa* of basket-work huts, through which we pass, presents a curious spectacle, with the village street lined on either side by rows of kneeling children, clad in Dame Nature's brown suit alone; each little figure holding up a long-stemmed flower—red hybiscus, creamy tuberose, or snowy gardenia—the imploring faces raised in silent entreaty to the white strangers for the infinitesimal coins which suffice to purchase a sheaf of blossom. Changing lights and shadows sweep across the glancing emerald of the rice-filled vale, darken the purple rifts of mountain gorges, or intensify the luminous azure of soaring crests. Wayside fruit-stalls make gay patches of colour among green piles of banana leaves, and thin yellow strips of bamboo, the approved paper and string of the tropics, in which every parcel is packed. Tall sugar-cane and plumy maize surround [58]
each brown *désa* beneath the knot of palms, and fields of tapioca vary the prevailing rice-grounds with sharp-pointed leaves and paler verdure. The entire tapioca crop of Java belongs to Huntley and Palmer, for use in the manufacture of the biscuits which make a valuable supplement to the Javanese commissariat, for unlimited rice seldom commends itself to English tastes. Hot springs abound in this volcanic soil, and in the "five waters" of Tjipanas, each of different temperature, the native finds a panacea wherein he can indulge to his heart's content, the healing springs rushing into stone tanks set in sheds of bamboo. The principal excursion from Garoet is to the active crater of the Papandayang, a long drive of twelve miles leading to the foot of the volcano. From this point a chair carried by six coolies is required for the steep road, formed by hundreds of moss-grown steps. Plantations of coffee, cinchona, and tapioca girdle the lower slopes of the mountain, hedges and thickets of red and purple coleas bordering the primeval jungle of orchid-decked trees on the higher levels, the moss-grown boughs wreathed with epiphytal plants, the trunks covered with branching ferns, and the thick ropes of matted lianas strangling the dense forest in their green embrace. Wild oleander mingles rosy blossoms with bushes of living gold like tall growths of double buttercups, and at length the cooler regions show the familiar ferns, [59]
violets, and primroses of the temperate zone. The weird silence of the jungle is emphasised by an occasional cry of a wild bird, flitting among the tall tree tops, or the crash of a bough, dragged down by the weight of some climbing rattan. A walk up a boulder-strewn slope reaches the old crater, or Solfatara, almost surrounded by steep walls of rock. Boiling and wheezing springs, fast-forming sulphur columns, and clouds of choking steam, rise from the yellow and orange-powdered earth. A deafening noise issues from the self-building architecture of ruddy pillars, the bubbling of boiling mud, and the shrill spouting of hot vapours from narrow orifices in the trembling crust of the fire-charged earth. Golden sulphur-pools shower burning drops on every side, and from the mysterious *kawa* or crater, echoes of subterranean thunder sound at intervals, from the traditional forge where native legends assert that a chained giant is condemned to work eternally in the service of the Evil One.

At night the broad verandah of the Hotel Rupert is transformed into a stage for a performance of the *topeng* or national drama, chartered by an American guest. The weird spectacle, accompanied by the *gamelon* music, transports us to the days of old-world Java, story and

performance being of ancient origin and religious signification. The subjects of the *topeng* are derived from the Panji group of dramatic poems, the ancient costumes, the curious masks, and [60] the office of the *dalang* or reciter, whose ventriloquial skill is required for the entire wording of the *libretto*, comprise a valuable memento of bygone days, otherwise entirely forgotten. The *wayang-wayang* or "shadow dance" of puppets, vies with the *topeng* in popularity, but the latter ranks as classic and lyrical drama. A graceful girl in pink, with floating scarf, and gleaming *kris* in her spangled sash, exhibits wonderful skill in the supple play of wrist and fingers, through the process known as devitalization, a form of drill which gives to the arm a plastic power of detached movement, fascinating but uncanny. The dusky garden is filled with a native crowd, moved alternately to tears and laughter by exploits unintelligible to the European spectator, for the story of every national hero is known to the poorest and most ignorant of the people, from perpetual attendance on theatrical performances. The *al fresco* entertainments necessitated by the climate provide exceptional opportunities of dramatic education in the legends of Java's heroic age. The spacious verandahs gleaming with the soft light of Chinese lanterns, and set in depths of shadow, the scented gloom of the tropical night veiling the dusky lawns, crowded with mysterious figures drawn by the weird music from every quarter, the brilliant robes and grotesque masks of the actors, compose a picture of archaic charm. Passers-by pause on their [61] way to look, and listen with unwearied interest to the oft-told tales, for the stories of the world's childhood, like the fairy lore of our own early days, deepen their significance to the untaught mind by perpetual repetition. The Hindu cloudland which veils the Javanese past "was reached by a ladder of realities," for the exploits of gods and mythical heroes were afterwards attributed to native Rulers, until the medley of truth and fiction, history and mythology, became an inextricable tangle. The birds' beaks, and hooked noses of the masks in the *topeng*, and of the puppets in the shadow-play, were made compulsory after the Arabic conquest, in order to reconcile the national pastime with the creed of Islam, which forbade the dramatic representation of the human form. The reigning *Susunhan* evaded the decree by distorting mask and puppet, but although the outside world might no longer recognise the heroes of the play, Javanese knowledge of national tradition easily pierced the flimsy disguise, and credited their deified heroes with a new power of metamorphosis. The fantastic play lasts so far into the night that the prolonged *libretto* is brought to a summary conclusion by the hostess, since European nature can stand no more, though the rapt attention of the Malay would continue till morning. The satiety of modern days has never touched these simple minds, and an entire absence of that [62] critical element which disintegrates so many of life's simple joys, ministers to the supreme satisfaction derived from the crude ideals of native drama. Silently the brown spectators slip away like shadows from the dim and dewy garden, for the simple and untaught Malay, though eagerly welcoming the privileges permitted to him, never encroaches upon them, and the conduct of these Eastern playgoers affords an example of order and sobriety which shames many an audience of higher education and social superiority in distant Europe.

DJOKJACARTA. [63]

A long day's journey lies between Garoet and Djokjacarta, which popular parlance abbreviates into Djokja. From the blue Preanger hills and palm-shadowed upland plains, the railway descends by steep gradients to the dense jungle and fever-laden swamp known as the Terra Ingrata. Malarious mists steam from marsh and mere, pink and purple lantana, yellow daisies, and the pallid blossoms of strangling creepers emphasise the gloom of the matted foliage, forming an impenetrable screen on either side of the narrow embankment across the dreary morass. The railway through the hundred miles of this miasma-haunted region was laid at immense sacrifice of human life, even the native workmen being compelled to sleep in camps far away from the scene of their daily toil. No white man could even direct the work, and the ubiquitous Chinaman, proof against every ill that flesh is heir to in Java, was deputed to superintend the solution of abstruse professional problems, between the short and hasty visits of Dutch and English engineers. Quagmire and quicksand, stagnant pool and sluggish stream, succeed in weary [64] iteration. Bleached skeletons of dead trees writhe in weird contortions against the dark background of jungle, as though some wizard's curse had blighted life and growth amid the rank vegetation rising from this dismal Slough of Despond. The brooding melancholy of atmosphere and scenery penetrates mind and soul, oppressed by an intangible weight, and escape from the Dantesque horrors of this *selva oscura* is accompanied by a sudden relief and buoyancy of spirit which perceptibly heightens the interest of the old-world city, once isolated by the woodland fastness of Nature, and belonging to an ageless past, surrounding the authentic origin of Djokjacarta with thick clouds of fable and myth. The modern name is derived from Arjudja, a city recorded in Java's ancient annals as being established by Rama, the incarnate Sun-God. Na-yud-ja, the first king of this Divinely-founded capital, also memorialises in his name the place which became the nucleus of the ancient Hindu empire. Temples and palaces, walls and watch-towers, ruined by earthquake, buried in jungle, and blackened by smoke of war, testify to the splendours of old Mataram. A bitter resistance was offered by the invading hordes of Islam, whether pirates or prophets, princes or soldiers, and the Hindu territory remained independent until the fierce conflict in the 18th century with usurping Mohammedans and Dutch colonists, when family [65] influence was undermined by political intrigues. The Dutch, after many vicissitudes, became

absolute rulers of Java, though native princes, as tributaries, were suffered to retain a semblance of sovereignty. The shadowy paraphernalia of vanished power is still accorded to the Sultan of Djokjacarta, in melancholy travesty of past authority, though every hereditary privilege has been wrested from his grasp. A curious relic of primitive days remains in the *al fresco* Throne of Judgment, a block of stone beneath a rudely-tiled canopy, moss-grown and hoary. Two ancient waringen-trees, their aerial roots, drooping branches, and colossal main trunks denoting an almost fabulous age, flank the historic seat, where the turbaned Ruler administered justice to the surging crowd which thronged around him, the indigo garb of the Soendanese contrasting with the gay *sarongs* of Central Java, glowing in the hot sunlight as it poured through the dark trellis of fluttering boughs. The city in the course of ages moved away from this ancient centre, and the rustic Throne is now remote from the heart of civic life. The streets of Djokjacarta, and the surrounding roads, consist of shady avenues, where open *tokos* (the native shops) vary the monotony of Dutch villas, their white colonnades and porticos gleaming against the background of stately trees, and rising from a mass of tropical vegetation. The prevailing indigo of [66]
Soendanese dress gives a dull aspect to the wide but squalid streets, for in native capitals, though Dutch cleanliness may enforce perpetual "tidying up," the lacking sense of order produces a strange impermanence in the conditions insisted upon. The inner court of the Sultan's Kraton, or Royal Enclosure, is now taboo to visitors, for the barbaric monarch, on the plea of age and infirmity, has obtained the privilege of privacy, and the Palace can only be seen through a personal interview. The outer courts are accessible to carriages, which make the square-mile circuit of the spacious quadrangles. Massive gates and crumbling machicolated walls command a green plain, where immense waringen-trees, clipped into the semblance of evergreen umbrellas, display the Eastern symbol of sovereignty. Officials passing to and fro show a continuous procession of these State *pajongs*. The Sultan's august head is canopied with gold, edged by an orange stripe, the Crown Prince sporting an umbrella with a golden border. Sultanas and royal children are known by white *pajongs*, while the vast concourse of Court officials, with umbrellas of pink, blue, red, black, purple and green, show their status to the initiated eye through the sequence of colour by which the *pajongs* form a complete system of heraldry. In the dusky angle of a mossy wall, four elephants, used in State processions, feed upon bundles of bamboo and [67]
sugar-cane. Mud huts and bamboo sheds prop themselves against tiled eaves and windowless houses. Open doors afford glimpses of squalid interiors, crowded with slatternly women and dirty children, the hereditary retainers and hangers-on of this effete and moribund royalty. Private troupes of dancing *bedayas*, *gamelon* players, actors, pipe, fan, and betel-box bearers, pertain to the tumbledown Palace, and the patriarchal system of ancient Java permits the presence of whole families belonging to these indispensable ministers of the royal pleasure. The people show the same indifference to Mohammedanism as to the perished faiths of olden time, and a large funeral party encountered on leaving the Kraton displays painful irreverence, though scattering rice and lighting incense sticks before a white coffin borne shoulder-high, and decked with a tracery of yellow marigolds and rosettes of pink paper. No priest accompanies the procession, and the laughter of the white-scarved mourners, preceded by men carrying ropes and planks, suggests an utter heartlessness and barbarity. Gay *passers*, a busy *campong Tchina*, a very hive of Celestial industry, and innumerable drives beneath over-arching trees, with distant views of purple peaks, comprise the interests of old-world Djokja, with the one exception of the famous Taman Sarie, or Water Castle, ruined by earthquake, but remaining as a pathetic memorial of bygone power and [68]
pride. Pavilions and baths, grottoes and fish-ponds, set in the tangled verdure of a neglected garden, surround the arcaded parapets of a colossal tower. Green plumes of fern wave from wall and battlement, velvet moss and orange lichen tapestry the blackened stone, and matted creepers sway their woven curtains in the evening wind. A Dancing Hall, which formerly rang with the weird music accompanying the "woven paces and waving hands" of Court *bedayas*, in their spangled pink robes, now echoes to the tread of alien feet; the dim arcades teem with ghostly memories, and the mournful desolation of the Taman Sarie borrows fresh poignancy in the former scene of mirth and music. A moss-grown and slippery stairway leads to the green twilight of a subterranean grotto, containing the richly-carved stone bedstead of the Sultan, who sought this cool retreat from the ardour of a tropical sun. A silvery curtain of murmuring water fell before his sculptured couch, and supplied this haunt of dreams with an ideal, if rheumatic environment of poetic beauty and lulling charm. Superstition clings to the deserted resting-place, and to touch even the stone columns of the royal couch is to invoke the powers of evil, and the presence of Death. The *Sumoor Gamelon*, or "Musical Spring," echoing with the voice of flowing waters, flanks the ancient banqueting hall, and cools a circle of vaulted grottoes, their shadowy [69]
depths bathed in the emerald twilight, deepened by the veil of verdure and the transparent foliage drooping over open window spaces. The Sultan's oval bathing tank, with stone galleries and spiral pavilions, occupies a hollow tower, but a touch of young life dispels the gloom, for a group of brown children swim and dive in the cool depths, shouting and splashing with a merriment unsubdued by the solemn sadness of the deserted halls. A Portuguese architect designed this fantastic retreat for an old-time Sultan, who brought the idea of the Water Castle from a far-off Indian home. The earthquake of 1867 rendered the Taman Sarie uninhabitable, choked the lake in which it stood, and destroyed the subaqueous tunnel which ensured the absolute seclusion of Sultan and harem. The famous Marshal Daendels, weary of waiting for an interview with a dilatory Sultan, yielded to natural impatience, and hearing the sound of distant music from the watery depths, dashed through the thicket of tamarinds which concealed the entrance to the water pavilion, and, dragging the Sultan from the place of dreams, scattered *bedayas* and *gamelon* players in terror, forcing the so-called "Regent of the World" and "Shadow of the Almighty" to accompany him to the Dutch headquarters. Rose garden and shrubbery, palm grove and pleasaunce, are fast relapsing into impenetrable jungle. Broken fountains, and [70]
mouldering vases once filled with orange-trees, outline the balustraded terraces; gilt pavilions lift

their upcurved eaves above a wild growth of oleander, but the enchanted scene of old romance is given up to bats and lizards, for the crumbling Taman Sarie is now a fast-vanishing monument of Java's buried past.

The number of *rechas*, or sacred stone figures of Brahmin and Buddhist origin, in the garden of the Dutch Residency, shows the scant care bestowed on the ancient temples, for years used as mere quarries of broken statuary, and still receiving inadequate recognition as historical remains, though Sir Stamford Raffles a century ago realised the supreme importance of Javanese sculpture as an indispensable link in archæological science. Djokjacarta, interesting in itself as the survival of an ancient dynasty, borrows double attraction from the architectural wonders which surround it, buried for ages in the deep green grave of tropical vegetation, but now laid bare as an open book, wherein we may read those graven records which unveil the mysteries of the past, and enable us to gaze down the long vista of Time and Change.

BORO-BOEDOER.

[71]

The archæological interest of Java culminates in the mysterious temple known as Boro-Boedoer, "the aged thing," with an actual history lost in mist and shadow, though recorded in imperishable characters on this spellbound sanctuary of a departed faith. The little tramway from Djokjacarta traverses fields of rice and sugar-cane, indigo and pepper; a range of dreamlike mountains bounds the view, crowned by the turquoise cone of Soemboeung, the traditional centre of Java, a green knoll at the base of the volcanic pyramid being regarded as the "spike" which fastens the floating isle to some solid rock in unfathomed depths of ocean. The fitful fancy of a wandering race, ever drifting across the changing seas, reflects itself in the legendary lore of the Malay Archipelago, often represented by weird traditions as though in perpetual motion. The vicissitudes of volcanic action, whereby islands were sometimes submerged or created, gives a colouring of fact to the vague ideas entertained by these nomads of the sea. Merbaboe, the "ash-ejecting," and Merapi, the "fire-throwing," flank the loftier crest, honeycombed with dim cave [72] temples, now deserted and forgotten, but formerly sanctifying those watch-towers of Nature which guard the hoary shrine of Boro-Boedoer. At Matoelan we hear that the swift river separating the great Temple from the secular world is in flood, the bridge broken down, and the supplementary raft impossible through the swirling current. This untoward event involves a further expedition to Magelang, a sordid town of continuous markets, the Javanese population being of pronounced Hindu type, silent and sad, according to the idiosyncracy of their mysterious ancestors across the sea. The conversational difficulties presented by the Dutch and Malay languages, combined with the incapacity of our brown driver, eventually land us at Mendoet, on the wrong side of the turbid stream—the Jordan which divides the weary traveller from his Land of Promise. Evening draws on, the clear sky flushes pink above the darkness of the palm-woods, and hope sinks apace, for the surging flood shows no sign of abatement. Suddenly the apathetic driver rouses himself from what proves a profitable meditation, and, with folded hands, breathes the magic word *pasteur*, whipping up his sorry steeds to fresh exertions. We draw up at a white bungalow on the roadside, close to a rustic church, and find a friend in an English-speaking Dutch priest, who, after giving us tea on his verandah, suggests inspection of Mendoet's little [73] moated temple, on the edge of the forest. An ever-growing tangle of lianas and vines buried this ancient shrine through the lapse of ages, until accident revealed the entombed sanctuary about eighty years ago. A processional terrace surrounds the walled pavement supporting the grey edifice, and the sculptured bas-reliefs denote the transitional stage of Buddhist faith, as it materialised through Jainism into the Puranic mythology of Hindu creed. The central chapel contains the famous picture in stone known as "The Tree of Knowledge," and represents the Buddha beneath the sacred Bo-Tree of Gaya. A fluted *pajong*, propped against the boughs, canopies his head, one hand being raised in benediction over kneeling converts, offering rice and incense. Listening angels hover overhead, birds peep out from nests among the leaves, and kids lean with necks outstretched over fretted crags, magnetised by the mystic attraction of the inspired Teacher. Long-eared statues show Nepalese influence, even the Buddhist images being girt with the sacred cord of Brahma. A controversy exists as to their identification with the Hindu Trinity, but as Eastern cults frequently bestow Divine attributes on mortals, the mysterious figures may possibly represent the murdered wives of the Rajah who founded the Mendoet temple in expiation of his crime. Another legend suggests the petrification of a princely family, as [74] a punishment for marrying within the forbidden degrees, but myth grows apace in this haunted land, and every century offers fresh variations of old-world stories, until original form is lost beneath a weight of accretion, like the thick moss blurring the chiselled outlines of some carven monument. After careful scrutiny of the miniature temple which suggests so many interpretations of symbolic imagery, we return to the little presbytery to hear of the subsiding river, and the good priest, announcing that the raft can now be safely negotiated, accompanies us to the tottering structure, a straw matting laid over three crazy boats punted across the turbulent stream. A half-hour's stroll beneath the arching boughs of a kanari avenue, ends at a picturesque Rest House, facing the temple-crowned hill. Surely we have reached the peace and silence of Nirvana at last! and the exquisite beauty of the surrounding landscape, mountain and forest, park-like valley and winding glen, transfigured in the deepening gold of sunset, stamps an ineffaceable impression of Boro-Boedoer in that mystic gallery of imagination and memory which

retains earth's fairest scenes as eternal possessions of mind and soul. A shadowy garden, fragrant and dim, stretches up to the pyramidal pile which covers the hill. A frangipanni grove scents the air, with gold-starred blossoms gleaming whitely amid the silvery green of lanceolated leaves, and a shaft of ruby light striking the stone Buddhas which guard the portico, emphasises [75] the inscrutable smile of the tranquil faces. Like all stupendous monuments of Art or Nature, Boro-Boedoer at first sight seems a disappointment, simply because the mind fails to grasp the immensity of the noblest Temple ever dedicated to the gentle Sage whose renunciation typified the greater Sacrifice offered by the Saviour of the World. Who that reads the story of Sakya Munyi can doubt that through the Prince who gave up kingdom, throne, and earthly ties for the sake of downtrodden humanity, a prophetic gleam of heavenly light pierced the darkness of the future, and pointed to the distant Cross? Twenty-five centuries have rolled away since Prince Siddartha closed his unique career, and twelve centuries later the wondrous sanctuary of Boro-Boedoer was erected in honour of the creed eternally dear to the heart of the mystic East. The eight stately terraces which climb and encircle the sacred hill rise from a spacious pavement of blackened stone, and the walled processional paths display a superb series of sculptured reliefs, which would measure three miles in length if placed side by side. The grey and black ruins, with their rich incrustations of sacred and historic scenes, remain in such splendid preservation that fancy easily reconstructs the bygone glory of the golden age, when this mighty Altar of Faith witnessed the glittering pageantry of Oriental devotion; when gaily-clad crowds flocked to the [76] morning sacrifice of flowers and music, while monarchs brought their treasures from far-off lands to lay at the feet of the mystic Sage, prophetically revealed as an incarnation of purity and peace vouchsafed to a world of oppression and sorrow. Life-size Buddhas, enthroned on the sacred lotus, rise above the crumbling altars of five hundred arcaded shrines, and stone stairways ascend from every side, beneath sharply-curved arches bordered with masks or gargoyles. The last three terraces form sweeping circles, flanked by bell-shaped *dagobas* resembling gigantic lotus-buds. Each open lattice of hoary stone reveals an enthroned Buddha, mysteriously enclosed in his symbolical screen, for these triple terraces typify the higher circles of Nirvana. Each dreamy face turns towards the supreme Shrine of the glorious sanctuary, a domed *dagoba* fifty feet high, and once containing some authentic relic of the Buddha's sacred person. Certain archæologists recognise in this spire-tipped cupola a survival of Nature-worship, incorporated with the later Buddhism in a form derived from the tree temples of primeval days, and built over a receptacle for the cremated ashes of the Buddhist priesthood. A touch of mysticism added by an unfinished statue in the gloom of the shadowy vault, suggests the unknown beauty of the soul which attains Nirvana's supremest height, for the supernal exaltation of purified humanity to [77] Divine union may not be interpreted or expressed by mortal hands, but must for ever remain incommunicable and incomprehensible. From the central *dagoba*, ascended by a winding stair, the intricate design of the spacious sanctuary discloses itself with mathematical precision, and the changing glories of dawn, sunset, and moonlight idealize the sacred hill, rising amid the palm-groves and rice-fields of a matchless valley, sweeping away in green undulations which break like emerald waves against the deepening azure and amethyst of the mountain heights. The solemn grandeur of Boro-Boedoer blinds the casual observer to many details which manifest the ravages of time, the ruthlessness of war, and the decay of a discarded creed. Headless and overthrown figures, broken *tees*, mutilated carvings, and shattered chapels abound, but the vast display of architectural features still intact conveys an impression of permanence rather than of ruin.

For six centuries, Boro-Boedoer was blotted from the memory of the people, and the heavy pall of tropical verdure which veiled the vast Temple remained unlifted. Superincumbent masses of trees, parasites, and strangling creepers wove their intricate network of root, branch, and stem round the monumental record of a dead faith and a buried dynasty. The riotous luxuriance of tropical Nature triumphed over the glories of Art, hewn with incalculable toil and skill in the living rock. Seeds borne on the wind, or sown by wandering birds, filled every interstice of the [78] closely-matted verdure; stair and terrace, dome and spire, sank out of sight into the forest depths, and when English engineers arrived to excavate the monumental pile, the task of clearing away the tangled masses of foliage occupied two hundred coolies during six weeks of arduous toil. The brief English occupation of the island necessarily left the work unfinished, but Dutch archæologists continued the labour, though with slower methods and feebler grasp of the situation. A transient cult sprang up among the Javanese populace as the ancient sanctuary revealed itself anew. The statues were invoked with reverential awe, incense was offered; the saffron, used as a personal decoration on festive occasions, was smeared over the impassive faces, unchanged in the eternal calm of a thousand years, and fragrant flower petals were heaped on the myriad altars. Vigils were kept on the summit, and the sick were laid at the feet of favourite images. This spurious devotion, hereditary or instinctive, sprang up in responsive hearts with simultaneous fervour, though the forgotten doctrines of Buddhism were never reinstated. Sentiment survived dogma in the subconscious soul, and the faint shadow cast by an immemorial past indicates the depths plumbed by the early creed in the abyss of Eastern personality. The vague simulacrum quickly faded, like a flickering flame in the wind which fanned [79] it into life; but simple souls, as they pass Boro-Boedoer in the brief twilight, mutter incantations, and brown hands grasp the silver amulets which ward off the powers of evil, for the deserted temple is still regarded as the haunt of unknown gods, who may perchance wreak vengeance on the world which has forsaken them.

The long scroll of ancient history, unrolled by the sculptured terraces, represents the birth, growth, and development of Buddhist faith. Queen Maya, jewelled and flower-crowned, with the miraculous Babe on her knee, sits among her maidens, the earth breaking into blossom at the

advent of her star-born child. His education in the mental and physical achievements imperative on Eastern royalty, when the sword-pierced heart of the mother who typified the Virgin Queen of Saints was translated to Nirvana's rest, is contrasted with the sudden realisation of life's vanity when brought face to face with the world's threefold burden of sorrow, sickness and death. The renunciation of power, wealth and love follows, liberating the soul for the pilgrimage along the mystic "path," pursued until "the dew-drop fell into the shining sea" of Eternity. The manifold details of the Buddha's traditional career are vividly pourtrayed on the hoary walls of volcanic trachyte in outline clear and sharp, as though the sculptors of the eighth century had just laid down burin and chisel. The indented leaves of the Bo-Tree, beneath which the Sage meditates, [80] are so exquisitely carved that they almost seem to flutter in the breeze. The scene of the deer-park wherein he judges beasts and men, carefully weighing the tiniest birds in the balance of the sanctuary, suggests a prophetic vision of the greater Saviour, Who declared that even the humble sparrow is remembered by the Creator. Countless scriptural truths throw their anticipatory shadows across the life of the Eastern mystic who approached so closely to the Christian ideal of a later age, for the Buddha's spiritual experiences became the inspiration of unnumbered hearts, and exercised a purifying influence over every creed of the philosophic East. The social life of ancient Java, comprising public ceremonials, domestic occupations, architecture, agriculture, navigation, drama and music, is memorialised by succeeding terraces of the igneous rock which sufficed for the old-world sculptor as the medium of his Art. An unknown King and Queen, the traditional founders of Boro-Boedoer, appear in varied guise, throned and crowned, walking in religious processions beneath State *pajongs*, kneeling before Buddha with open caskets of treasure, and receiving the homage of the people, accompanied by bearers of smoking censers and waving fans. Armed warriors guard the jewelled thrones, and the popular attitude in every scene of the royal progress evidences the semi-sacred character awarded to Indian sovereignty. [81] The eighth century A.D. was the meridian of the Javanese Empire, and in the subsequent changes of nationality the facial type of the past has altered beyond recognition, for in the ancient civilisation depicted on these sculptured terraces, archæologists assert that every physiognomy is either of Hindu or Hellenic character. Ships of archaic form, with banks of rowers; palm-thatched huts built on piles, in the unchanging fashion of the Malay races; graceful *bedayas*, the Nautch girls of Java, performing the old-world dances still in vogue; and women with *lotahs* on their heads, passing in single file to palm-fringed tanks, might be represented with equal truth in this twentieth century. Seedtime and harvest, ploughing and reaping, bullock-carts and water-buffaloes, fruit-laden wagons and village *passers*, pass in turn before the spectator in this wondrous gallery of native art. Richly-caparisoned elephants suggest Indian accessories of royal life and State ceremonial, an occasional touch of humour enlivening the solemn pageantry. In one grotesque relief a *bedaya* and an elephant stand *vis-a-vis*, the ponderous monster imitating the steps of the slim maiden in floating veil and embroidered robes, her slender limbs contrasting with the outflung feet of her clumsy partner. Weird myths of the great fishes which guided and propelled the coracle-like boats of the first Buddhist missionaries to the shores of Java are [82] perpetuated in stone, and the forest, sloping down to the wave-beaten coast, shows the rich vegetation which still clothes this island of eternal summer. The *sumboya* or flower of the dead, droops over stately tombs; bamboo and palm, banana and bread-fruit, mingle their varied foliage; mangosteen and pomegranate, mango and tamarind, acacia and peepul, show themselves as indigenous growths of the fertile soil; while palace and temple, carven stairway, and flower-girt pavilion, suggest the wealth and prosperity of the ancient empire. The mighty Temple of Boro-Boedoer, built up through successive ages, indicates the gradual change from the simplicity of the early faith, at first supplanting, and eventually becoming incorporated with, the Brahminism which succeeded it in modified form, as though rising from the ashes of the earlier Hindu creed which Buddhism virtually destroyed. In the higher terrace, the last addition to this stupendous sanctuary, the images of Buddha represent the ninth *Avatar* or Incarnation of the god Vishnu, though he still sits upon the lotus cushion and holds the sacred flower in one hand. This inclusion of Sakya Munyi within the Puranic Pantheon was a masterly feat of strategy accomplished by reviving Brahminism, the heresy of the Jains supplying the link between the rival creeds. All the sculptured figures, leaning forward in veneration of the mystic statue in the central cupola, are [83] invested with the sacred thread of the Vishnavite Brahmin. The images of the highest circular terrace are carved in four symbolical attitudes. The "teaching" Buddha rests an open palm on one knee; in the posture of "learning" his hands are outstretched to receive the gift of knowledge. In "exposition," one hand is raised towards Heaven, and in the act of "demonstration," thumbs and index fingers are joined. Ferguson points out that within the grey lattice of each lotus-bell *dagoba*, the right palm of the enthroned Buddha curves over the left hand. This restful posture indicates the state of final comprehension, when the aspiring soul, raised to the different spheres of Nirvana by steps of ascending sanctity, receives increasing peace and satisfaction from gradual absorption into the Infinite. No creed passes unaltered through any crucible of national thought; Indian Buddhism borrowed both form and colour from races which, in accepting the new faith, retained their own individuality and modes of assimilation. They gave as well as received, and the value of the gift depended on the character of the giver.

No inscriptions exist on the stones of Boro-Boedoer. The sculptured reliefs tell their own story, which admits of diverse interpretations. The relics of the world-renowned Mystic were dispersed throughout Asia in the sudden impulse of missionary enterprise three centuries after his death, [84] and every Buddhist temple received some infinitesimal treasure. No record is found of the date when the precious relic, probably a hair or an eyelash, was deposited in the great *dagoba* of Boro-Boedoer, but an Indian prince sailed with an imposing fleet to found a Buddhist empire in Java at the opening of the 7th century A.D., and a subsequent inscription discovered on the coast of Sumatra commemorates the completion of a seven-storeyed *Vihara*, evidently the colossal

Temple of Boro-Boedoer, by the contemporary King of "Greater Java," the ancient name of Sumatra. In the tenth century, a reigning monarch sent his sons to India for religious education. They brought back in their train artists, sculptors, monks, priests, and the gorgeous paraphernalia then used in the ceremonial of Buddhist worship, but the heart of the ancient faith was atrophied by the indifference of the people, and the zealous attempt to galvanise a moribund creed into fresh life failed even to arrest the progress of decay. National thought, fickle as the wind, had turned from an impersonal philosophy to the materialistic cult of Hindu deities, as the Israelites of old hankered after the visible symbol of Isis and Osiris in the Golden Calf. No definite creed succeeded in gaining a permanent hold upon the wandering minds and shallow feelings of a race whose deepest instincts reveal the fleeting fancies and inconstant ideas indigenous to a [85] sea-faring stock, imbued with the spirit of change and unrest. A magical charm broods over the mysterious Temple, the materialised dream of a mighty past rescued from the sylvan sepulchre of equatorial vegetation, and restored to a vivid reality beside which the paintings of Egyptian tombs sink into comparative insignificance. The seclusion of the memory-haunted pile enhances the thrill of an unique experience. Vista after vista opens into the world of long ago so graphically depicted on the monumental tablets of the processional paths, while type and symbol point also to the infinite future intensely realised by Eastern mysticism. Mortal life was but a fleeting mirage besides this vision of the life beyond. For the words "*Shadow, Unreality, Illusion*," perpetually repeated by the yellow-robed monks on the beads of the Buddhist Rosary were inscribed on the inmost heart of the faithful disciple, who strove to attain that detachment from the world of sense inculcated by the creed expressed on the hoary stones of Boro-Boedoer.

BRAMBANAM. [86]

The ruined temples of Brambanam memorialise that phase of Java's religious history, when the altars of Buddha were finally deserted, and Hinduism became the paramount creed of the fickle populace. An archæological report sent to Sir Stamford Raffles a century ago, describes the remains of Brambanam as "stupendous monuments of the science and taste belonging to a long-forgotten age, crowded together in the former centre of Hindu faith." A rough country road leads from the little white railway station, perched on a desolate plain, to these far-famed temples. A brown village, shaded by the dark foliage of colossal kanari-trees, shows the usual fragility of structure in basket-work walls and roofs of plaited palm-leaves, but the humble dwellings, destroyed and rebuilt myriad times on the ancient site of Java's Hindu capital, have supplemented native workmanship by a multitude of carven stones, broken statues, and moss-grown reliefs, for the ruins, theoretically guarded from the spoiler's hand, are still inadequately [87] protected, and the grey *recha* have been used as seats, landmarks, or stepping-stones over muddy lane and brimming water-course. The conversion of Java to the materialistic creed for which she forsook the subtleties of an impersonal Buddhism, though shallow was complete, and the doctrine of impermanence, inculcated by the discarded faith, continued an essential factor in spiritual development, for the inconstancy of the national mind only found a temporary halting-place in each successive creed which arrested it. The seed was sown, the bud opened, and the flower faded, with incredible rapidity, but the growth while it lasted, showed phenomenal luxuriance. The erection of these Hindu sanctuaries signalised the zenith of Javanese power; their fame travelled across the seas, and numerous expeditions sailed for this early El Dorado of the Southern ocean. Kublai Khan came with his Mongol fleet, but was repulsed with loss, and branded as a felon. A second and stronger attempt from the same quarter met with absolute defeat. Marco Polo, compelled to wait through the rainy season in Sumatra for a favourable wind, came hither in the palmy days of mediæval Portugal, but returned discomfited. Goths from the Northern bounds of Thuringian pine forests followed in their turn, but the power and prestige of Hindu Java remained invincible until destroyed by the wayward fickleness of her own children. [88] Brahminism was finally discarded for the specious promises of Arabian invaders, and the lightly-held faith succumbed to the creed of Islam. Mosques were built, Hindu temples were forsaken, and Nature's veil of vegetation was once more suffered to hide altar and statue, wall and stairway, until every sculptured shrine became a mere green mound of waving trees, strangling creepers, and plumy ferns. The memory of the past was entirely obliterated from the hearts of the people, and every year buried the relics of the former religion in a deeper grave.

Siva the Destroyer, and also the Life-Giver, the Third Person of the Hindu Trinity, together with Parvati and Brahma, were worshipped here in their original character, and an exquisite statue of Lora Jonggran (Parvati in her Javanese guise) remains enshrined in a richly-decorated chapel, surrounded by dancing houris, inspired in their sacred measure by the flute-playing of Krishna. A further instance of the mode already mentioned by which sentiment survives dogma in the Malay races, is shown by the fact that Lora Jonggran still receives the homage of Javanese women. Flowers are laid at her feet, love affairs are confided to her advocacy, and as the shadows deepen across the great quadrangle, a weeping girl prostrates herself before the smiling goddess, and, raising brown arms in earnest supplication, kisses the stone slab at the feet of the beautiful [89] statue, popularly endowed with some occult virtue which the loosely-held Mohammedanism of a later day has failed to discredit or deny. The temples of Brambanam were erected shortly after the completion of that upper terrace in the great sanctuary of Boro-Boedoer which marks the traditional epoch between Buddhism and the later Hinduism, including Sakya Munyi among the

avatars of Vishnu. The sacred trees and lions carved here on the walls of the temple quadrangle, give place in the galleries to scenes from the great Hindu epic of the Ramayan. The familiar form of Ganesh, the elephant-headed God of Wisdom, looms from the shadows of a vaulted shrine; Nandi, the sacred bull, stands beneath a carven canopy, and the great memorial of a bygone faith contains the identical galaxy of gods found in the Indian temples of the present day, for the thin veil of Javanese thought is a transparency rather than a disguise, softening rather than hiding the clear-cut outlines of the original idea. The "fatal beauty" of the graceful waringen-tree has played an ominous part in the destruction of the Brambanam temples, for the interlacing roots, like a network of branching veins, make their devious way through crevice and cranny, splitting and uplifting the strongest slab, wherein one tiny crack suffices for the string-like fibres to gain foothold. Masks and arabesques, fruit and flowers, fabulous monsters and sacred emblems, encrust the grey balustrades and bas-reliefs of the noble stairways. Roof and column teem with [90]
richest ornament, for Hindu art had reached the climax of splendour when the great city, formerly surrounding the monumental group of stately temples, attained to her utmost power and fame. The Greek influences which prevailed in Northern Hindustan were translated to Brambanam in their attributes of dignity and grace, for the flowing robes and easy postures of the sculptured figures correct and modify the grotesque and over-laden character of original Hindu art. The great stone-paved court once contained an imposing group of twenty pyramidal shrines, but only three remain in the original contour of the so-called "pagoda style," peculiar to the Dravidian temples of Southern India, from whence Java derived her special form of faith. The ruins on the opposite side of the grey quadrangle are mere cone-shaped piles of rubbish, dust, and broken stone, but the tapering pyramids, with their graceful galleries and processional terraces, richly carved and adorned with images, enable us to reconstruct in imagination the stately beauty of the architectural panorama once displayed by the temple courts. Scenes from the Ramayan and Mahabharata adorn the great blocks of the boundary wall, sculptured in high relief. The Vedic Powers of Nature, with Indra as the god of storm and hurricane, manifest the recognition of that earlier belief which became submerged in the vast system of Pantheistic [91]
mythology. The faith of further India takes form and colour from the idiosyncracy of Java, and the goddess Parvati, or Kali, worshipped under these different names according to her attributes of glory or terror, becomes Lora Jonggran, the benignant goddess of Java, popularly known as "the maiden of the beauteous form." Four lofty stairways ascend to the hoary chapels within each sculptured pyramid, every dusky vault containing the broken image of the tutelary *Deva*.

Only separated from Brambanam by a winding path and a green belt of jungle, stands the great Buddhist temple of Chandi Sewon, and the colossal figures flanking the entrance gate indicate a decadent phase of the ancient creed which Boro-Boedoer illustrates in the purity of earlier developement. Chandi Sewon, the "thousand temples," includes in the number myriad unimportant shrines, ruined, overthrown, or covered with a green network of interlacing creepers. The great architectural pile, built at a uniform level, surrounds the central sanctuary with five great enclosures. All the ancient faiths of the world contain foreshadowings or reflections of Christian truth, and the cruciform temple which forms the climax of this monumental erection shows the mystic value attached to the sacred Sign so frequently encountered in Buddhist shrines, and known as the *Shvastika*. The numerous chapels of Chandi [92]
Sewon contained the galaxy of Tirthankas or Buddhist saints which the materialism of the Jains added to the impersonal subtleties of esoteric Buddhism. The blank emptiness and desertion of this vast sanctuary produces an impression of unutterable desolation. The weed-grown courts, the ruined altars, and the moss-blackened arches, encumbered with indistinguishable heaps of shattered sculpture, lack all the reposeful charm of Boro-Boedoer, still a sermon in stone which he who runs may read. The degenerate creed memorialised by Chandi Sewon, has failed to impress itself on the colossal pile which bears melancholy witness to the evanescent character of the heretical offshoot from the parent stem. Jungle and palm-forest in Central Java contain innumerable vestiges of pyramidal temples, palaces, and shrines; vaults hidden beneath the shrouding trees have yielded a rich store of gold, silver, and bronze ornaments, household utensils, and armour. For many years the peasants of the region between Samarang and Boro-Boedoer paid their taxes in gold melted from the treasure trove turned up by the plough, or dug from the precincts of some forgotten sanctuary, buried beneath the rank vegetation of the teaming soil. The discarded Hindu gods still haunt the forest depths, and the superstitious native, as he threads the dark recesses of the solemn woods, gazes with apprehensive eyes on the trident of Siva, or the elephant's trunk of Ganesh emerging from the trailing wreaths and matted [93]
tapestry of liana and creeper, veiling the blackened stone of each decaying shrine. Nature has proved stronger than Art or Creed, in the eternal growth beneath an equatorial sun, of the kingdom over which she reigns in immortal life. Silently and insidiously she undermines man's handiwork, and realisation of his futile conflict with her invincible power enters with disastrous effect into the popular mind, lacking that immutable force without which the spiritual temple of faith rests on a foundation of shifting sand. Kawi literature, popularised by translation, and familiar through the medium of national drama, interprets Javanese creeds and traditions. This "utterance of poetry" derived from Sanskrit, fell into disuse after the Mohammedan conquest, though a few Arabic words became incorporated into the two-fold language comprising *Krama*, the ceremonial speech, and *Ngoko*, the speech of "thee and thou," or colloquial form of address. The island of Bali, and the slopes of the Tengger range, retain a modification of Hinduism, and Bali treasures a Kawi version of the Ramayan and Mahabharata epics. Many inspiring thoughts and noble sentiments, expressed in story and song, have become well-known maxims identified with Javanese life. "Rob no man of due credit, for the sun, by depriving the moon of her light, adds no lustre to his own." "As the lotus floats in water, the heart rests in a pure body." "Ye [94]
cannot take riches to the grave, but he who succoureth the poor in this world shall find a better

wealth hereafter." A *babad* or rhythmical ballad of semi-religious character belongs to every province, but though many details of temple worship—Buddhist, Hindu, and Mohammedan—may be gathered from the lengthy scroll, heroic and princely exploits, myths and traditions, encumber the sacred text, which Eastern imagination transforms into a fairy tale. Creeds lose their chiselled outline, and crumble away in the disintegrating medium of Javanese thought, which blends them into each other with changing colour and borrowed light. The inconstant soul of the Malay knows nothing of that rigid adherence to some centralising truth which often forms the heart of a living faith, and his religious history is an age-long record of failure, change, desertion, and oblivion, repeated in varying cadences, and inscribed in unmistakeable characters on the ruined sanctuaries of old Mataram.

SOURAKARTA.

[95]

The imperial city of Sourakarta, commonly abbreviated into "Solo," was the hereditary capital of the Mohammedan emperors, now mere puppet-princes held in the iron grasp of Holland. The present Susunhan, descended from both Hindu and Arab ancestry, maintains a brilliant simulacrum of royal state, and his huge Kraton, far surpassing that of Djokjacarta, contains 10,000 inhabitants. The pronounced Hindu type, though debased and degraded, remains noticeable even amid the all-pervading environment of squalor and disorder, which dims the gorgeous colour and brilliant ceremonial, producing the effect of jewels flung in the dust. A dense throng of brown humanity, clad and unclad, walks to and fro beneath the dusky avenues of feathery tamarinds which shield Solo from the ardour of the tropical sun. Old crones, with [96] unkempt locks streaming over brown and bony necks, pass by, their wide mouths distorted and discoloured with sucking the scarlet lumps of *Sarya*, from which the native derives unfailing consolation, even the Javanese girl showing absolute disregard of the disfigurement produced by this favourite stimulant. Deep moats, lichen-stained walls, and hoary forts, invest Solo with a feudal aspect, and the grim tower of Vostenberg menaces the Kraton with bristling cannon, reminding the hereditary Ruler of his subserviency to modern Holland, for only a melancholy illusion of past glory remains to him. The dragon-carved eaves of the Chinese quarter, the open *tokos* beneath waringen boughs, the shadowy *passer* brightened by mounds of richly-coloured fruits, and the stuccoed palaces of Court dignitaries, framed in dark foliage, give character and interest to the city, where the life of the past lingers in a series of street pictures remaining from bygone days of pomp and show. Ministers of State walk beneath many-coloured official umbrellas, held by obsequious attendants; graceful *bedayas*, in glittering robes, execute intricate dances, and *gamelon* players discourse weird music on pipe and drum. Court ballet-girls, known as *Serimpi*, are borne swiftly through the crowd in gilded litters, and masked actors give *al fresco* performances of the historic *Wayang-wayang*, represented by living persons, for the actual *[97]* "shadow-play" is impossible in broad daylight. The colour of the mask indicates the character assumed by the actor. The golden mask signifies Divinity, heroes wear white, and evil spirits black or red. Here, as elsewhere, the profile of the grotesque disguise invariably shows either the Greek, or the hawk-nose strangely suggestive of Egyptian origin, and which, as a variation on human physiognomy, specially commended itself to Mohammedan thought as a skilful evasion of an inconvenient dogma. Elsewhere the spirit of concession to alien ideas is almost unknown, even flower and leaf being conventionalised on those architectural monuments of Islam which form the supreme expression of Mussulman genius. The suppression of national amusements has ever proved a perilous step, and in the heart of this ancient kingdom the original setting of Javanese life remained in stereotyped form. The moving panorama of the tree-shadowed streets possesses a strange fascination, and the light of the past lingers like a sunset glow over the human element of the changed and modernised city. The twang of double-stringed lutes, the tinkle of metal tubes, and the elusive melody of silvery gongs, echo from the ages whence dance and song descend as an unchanged inheritance. An itinerant minstrel recites the history of *Johar Mankain*, the Una of Java, who shone like a jewel in the world which could not tarnish the purity and [98] devotion of one whose heart entertained no evil thought. In the intricate byways of the crumbling Kraton, a professional story-teller draws a squalid crowd of women from their dark hovels and cellars, with the magic wand of enchantment wielded by the reciter of heroic deeds from the *Panji*, exaggerated out of all recognition by the addition of fairies and giants, demons and dwarfs, to the simple human element of the original story. The apathy and decay of native life, lacking all the scope and interest common to a strenuous age, appears galvanised into some fleeting semblance of vitality by the extravaganza presented to it, for the language of hyperbole is the natural expression of Eastern thought, and penetrates into mental recesses unknown and unexplored by the relater of unvarnished facts. The quick response of the native mind to Nature's teaching, and the wealth of tradition woven round flower and tree, mountain and stream, foster the love of marvel and miracle in those whose daily wants are supplied by the prodigality of a tropical climate, for the innate poetry of the race has never been crushed out by the weight of practical necessities.

A permit being obtained to view the interior of the Susunhan's palace under a Dutch escort, we present ourselves at the colonnaded portico, where the Prince Probolingo, brother of the Susunhan, receives his visitors with simple courtesy. This descendant of a hundred kings is [99] simply attired in a dark brown *sarong* and turban, the *kris* in his belt of embroidered velvet

ablaze with a huge boss of diamonds. Attendants, holding State umbrellas over the favoured guests, usher them through marble-paved courts, in one of which a little prince is seated, with furled golden umbrella behind him to denote his rank, a group of royal children playing round him, their lithe brown forms half-hidden in the green shadows of a great tamarind tree. A superb marble ball-room with crystal chandeliers, forms an incongruous modern feature of the spacious Palace, but helps to popularise the so-called "Nail of the Universe" among the European inhabitants of Solo, by the splendid entertainments continually given at the imperial command. The porcelain and glass rooms convey an idea of the boundless hospitality bestowed; the thousands of wine-glasses being especially noticeable, for 800 guests are often invited at a time. Treasures of linen and costly embroidery, silken hangings and velvet banners, gorgeous carpets and mats of finest texture, are displayed to our admiring eyes, but possession rather than enjoyment is the keynote of Eastern character, and the bales and bundles of priceless value, kept in huge cabinets of fragrant cedar-wood, seldom see the light of day. Long counting-houses are crowded with native scribes, their brown bodies naked except for *sarong* and *kris*, the perpetual rattle of the abacus making a deafening din, for apparently the smallest sum cannot be added up [100] under Eastern skies without the assistance of this wire frame with the ever-shifting marbles. Cramped fingers move wearily over the yellow parchments, with their long lists of undecipherable hieroglyphics, and the turbaned heads are scarcely raised until the entrance of the Prince necessitates the time-honoured salute of the *dodok*, the crouching posture assumed in the presence of a superior. The needs and luxuries of the immense royal household render the counting-house a feature of the utmost importance. The Prince Probolingo has himself forty wives, and a Harem in proportion to their numbers, the Susunhan's Imperial Harem far exceeding that of his brother. Wonderful tales are told of the fairy-like loveliness belonging to these inner palaces, with their treasures of ivory and sandalwood, cedar and ebony, but they are jealously guarded from intrusion, and a glimpse of their fantastic glory seldom permitted to Western eyes. After an exhibition of gold-encrusted litters and painted coaches of State, used in royal processions, the Prince, a clever-looking man of forty, takes wine with his guests. Each stand of solid silver contains six bottles, the crouching attendants also carrying silver trays of tumblers and wine-glasses, a gaily clad servitor with a huge silver ice-bowl bringing up the rear. After drinking the health of His Royal Highness in iced Rhine wine, we make our adieux, and [101] escape from our splendid *pajongs* of rainbow hue on the steps of the Great Entrance, conveying our thanks through the medium of an interpreter. These fainéant princes learn no tongue but their own, greatly to the advantage of their Dutch masters. The colossal incomes assigned to scions of the royal stock only serve the double purpose of political expediency and personal extravagance, for the luxury of a licentious Court remains unchecked, and the idea of educating or reforming tributary princes is unknown in Java. Territorial rights were relinquished for pecuniary gains, and the entire Court of the Susunhan is in the pay of the Dutch, the wealth amassed from the richest island in the world affording ample compensation for the pensions lavishly bestowed on the former owners of the tropical Paradise. The Dutch Resident, in his capacity of "Elder Brother" to the indigenous race, claims the full privileges of his assumed position, but the advancing tide of social reform has even touched these distant shores, and the alien authority tends on the whole to the welfare of the community. Hygienic regulations are compulsory, and even here the traditions of Holland enjoin an amount of whitewashing and cleaning up unique in tropical colonies. The green and vermilion panelled *sarongs* of Solo are renowned for their elaborate designs, and the painting of *battek*, or cotton cloth, remains a [102] flourishing industry of the ancient capital. The intricate beauty of the hand-made patterns far surpasses that of the woven fabrics wherewith new mills and factories begin to supply the market. Centuries of hereditary training, from the days when royal Solo was a self-supporting city, contribute to the amazing skill of the *battek* girls, but the elaboration of native Art is doomed to decay, for Time, hitherto a negligeable quantity in this "summer isle of Eden," begins to reveal a value unknown to the Javanese past, and as the poetry of illumination vanished before the prose of the printing press, so the painting of *battek* must inevitably give way to the wholesale methods of Manchester in the near future of Java, just awakening from her spellbound sleep to the changed conditions of life and labour. An exquisite plain, described by de Charnay as unrivalled even in Java, surrounds Sourakarta with belts of palm, avenues of waringen, and picturesque rice-fields of flaming green and vivid gold. Azure peaks frame the enchanting picture. The storied heights are rich in traditions of gods and heroes, with innumerable myths haunting the ruined temples which cluster round the base of the mountain range, and suggest themselves as relics of an earlier creed than Buddhism or Brahminism. Archaic sculptures, obelisks, and gateways, massive and undecorated, recall the architecture of Egyptian sanctuaries, but no record exists which throws any light on the origin of the extensive [103] monuments of a forgotten past, though the triple pyramid of Mount Lawu is still a place of sacrifice to Siva the Destroyer. Pilgrims climb the steep ascent to lay their marigold garlands and burn their incense-sticks at the foot of the rude cairn erected in propitiation of the Divine wrath, typified by the cloud and tempest hovering round the jagged pinnacles of the volcanic range, which frowns with perpetual menace above the verdant loveliness of plain and woodland. The instinctive worship seems one of those hereditary relics of a perished faith so frequently encountered in Java; a blind impulse for which no reason can be ascribed by the devotee, swayed by those mysterious forces of the subconscious self which seem imperishable elements in the brown races of the Malay Archipelago. The native Court attracts myriad parasites, and the wealthy Chinese half-castes, or *Paranaks* of Solo, with their inborn commercial genius, surpass all competitors in the pursuit of fortune. The three centuries of mixed marriages have modified Chinese conservatism, and though the *Paranak* is severely taxed, and excluded from all political offices, he remains supreme in the kingdom of finance, regarded even by the Dutch as an indispensable factor in the complicated affairs of the island.

The great *passer* of Solo becomes an endless delight, and the interminable corridors, where the fumes of incense mingle with the breath of flowers, convey strange suggestions of antiquity. [104] Simple meals of rice and bananas progress round cooking-pots of burnished copper. Pink pomelo and purple mangosteen vary the repast; strips of green banana leaf folded into cups fastened with an acanthus thorn, or serving as plates for Dame Nature's prodigality, provide the accessories of the feast as well as the provisions. The Javanese populace, wonderfully free from those household cares which involve so much time and trouble in Northern nations strenuously occupied in keeping the wolf from the door, and left to carry out their own inventions, have evolved numerous methods of blending the different metals—steel and iron, brass and silver. The veinings of the *kris*, beautiful as those of any Toledo blade, are produced by the welding of metals steeped in lime-juice and arsenic, which destroy the iron and retain the ingrained pattern. The chains of mingled brass and silver show exquisite designs and a special charm of colour, in the soft golden hue and subdued gleam of the heavy links, with their richly-enamelled talismans of ruby and turquoise enamel. Soft voices, tranquil movements, and courteous manners are the age-long heritage of Malay idiosyncracy, and even in the crowded *passer*, with its horde of buyers and sellers, noise and dispute are non-existent. It is a market of dreamland, and though echoes of marching feet and music of native bands remind us that we are in imperial Sourakarta, the busy [105] hive of the *passer* suggests a panoramic picture of native life, rather than the pushing, jostling crowd represented by the ordinary idea of a market in that Western hemisphere which, in bestowing so many priceless gifts on humanity, has taken from it the old-world grace of repose.

SOURABAYA AND THE TENGGER. [106]

The port of Sourabaya, supreme in mercantile importance, ranks as the second city of Java, as it contains the military headquarters, the principal dockyards, and the arsenal. Leagues of rice and sugar-cane lie between Solo and Sourabaya, the landscape varied by gloomy teak woods, feathery tamarinds, and stately mango trees. White towns nestle in rich vegetation, and the green common known as the *aloon-aloon* marks each hybrid suburb, Europeanized by Dutch canals, white bridges, and red-tiled houses, planted amid a riotous wealth of palm and banana. A broad river, brimming over from the deluge of the previous night, flows through burning Sourabaya; a canal, gay with painted *praus* connecting it with the vast harbour, where shipping of all nations lies at anchor, the sheltered roads bristling with a forest of masts and funnels. Bungalows, in gorgeous gardens, flank dusky avenues of colossal trees, for even Sourabaya, the hottest place in steaming Java, enjoys "a boundless contiguity of shade." In the *sawa* fields broad-eaved huts, set [107] on stilts above the swamp, protect the brown boys who frighten birds from the rice, for the clapping and shouting must be carried on under shelter from the ardent sun. No air blows from the rippling water, set with acres of lotus-beds, the fringed chalices of rose and azure swaying on their plate-like leaves of palest green. The heterogeneous character of Sourabaya gives unwonted interest to the streets, uniquely brilliant in grouping and colour. Gilded eaves of Chinese houses, many-tiered Arab mosques, encrusted with polished tiles of blue and purple, white colonnades of Dutch bungalows, and pointed huts of woven basket-work within wicker gate and bamboo fence, mingle in fantastic confusion to frame a series of living pictures. Cream-coloured bullocks and spirited Timor ponies, in creaking waggons and ramshackle carriages, pass in endless procession. Bronze-hued coolies balance heavy loads on the swaying *pikolan*, a sloping pole of elastic bamboo, and strolling players, rouged and tinselled, collect crowds in every open space where a fluttering tamarind-tree offers a welcome patch of shadow to each turbaned audience, clad in the paradisaical garb of the tropics. Graceful Malay women flit silently past, in pleasing contrast to their burly Dutch mistresses, clad in a caricature of native garb which the appalling heat of Sourabaya renders a more slatternly disguise than even colonial *sans géne* accomplishes [108] elsewhere. Orchids spread broad spathes of scented bloom from grey trunks of courtyard trees, and cascades of crimson and purple creepers tumble over arch and wall. Insinuating Chinamen untie bundles of *sarongs*, scarves, and delicate embroideries on the marble steps of hotel porticoes, where the prolonged "shopping" of the drowsy East is catered for by the industrious Celestial, when *tokos* are closed, and the tradesman sleeps on the floor amid his piled-up wares, for the slumber of Java is too deep to be lightly disturbed, and the solemnity of the long siesta seems regarded almost as a religious function. In this far-off land of dreams it seems "always afternoon," and the complacency wherewith the entire population places itself "hors de combat" becomes a perpetual irritation to the traveller, anxious to seize a golden opportunity of fresh experience. The sun sinks out of sight before the sultry atmosphere begins to cool. The weird "gecko," a large lizard which foretells rain, screams "Becky! Becky!" in the garden shadows, and a cry of "Toko! Toko!" echoes from another unseen speaker of a mysterious language, while wraith-like forms of his tiny brethren make moving patterns on the white columns, as the hungry little reptiles hunt ceaselessly for the mosquitos which form their staple diet. Lashing rain and deafening thunder at length cool the fiery furnace, blue lightning flares on the solid blackness of [109] heaven, and the storm only dies away when we start at dawn for Tosari, the mountain sanatorium of the Tengger. The flat and flooded land glows with the vivid green of springing rice, tremulous tamarind and blossoming teak bordering a road gay with pilgrim crowds, for the great volcano of the Tengger remains one of Nature's mystic altars, dedicated to prayer and sacrifice. Moslem girls in yellow veils jostle brown men with white prayer-marks and clanking bangles. The *sari* of

India replaces the *sarong* of Java, with fluttering folds of red and purple; children, clad only in silver chains and medals, or strings of blue beads, dart through the crowd, from whence the familiar types of Malay and Javanese personality are absent. We change carts in a busy roadside *passer*, which drives a roaring trade in rice-cakes and fruit, syrups and stews, to mount through changing zones of vegetation, where palms give place to tree ferns, and luscious frangipanni or gardenia yields to rose and chrysanthemum. From the half-way house of Poespo, a forest road ascends to Tosari. Sombre casuarina, most mournful of the pine tribe, mingles with teak and mahogany in dense woods falling away on either side from the shadowy path. Innumerable monkeys swing from bough to bough, eating wild fruits, and breaking off twigs to pelt the intruders on their domains. At length the sylvan scenery gives place to endless fields of cabbage, potatoes, maize, and onions, for the cool heights of the Tengger range serve the prosaic purpose [110] of market-garden to Eastern Java, and all European vegetables may be cultivated here with success. A patchwork counterpane of green, brown, and yellow, clothes these steep slopes, but the extent of the mountain chain, and the phantasmal outlines of volcanic peaks, absorb the incongruities grafted upon them. Valerian and violet border the track between swarthy pines with grey mosses hanging down like silver beards from forked branches, and sudden mists shroud the landscape in vaporous folds, torn to shreds by gusts of wind, to melt away into the blue sky, suddenly unveiled in dazzling glimpses between the surging clouds. A long flight of mossy steps ascends to the plateau occupied by the Sanatorium, with wide verandahs and a poetic garden, like some old Italian pleasaunce, with fountain and sundial, espaliered orange boughs, and ancient rose-trees overhanging paved walks, gay parterres, and avenues of myrtle or heliotrope. Flowers are perennial even on these airy heights, and dense hedges of datura, with long white bells drooping in myriads over the pointed foliage, transform each narrow lane into a vista of enchantment. Eastern Java spreads map-like beneath the overhanging precipice, the blue strait of Madoera curving between fretted peak and palm-clad isle. The velvety plum-colour of nearer ranges fades through tints of violet and mauve into the ethereal lilac of distant summits. [111] The lowlands gleam with brimming fish-ponds and flooded *sawas*, as though the sea penetrated through creek and inlet to the heart of the green country, the vague glitter of this watery world investing the scene with dream-like unreality. Brown *campongs* cling to mountain crest and precipitous ledge. These almost inaccessible fastnesses were colonised after the Moslem conquest by a Hindu tribe which refused to relinquish Brahminism. Driven from place to place by the fanatical hordes of Islam on the downfall of the Hindu empire, the persecuted race, a notable exception to native inconstancy and indifference, retreated by degrees to this mountain stronghold, where they successfully retained their religious independence, and defended themselves from Mohammedan hostility. Brahminism through centuries of isolation, has assimilated many extraneous heathen rites, and wild superstitions have overlaid the original creed. The worship of the Tenggerese is now mainly directed to the ever-active crater of the awe-inspiring Bromo, always faced by the longer side of the windowless communal houses, built to contain the several generations of the families which in patriarchal fashion inhabit these spacious dwellings. Huge clouds of smoke from the majestic volcano curl perpetually above the surrounding peaks, and float slowly westward, the thunderous roar of the colossal crater echoing in eternal menace through the rarefied air, and regarded as the voice of the god who inhabits the [112] fiery Inferno. These lonely hills, ravaged by tempest and haunted by beasts of prey, are the hiding-places of fear and the cradles of ever-deepening superstition. Wild fancies sway the untaught mountaineers, responsive to Nature's wonders, though powerless to interpret their signification. The constant struggle for existence produces a character utterly opposed to that of the suave and facile Malay. The graces of life are unknown, but the strenuous temperament of the Tenggerese is shown by indefatigable industry in the difficult agriculture of the mountain region, and the careful cultivation of the vegetables for which the district is renowned. Day by day, the Tenggerese women—gaunt, scantily-clad, and almost unsexed by incessant toil in the teeth of wind and weather—carry down their burdens to the plain, their backs bent under the weight of the huge crates, while the brown and wizened children are prematurely aged and deformed by their share in the family toil. The more prosperous inhabitant carries his vegetables on a mountain pony, trained to wonderful feats in the art of sliding up and climbing down walls of rock almost devoid of foothold, for the riding of Tenggerese youth and maiden rivals that of the Sioux Indian. Misdirected zeal strips the hills of forest growth; the scanty pines of the higher zone serving as fuel, and the ruthless destruction of timber brings the dire result of decreasing [113] rainfall. Only bamboo remains wherewith to build the communal houses, formerly constructed of tastefully blended woods, and the flimsy substitute, unfitted to resist drenching rain and raging wind, is dragged with the utmost difficulty from cleft and gorge along rude tracks hewn out in the mountain side. Rice, elsewhere the mainstay of life in Java, has never been cultivated by the Tenggerese, the sowing and planting of the precious crop being forbidden to them during the era of gradual retreat before the Mohammedan army centuries ago, and the innate conservatism of the secluded tribe, in spite of life's altered environment, clings to the dead letter of an obsolete law. The tigers, once numerous round Tosari, have retreated into the jungle clothing the lower hills, and seldom issue from their forest lairs unless stress of weather drives them upward for a nightly prowl round byre and pen. The destruction of covert renders Tosari immune from this past peril, and the tragic tiger stories related round the hearthstone of the communal house are becoming oral traditions of a forgotten day, gathering round themselves the moss and lichen of fable and myth.

The main interest of Tosari centres round the stupendous Bromo, possessing the largest crater in the world, a fathomless cavity three miles in diameter, veiled in Stygian darkness, and suggesting the yawning mouth of hell. This bottomless pit, bubbling like a boiling cauldron, pouring out [114] black volumes of sulphureous smoke, and clamouring with unceasing thunder, was for ages a

blood-stained altar of human sacrifice. Every year the fairest maiden of the Tengger was the chosen victim offered to Siva, who, in his attribute of a Consuming Fire, occupied the volcanic abyss. The worship of the Divine Destroyer has ever been a fruitful source of crime and cruelty, and a tangible atmosphere of evil lingers round those hoary temples of India dedicated to the Avenging Deity, whose fanatical followers are reckoned by millions. Through the inversion of creed peculiar to Hindu Pantheism, the propitiation of Divine wrath has become the fundamental principle of religion, and pathetic appeals for mercy continually ascend from darkened hearts to those unseen powers vividly present to Hindu thought, which, amid countless errors and degradations, has never ceased to grasp the central fact of Eternity. The impalpable air teems with Divinity. Watchful eyes and clutching hands surround the pilgrim's path, and unseen spirits dog faltering footsteps as they stumble through the snares and pitfalls of earthly life. In the rude tribes of the Tengger, hereditary faith reflects the uncompromising features of local environment. The lotus-eating races of the tropical lowlands, with their feeble grasp on the sterner aspects of creed and character, have nothing in common with this Indian tribe, remaining on the outskirts [115] of an alien civilisation. The creed for which the early Tenggerese fought and conquered, has cooled from white heat to a shapeless petrifaction, and weird influences throng the ruined temple of a moribund faith, but the shadows which loom darkly above the mouldering altars still command the old allegiance, and a thousand hereditary ties bind heart and soul to the past.

The expedition to the Bromo, by horse or litter, affords the supreme experience of Javanese volcanoes. The broken track, knee-deep in mud and rent by landslips, traverses fields of Indian corn, rocky clefts, and rugged water-courses. The familiar flora of Northern Europe fringes babbling brooks, their banks enamelled with wild strawberries and reddening brambles. Curtains of ghostly mist lift at intervals to disclose the magical pink and blue of the mountain distance, as sunrise throws a shaft of scarlet over the grim cliff's of the Moengal Pass. A chasm in the stony wall reveals the famous Sand Sea below the abrupt precipice, a yellow expanse of arid desert encircling three fantastic volcanoes. The pyramidal Batok, the cloud-capped Bromo, and the serrated Widodaren, set in the wild solitude of this desolate Sahara, form a startling picture, suggesting a sudden revelation of Nature's mysterious laboratories. The deep roar of subterranean thunder, and the fleecy clouds of sulphureous smoke ever rising from the vast furnaces of the Bromo, emphasise the solemnity of the marvellous scene. Native ideas recognise [116] this terror-haunted landscape as the point where Times touches Eternity, and natural forces blend with occult influences. Tjewara Lawang, "the gate of the spirits," traditionally haunted by the countless *Devas* of Hindu Pantheism, bounds the ribbed and tumbled Sand Sea with a black bridge of fretted crags, from whence the invisible host keeps watch and ward over the regions of eternal fire.

By a fortunate coincidence, the annual festival of the Bromo is celebrated to-day, when Siva, the Third Person of the Hindu Triad, is propitiated by a living sacrifice. Goats and buffaloes were flung into the flaming crater long after the offering of human victims was discontinued, but, alas for the chicanery of a degenerate age! even the terrified animals thrown into the air by the sacrificing priest never reach the mystic under-world, their downward progress being arrested by a skilled accomplice, who catches them at a lower level, and risks great Siva's wrath by preserving them for more prosaic uses. The silence of the Sand Sea is broken to-day by the bustle of a gay market on the brink of the yellow plain. The terrific descent through a gash in the precipice, carved by falling boulders, landslips, and torrential rains, lands the battered pilgrim in the midst of a lively throng in festal array. Girls in rose and orange *saris*, with silver pins in sleek dark hair plaited with skeins of scarlet wool, dismount from rough ponies for refreshment, or [117] gallop across the Sand Sea to the mountain of sacrifice. The turbaned men in rough garb of indigo and brown show less zeal than their womenkind, and betel-chewing, smoking, or the consumption of syrups and sweetmeats, prove more attractive than the religious service, for modern materialism extends even to these remote shores, and the Avenging God is often worshipped by proxy.

The Sand Sea was originally the base of the Tengger volcano, split from head to foot by an appalling eruption, which forced mud, sand, and lava from the enclosing walls into the surrounding valley. Fresh craters formed in the vast depths of sand and molten metal; the three new volcanoes—Bromo, Battok, and Widodaren—casting themselves up from the blazing crucibles hidden beneath the fire-charged earth. We stand on the thin and crumbling crust of the globe's most friable surface, a mere veil concealing fountains of eternal fire, foaming solfataras, and smoking fumaroles. Circle after circle, the great belt of volcanic peaks rises around us, visible outlets of incalculable forces, ever menacing the world with ruin and havoc.

On the steep descent, a few devout pilgrims offer preliminary sacrifices of food, or flowers, to the *Devas* of the mountains, laying the little treasures in oval vaults dug by human hands, before entering the inner courts of the fiery sanctuary. The yellow Sand Sea, swept by a moaning wind, [118] sends up whirling eddies, and the dusky haze shimmers in fantastic outlines, which probably originated the idea of spiritual presences hovering round the scene. Grey heather and clumps of cypress-grass dot the wild Sahara with their dry and colourless monotony, but give place on the southern side to patches of fern and turf, the scanty pasture of the mountain ponies, herding together until sickness or accident breaks the ranks, when the hapless sufferer, deserted by his kind, falls an easy prey to the wild dogs of the Tengger ranges. A heap of bleaching bones points to some past tragedy, and terrifies the swerving horses of the native pilgrims. The ascent of the Bromo is negotiated from the eastern side to the lip of the gigantic crater. Slanting precipices of lava, their grey flanks scored with black gullies below the volcanic ash which covers the upper slopes, rise to the jagged pinnacles bordering the black gulf of eternal mystery and night. A

rickety ladder of bamboo, approached through a chaos of boulders, mounts to the edge of the profound abyss. The ladder has been renewed for this Day of Atonement, and worshippers clad in rainbow hues crowd round the base of the volcano, while the priests of Siva, in motley robes of brilliant patchwork, adorned with cabalistic tracery in white, ascend the swaying rungs, bearing their struggling victims, bleating, crowing, and clucking in mortal terror. Stalwart arms toss the [119] black goat with accurate aim to an assistant priest, who passes on his clever "catch" to a third expert in the task of hoodwinking Siva and depriving him of his lawful prey. Sundry cocks and hens, evidently toothsome morsels, are then thrown from one priest to another, and saved for the cooking-pot, but a tough-looking chanticleer of the Cochin China persuasion is finally selected, and cast into the seething pit to propitiate the terrible wrath of the Avenging Deity at the smallest expense and loss to the astute priesthood. At the close of the sacerdotal is sacreligious performance, we mount the shaking ladder to a thatched shed on the rim of the crater. From hence, between the dense volumes of smoke, the huge cavity is visible to a depth of 600 feet. Sallow clouds of sulphur emerge from a pandemonium of tumultuous clamour; red-hot stones shoot upward, but fall back into the chasm before they reach us; burning ashes strike the smooth walls with a weird scream, and then whirl back into the darkness; yellow solfataras rise in foaming jets, with the fierce hiss of unseen serpents, and bellowing thunders shake the earth. The superb spectacle of nature's power in her armoury of terror is unique among the volcanos of Java, for unless the Bromo blazes in the throes of a violent eruption, when the ascent to the crater becomes impossible, no danger exists in gazing down into the mysterious abyss. At every [120] gust which rages round this laboratory of Nature, the vast clouds—black, yellow, and blue—floating away into space, assume grotesque forms suggesting primeval monsters or menacing giants, darkening the skies with their ghostly presence. Driving rain and a rising gale hasten a rapid descent to the Sand Sea, but the sudden storm dies away into sunlit mists. The climb to the Moenggal Pass is complicated by a series of pools and cascades; the horses pick their own perilous way, but the management of the chairs by the noisy coolies demands superhuman strength and security of hand and foot, the crazy and battered *doolie* escaping falls and collisions by a continuous miracle.

The expedition to Ngandwona, in the heart of the hills, skirts green precipices and traverses brown *campongs* forlorn and neglected, like this stranded Hindu race, incapable of adjustment to life's law of change, and retaining the form without the spirit of the past. The glens lie veiled in cloud, but the peaks bask in sunshine. Waterfalls dash through thickets of crimson foxglove, and daturas swing their fragrant bells over the dancing water. A little goatherd, leading his bleating flock, plays on a reed flute to summon a straggler from a distant crag. The brown figure, in linen waistcloth and yellow turban, suggests that Indian personality which has survived ages of exile on these lonely heights. The route to Ngandwona discloses the Tengger in a different aspect; the [121] volcanos are far away, and this central region is rich in pastoral pictures full of lulling charm. The voice of the Bromo still breaks the silence of the deep valley with a mysterious undertone, but only benignant *Devas* haunt this flower-filled hollow, remote alike from the terrors of Nature and the influences of the external world.

The following day varies the character of the range, exposed to every vicissitude of temperature and climate. White billows of fog beat upon the mountain tops like a silent sea, and blot out the landscape with an impenetrable veil. Thunder echoes through the rocky caves with incessant reverberations, and rain settles down in a drenching flood. The chill of the wooden Hotel penetrates to the bone; enthusiasm wanes below zero, and even scorching Sourabaya appears preferable to this wet and windy refuge on the storm-swept heights. The hurricane proves brief in proportion to the violence displayed, and the walk to Poespo at dawn, behind the baggage-coolie, is a vision of delight. Violet mountains lean against the pale blue of a rain-washed sky, tjewara and teak glisten with jewelled lustre, and the Tengger, bathed in amethystine light, lifts itself above the world as the realm of purity and peace, ever revealed and prophesied by the glory of mountain scenery.

CELEBES. [123]

MAKASSAR AND WESTERN CELEBES.

Each island of the great Archipelago offers distinctive interests, for many alien races grafted themselves on the original stock, after those age-long wanderings across the Southern seas which probably coincided with the westward march from Central Asia, whereby primeval man fulfilled the decrees of destiny.

A long pull in a rickety *sampan* across the harbour of Sourabaya involves numerous collisions with fruit-boats, canoes, and rafts, before reaching the steamer in the offing. Intervals of comparative safety permit cursory observation of the gorgeously-painted *praus* with upturned stern, curving bamboo masts, and striped sails, the outline of the gaudy boats accentuated by a black line, and producing the effect of huge shells tossing on the tide. The green isle of Madoera,

and the level morasses of Eastern Java, bound the wide harbour, the blue cloud of the distant Tengger soaring abruptly on the horizon. The ship becomes our home for a month, and affords a [124] welcome relief from divers struggles on land, involved by a dual language, official red tape, and native incompetence. A brilliant sunset flames across the heavens, and we glide across a golden sea as a fitting prelude to unknown realms of enchantment. The dreamful calm of the two days' passage obliterates the memory of bygone difficulties and perturbations, the interval between past and future experiences falling like refreshing dew on the weary spirit, and increasing the receptive capacity required for the assimilation of new impressions. The vast extent of the Malay Archipelago, and the stupendous size of the principal islands, comes as a fresh revelation to travellers whose ideas have been limited by vague recollections of schoolroom geography. The seven hundred miles of Java's length, Sumatra's vast extent of fourteen hundred miles, the area of Borneo equalling that of France and Germany combined, and the fact of Celebes, for which we are bound, exceeding the dimensions of Norway and Sweden, convey startling suggestions of the limitless space occupied by the great Equatorial group. The palms and flowers of myriad smaller isles break the blue monotony of these summer seas traversed by the Malay wanderers of olden days, striving to sail beyond the sunset, and to overtake that visionary ideal flitting ever before them, and luring them on with the fairy gold of unfulfilled desires.

At length the high blue peaks of central Celebes pierce the silver mists of a roseate dawn, and [125] beyond a cluster of coral islets, the white town of Makassar gleams against a green background of palms. Miles of brown *campongs* fringe the shore, but the gay scene on the wooden wharves at first occupies undivided attention. *Sarongs* of crimson, orange, purple, or boldly-contrasting plaids, enhance the deep bronze of native complexion, the ample folds of the wide skirts drawn up above the knees. High turbans of white or red cambric, elaborately twisted, add dignity to the stately figures, deeply-cut features and hawk noses denoting Arab origin, for the Makassarese is a lineal descendant of the Moslem pirates, once the terror of these island-studded seas. Proud, courageous, and passionately addicted to adventurous travel in far-off lands, these sturdy islanders have little in common with the inert races of Java. The normal Malay element appears extinguished by the fiery superstructure of Arab nature, retaining the vindictive and fanatical traits of ancestral character. The women, in rainbow garb, use their floating *slandangs* as improvised *yashmaks*, holding the red and yellow folds before their faces in approved Moslem fashion, when passing a man. Makassar, formerly ruled by a line of powerful princes as an independent fief, but now subject to a Dutch Governor, has become the capital of Celebes, and occupies an important commercial position. The wharves are filled with bales of *copra*, mother-of- [126] pearl shells, plumage of native birds, dried fish, bundles of rattan, and precious woods from the primeval forests of the interior. The boom of the fisherman's drum echoes across the water in constant reverberations, a secularised relic of the religious past, originally serving the purpose of the Mohammedan call to prayer, but now fulfilling the prosaic office of signalling the arrival or departure of boats, though the devout mariner still appeals by drum to the Heavenly Powers for fair weather and a good haul of fish. The official buildings of Makassar, including the Dutch Governor's palace, face a green *aloon-aloon*, flanked by superb avenues of kanari and tamarind trees. The hoary fort, scarcely distinguishable from the solid rock which supports it, was captured from the King of Goa by a Dutch admiral, who thrust his sword through an adjacent cocoanut palm, to symbolise his intention of piercing the hearts of all who resisted the Treaty afterwards drawn up. The sword and cocoanut now form part of the heraldic arms belonging to Makassar.

Local costume affords a continuous feast of colour, and streets and avenues appear like moving tulip beds, the broad blue sky and dazzling sunshine of this tropical land intensifying every glowing tint of robe, fruit, and flower. In the umber shadows of dusky *tokos*, gold-beaters fashion those red-gold ornaments rich in barbaric beauty, for which Makassar has ever been renowned. [127] Portuguese art glorifies native workmanship, and the Dutch carry on the traditions of the past, merely simplifying the old methods by introducing modern tools to lighten the labour of production. Silken scarves, and elaborately-painted *battek*, woven with gold and silver thread, swing from the black rafters of dim corridors, and countless treasures of the deep, in shells and coral of rich and delicate colouring, manifest the infinite variety of Nature's handiwork. From the crowded lanes, with their busy markets and hybrid population, we drive through the long line of *campongs* bordering the palm-fringed coast. The bamboo walls of the fragile houses, standing on stilts or rocking on poles in the rippling sea, show a multitude of fantastic designs, the broad roofs of thatched grass or plaited palm-leaves extending in penthouse eaves above carven panels let into the gables. A riot of glorious vegetation frames and overshadows the clustering huts of deftly-woven cane. Dark faces peer through the narrow slits of bamboo window-spaces, but Makassar pride contains the elements of self-respect, and though the stranger attracts a certain amount of interest, no discourtesy mars the pleasure of exploration. A red road beneath towering palms, skirts rice-fields and bamboo thickets to the beautiful ford of the Tello, a broad river flowing between vast woods of cocoanut and bread-fruit trees, with only a tiny dug-out, steered [128] by a brown boy in a scarlet turban, to dispel the loneliness of the scene. The vicinity of Makassar offers no special characteristics beyond those of a tropical garden, but the changing aspects of native life provide subjects of unceasing interest. To-day a great Chinese festa takes place, which attracts all the inhabitants of town and *campong*, for amusements are scarce on these distant shores, and no questions of race or faith complicate the determination to secure a share in the pleasures of the ceremony. When the usual burst of squibs and crackers, lighting of bonfires, and tossing of joss-papers into the air, marks the commencement of the holiday, spectators line the roads, climb the trees, and crowd the fiat roofs of Portuguese houses. The afternoon is the children's portion of the festival, and the little bedizened figures, with rouged faces, tinsel

crowns, and spangled robes, bestride grotesque wooden dragons, fishes, and birds, brilliantly painted, and drawn on wheels by masked men in robes of pink and green. A crowd of high-class babies, also bedizened and spangled, follows in perambulators wreathed with flowers, and pushed by their Chinese nurses. Hideous gods in glittering robes, and appalling demons painted in black and scarlet, bring up the rear of the long procession, which traverses every street and lane of the Chinese *campong*, the open houses displaying the lighted altars and tutelary gods of [129] Buddhist and Taoist creed, for the mystic philosophy of the Eastern sages materialises into grossest realism by passing through the crucible of Chinese thought.

A visit to the so-called "Kingdom of Goa" fills up our last day in Makassar. The Palace of the tributary Sultan, ten miles from the capital, consists of steep-roofed houses built upon huge trunks of forest trees, and connected by carved galleries and crumbling stairs with the Harem at the back of the main edifice. Squalid women in blue yashmaks loll on the crazy verandah, whence a native secretary marshals us through the dusty and ruinous building. The Sultan, taking to the hills as a necessary precaution after inciting his subjects to rebellion against the Dutch, has just been captured, but, whether by accident or design, fell over a cliff, and until his dead body is brought back to receive the Mohammedan rites of burial, the royal residence remains in charge of the police. The grass-grown road to the decaying Palace intersects the rambling and sordid village of Goa, the feudal appanage of the sorry chieftain, a perpetual thorn in the side of the Dutch Government. The surrounding country appears almost a solitude, the silence stirred by the song of the distant surf, the chirping of myriad grasshoppers, and the ceaseless clash of waving palms in the breeze which steals up from the sea. A quaint water-castle, shaped like a Chinese junk, stands on a rock in a fish-pond reflecting the rosy sky, and the fretted marble of a beautiful [130] Arabian tomb gleams from a clump of white-starred *sumboya* exhaling incense on the air. As the magic and mystery of night shroud Makassar in a mantle of gloom, the surrounding sea becomes a vision of phosphorescent flame to the furthest horizon. The sheet-lightning of the tropical sky repeats the wonders of the deep, the glamour of romance gilds the prose of reality, and we apprehend that spirit of wondering awe which breathes through the records of old-world voyagers across uncharted oceans, when witnessing the phenomena of Nature in the sanctuary of her power, before Science had torn the veil from the mystic shrine.

The steamer's course follows the bold and mountainous coast; steep cliffs alternate with forest-clad ravines, the purple ranges of the foreground melting into the azure crests of soaring peaks. Skilful navigation is required in threading the blue water-lanes of the Spermunde group, the scores of palm-clad islets like bouquets of verdure thrown on the tranquil sea. The wicker-work *campongs* of the fishing population form a ring round each white beach of sparkling coral sand. The black bow of the "Bromo," a ship which broke her back on a reef twenty years ago, stands high above the treacherous rocks, and accentuates the vivid colouring of water and foliage. At Paré-Paré, a native *campong* in a deep bay at the edge of a forest, the steamer stops to discharge [131] cargo, and affords an opportunity of landing. A gay crowd lines the shore of the picturesque village, the houses of palm-thatched bamboo adorned with carved ladders and upcurving eaves of white wood. One of the numerous military expeditions to turbulent Celebes has lately been successful, and the *campong*, where every hut was closed for a year in consequence of the local Rajah forcing his people to join in his insurrection, has at last been re-opened, though under a guard of Dutch and Malay troops. A brown bodyguard of native children, mainly clad in silver chains and medals, escorts the strangers with intense delight to a shabby little mosque, where a Dervish, in the orange turban rewarding a pilgrim to Mecca, beats a big drum in the stone court. The little savages encountered at Mandja on the following day seem equally free from clothes and cares, but Europeans, though possessing the charm of novelty, are regarded with awe; a sudden stop, a word, or even a lifted hand, sufficing to make the whole juvenile population take to their heels, and hide among the palms and bananas until a sudden impulse of fresh curiosity banishes fear. Clothing is at a discount, but ornaments of brass, silver, and coloured beads, are evidently indispensable. Natural flowers, like immense red fuchsias with long white bells, serve as ear-rings, and scarlet caps adorn the sleek black heads of the elder girls. An *al fresco* picnic party [132] from the hills occupies a green mound, and boils a kettle on sticks of flaming bamboo, though a stray spark might easily burn down the entire *campong*. A great part of Celebes is uninhabited and uncultivated, but the tribes of the interior, warlike and treacherous, have never been completely subjugated. The slave trade flourishes among these lonely hills, murder and violence are rife; the methods of warfare, comprising poisoned arrows, and bullets containing splinters of glass, denote absolute barbarism, and the enormous island, which ought to be a field of emigration for some of Java's twenty-seven millions, except for the coast *campongs* and the rice-grounds of the far interior, remains one of the waste places of the earth, in spite of a perfect climate and a teeming soil.

Day by day the scenery becomes more wild and dreary; the forests disappear, and the sun-baked hills encroach on the low brushwood beyond the white beaches of coves and inlets, without any sign of habitation. An atmosphere of crystalline purity discloses the highest range of the interior, a long chain of azure peaks. Our course traverses league upon league of melancholy solitude, emphasised rather than relieved by the brilliant sunlight and balmy breezes playing over this realm of neglected possibilities, where the wants of countless sufferers might be abundantly supplied. Anchoring for an hour in the deep blue bay of Tontoli, we come once more into the [133] haunts of men, and two picturesque *campongs* buried in cocoa-palms beneath the wooded mountains of Tomini are pointed out as exclusively peopled by descendants of the pirates who infested this western coast of Celebes. From this point the interest of the cruise increases. Pretty *campongs* line the shore of every sheltered creek. Boats of quaint form and colour push off to meet the steamer, quickly surrounded by *sampans*, *blotos* (the native canoes), or carved and

painted skiffs, all manned by an amphibious race in Nature's suit of brown, which renders the wearers indifferent to overturned boats, water-logged *blotos*, and collapsing rafts, though the encouraging statements of our Malay crew as to the warmth and shallowness of the water in case of any contretemps, is less reassuring to the travellers who venture shoreward on the risky craft. The loan of the captain's boat makes the visit to Dongalla an experience of unalloyed pleasure, but the people appear morose and sullen. A dignified youth, in purple turban and checked *sarong*, attempts to do the honours of his native place, but his comrades, oppressed by vague suspicions, close the heavy doors of their wooden houses, and peep through the interstices of the bamboo shutters as we thread the narrow alleys, escorted by the deck steward. A more genial crowd welcomes us to the palm-groves of Palehle, where a light-hearted bodyguard of children shows us every nook and corner of the brown *campong*, with smiling faces and merry laughter. [134] The heart-whole mirth of these little savages might brighten the saddest soul. Living in the present, with no artificial wants to create dissatisfaction, and free from the pains or penalties of poverty, as experienced in Northern climes, the simple life close to the heart of Nature suggests ideas of Eden's unshadowed joy. Amid the treasures of memory garnered during the winter's wanderings through the Malay Archipelago, the unclouded merriment which endows these children of Nature remains as the deepest impression stamped on the memory of the Western pilgrim. European childhood, at the best and brightest, but faintly approaches this spontaneous gaiety, the special attribute of untutored souls in a world of primal innocence.

At Soemalata the steep declivities of wooded mountains enclose the harbour, and a narrow pass leads to the gold mines, where the process of smelting and separating the ore takes place in a primitive series of conduits, sluices, mills, and pounding machines. The gold concession granted by the local Rajah prospers in European hands, but the barbaric chieftain adheres to the ancient custom of having the gold washed from the river sand by his own slaves. The English engineer of the mines hails a compatriot with delight, and his explanation of the complicated machinery ends with a welcome invitation to tea in his pretty bungalow. A solitary Englishman is frequently found [135] stationed in the remotest outposts of civilisation throughout the Malay Archipelago, enduring a life of unexampled loneliness with the tenacity and determination inherent in national character. The oft-receding vision of a successful future inspires the dauntless heart less than a sense of present duty, and these exiles from the social ties of nation and kindred possess special claims on sympathy and remembrance. Lovely lanes of palm and banana, brightened by trees of crimson poinsettia, wind upward to the hills, and a cluster of green islets gems the blue waters; the scarlet-stemmed Banka palm offering a glowing contrast to the sweeping emerald of the feathery fronds. The little settlement of Kwandang, with a gold *fabrik* occupying a wooded islet, completes the circuit of the western coast, for the North-Eastern Cape comprises a distinctive province, requiring a separate chapter. Intervening mountains, with jagged cliffs and towering summits, rise like Titanic fortresses from the creaming surf which washes the yellow bastions, leaving no space for the wicker *campongs*, impermanent as a child's house of cards, but perpetually rebuilt in identical fashion, and never developing into substantial dwellings, or adjusted on the new lines required by varieties of environment.

THE MINAHASA. [136]

Steaming slowly through the phosphorescent seas of the starlit night, we anchor at dawn in the forest-lined bay of Amoerang, the principal harbour of the Minahasa. The picturesque Northern Cape of Celebes contains a population differing in origin and character from all other races of the vast island, and conveys the idea of a distinctive country. The mountain panorama of shelving ridges and fretted promontories, breaking the outlines of the rocky coast with infinite variety, culminates in the chiselled contours of volcanic peaks, cutting sharply into the silvery blue of a stainless sky. Amoerang, half-buried in sago-palms, on the green rim of the secluded haven, shows slight resemblance to the *campongs* generally encountered on the western coast. Wooden cottages, though built on piles of wood or stone, and thatched with *atap* (plaited palm leaves) possess many features in common with the screened and balconied dwellings of Japan. The people, in aspect and feature, also convey suggestions of the Japanese origin ascribed to them, for ancient traditions assert that the Minahasa was colonised by an Asiatic tribe, driven out of [137] Formosa by native savages, in one of those wild raids upon the peaceful maritime population which drove them to face the perils of an unknown sea, rather than fall into the ruthless hands of the bloodthirsty aborigines who inhabited the forests and mountains of the interior. Many of the hapless exiles perished through hunger, thirst, storm, and shipwreck of their slightly-built craft, during the long wanderings which ended as though by chance for the survivors, in the distant Minahasa. The Malay element in those Japanese refugees, displayed the usual characteristics of skill in boat-building and navigation, together with that accurate observation of natural phenomena which alone could compensate for the lack of scientific knowledge. The women, with oblique eyes and oval faces, wear the gay *sarong* and white *kabaja* customary in Eastern Java. The men, in shapeless gowns and wide trousers, with broad hats of battered straw on their close-cropped hair, afford a sorry spectacle of unbecoming and disorderly attire, conveying grotesque hints of Japanese ideas beneath the squalid ugliness overlaying them. The fishermen, conveniently unclad for the necessities of their calling, wear only a yellow or scarlet waist-cloth, the bright touch of colour emphasising the deep bronze of their slight but athletic forms. The

people of the Minahasa, Christianised after the Calvinistic methods of Dutch and German missionaries a century ago, have always been specially favoured by the Government of Holland, and large sums are annually expended in improving the status of this distant colony. The making of roads, the building of schools and churches, and the improvement of social conditions, are liberally catered for, not only for the advantage of the Minahasa, but that no excuse may exist for any rebellion against such paternal rule. Tribal insurrections continually recur in the great Archipelago, where a storm in a teacup often swells into dangerous proportions, and the peaceful adherence of the Minahasa to the powers that be becomes an important factor in turbulent Celebes. The race, so strangely amalgamated with alien interests, shows the apathy of a temperament incapable of developement on foreign lines, though unable to resist the pressure imposed upon it. The pretty *campong* seems silent as the grave. No native *warongs*, or restaurants, enliven the straight roads with their merry crowds or cheerful gossip, and sellers of food and drink, whose cries echo through the streets of Makassar, are unknown in this northern port, where even the arrival of the fortnightly steamer fails to excite much interest in the public mind. [138]

A rash determination to drive across the Minahasa, and pick up the boat at Menado, involves unimagined difficulties. Heavy waggons drawn by brown *sappies* (*i.e.*, bullocks), which travel at the rate of two miles an hour, suffice for native use in remote Amoerang, but at length a dilapidated gig, with two sorry steeds harnessed in tandem fashion by sundry bits of old rope, is produced. Having frequently experienced the pace accomplished by many a Timor pony of emaciated and dejected aspect, faith accepts even this unpromising team for the long drive of thirty miles. Quaint *campongs*, with bamboo fences and curiously arched gateways, flank the woodland road. Each little garden flames with red poinsettia, purple convolvulus, and yellow daisies. The latticed screens pushed back from open verandahs, show Japanese-looking rooms, furnished with the European lamps, chairs, and tables, exported by thousands to the Minahasa, but the same atmosphere of stagnation broods over these quiet villages, and even the children, returning from a bamboo schoolhouse on the edge of the forest, show the staid and solemn demeanour of their elders. For a few miles all goes well, with the trifling exception of occasional breakages in the countless knots of the rope harness. The last whistle of the steamer floats upward as she leaves her anchorage, and refusing to yield to a faint misgiving as to the success of the present enterprise, eyes and thoughts concentrate themselves on the increasing beauty of the mountain road, the living emerald of the rice-fields, and the picturesque mills for husking the grain, which give special character to this unique district of Celebes. Suddenly the rickety conveyance comes to a full stop, and a kicking match begins, the plunging ponies refusing to budge an inch. The incapable Jehu implores his fare's consent to an immediate return, but meets with an inexorable refusal, the halting Malay sentences eked out with an unmistakable pantomime of threats and warnings. The driver's whip, supplemented by an English umbrella, produces no effect on the obtuse animals, which have to be led, or rather hauled, on their unwilling way. One obstreperous steed becomes so unmanageable that it becomes necessary to hitch him to the back of the cart, at the imminent risk of overturning it, in his determination to thwart his companion's enforced progress. Mile after mile the wearisome struggle continues. Even a lumbering bullock waggon passes us again and again, in the numerous stoppages required for fresh conflict. The endless hours of the weary day drag on like a terrible nightmare, but a descent into a profound ravine of these mountain solitudes at length enables the driver to start the team at a rate which makes it impossible for them to stop, and he vaults lightly into his place as we spin merrily downhill. Our troubles are not over, for on the next upward grade the old game of rearing, backing, and futile attempts at buck-jumping, begins again. Despairing eyes rest on a thatched booth at the roadside, containing a row of bottles hung up by a string, with the bamboo tube for coins. Holding the ropes, and currying favour with the ponies by leading them to a patch of grass, it becomes possible for the boy to leave them for a sorely-needed drink of the sago-wine. The fiendish animals try to upset the cart, and the fight recommences for the fiftieth time, but the brown huts of a *campong* in a cactus thicket inspire hope, and after a furious battle in the street, to the intense delight of the Japanese-looking people, a man comes to the rescue with a stout pony. The boy mounts one battered steed, the other is left behind in a hospitable stable, and we trot briskly on through lovely scenery of forest and mountain to Kanas, at the head of the beautiful lake of Tondano, hitherto seen in glimpses at an immense depth between encircling peaks. Wearied almost to stupefaction by eleven hours of a combat, after which victory seems scarcely less ghastly than defeat, we would gladly remain for the night at the little Rest House of Kanas, but prudence compels us to push on to Tondano, at the other end of the lake, while a capable pony remains at disposal. The lake road is a vista of entrancing loveliness, overhung by arching bamboos and great sago-palms, the vanguard of the forest which clothes the lower spurs of the purple mountain ranges, shutting off the long blue lake from the outside world. A rudely-built *bloto*, merely the hollowed trunk of a tree, crosses the water, with a torch flickering at the prow, for the sun has set, and the crimson afterglow begins to fade from the serrated crests of the opposite heights. The ripple of the water in the reeds at the edge of the road, and the sigh of the evening breeze, fluttering the leaves and creaking the yellow canes of the great bamboos, alone stir the silence, which comes as a welcome relief after the toil and excitement of the day; but alas! we have all forgotten the perils of the road at nightfall, and in the sudden darkness, deepened by the shadowy trees, a false step might precipitate cart and passengers into the deep water. Any advance becomes dangerous on the winding way, which follows every curve of the irregular shore, so a halt is called, while the boy rides on towards some twinkling lights denoting a lakeside *campong*. After a long wait, he returns in triumph with three matches and a piece of flaming tow in a bottle. By observing due precaution, we can now follow his guidance, while he holds out the flaring light with extended arm. As we turn round the foot of [139] [140] [141] [142]

the lake into a raised causeway above fields of ripening rice, the full moon comes up behind the sombre hills, and transfigures the night with a sparkling flood of silver glory. We reach the white Dutch town of Tondano as the clock strikes ten, but everyone is in bed at this dissipated hour, and difficulty is experienced even in getting admission to the little Hotel, though the delight of [143] finding an English-speaking landlord atones for a somewhat ungracious reception after a long and painful pilgrimage, which should serve as a solemn warning against the rash attempt to penetrate the wilds of the Minahasa under native guidance.

Tondano, with houses and verandahs gleaming in spotless whiteness among green spaces and luxuriant trees, appears a typical Dutch town, incongruous but picturesque. The absolute purity and transparency of the atmosphere give value and intensity to every shade of colour, and the scarlet hybiscus flowers show the incandescent glow belonging rather to lamps than to blossoms. The river Tondano forms a series of lovely cascades below the town, situated four miles from the lake at the present time, for the marshy flats have been reclaimed as rice-grounds, thus somewhat diminishing the stretch of water. The steep drive down to Menado offers a succession of lovely views. The little port, in a nest of verdure, encircles the azure bay, where our steamer, merely a white speck in the distance, lies at anchor. A turn of the road discloses a glimpse of the mountain lake, a sheet of sapphire sparkling in the morning sun, but retrospective thoughts in this instance convey pain as well as pleasure, for "mounting ambition" has for once "o'erleapt itself," and failure counterbalances success. Menado, divided by the river, is inhabited by two [144] distinct tribes of the mysterious colonists who came from the farthest East to these unknown shores. The ubiquitous Chinaman has found a firm footing in the northerly port of Celebes, and the splendidly-carved dragons of a stately temple, rich in ornaments of green jade, blue porcelain, and elaborate brass-work, denote the important status of the wealthy community. A busy *passer* supplies the usual pictures of native life, but the people of the Minahasa, here as elsewhere, lack both the gay insouciance of the South, and the strenuous energy of the Northern mind, the residuum of apathetic dullness, deprived of all the salient characteristics which constitute charm and interest. European houses of Dutch officials stand in ideal gardens of brilliant flowers and richest foliage. The little Hotel Wilhelmina is a paradise of exotic blossoms, but Menado, apart from a lovely situation, and the usual riot of glorious verdure which makes every tropical weed a thing of beauty, offers little inducement for a prolonged stay. The bay, exposed to contrary winds and chafed by conflicting currents, tosses in perpetual turmoil, though a long jetty diminishes the former difficulties of the stormy passage between ship and shore. In the amber light of sunset, the dark mountain ranges stand out with unearthly clearness. The jagged peaks of Klabat and Soedara in the background, bringing into prominence the grey cliffs [145] and purple ravines of the smoking Lokon. The wonderful scenery of the Malay Archipelago seldom lacks that element of terror which enhances the radiant loveliness of Nature by painting it on a tragic background of storm and cloud, the vague suggestion of evanescence intensifying the mysterious charm with poetic significance. The receding coast discloses a striking panorama of the mountain heights piled one upon another, the grey towers and bastions guarding this narrowing Cape of the Minahasa, a veritable outpost of Nature, eternally washed by the restless seas. As the steamer rounds the savage promontories, and threads the blue straits formed by two rocky islets at the northern extremity, the weird and desolate landscape conveys a strange sense of separation even from the alien humanity which peoples the far-reaching peninsula of the Minahasa, and this northern extremity appears a limitless waste. Chaotic masses of imperishable granite, splintered reefs thrusting black spikes through the creaming surge, and wind-swept cliffs of fantastic form, characterise the solemn headland, unpainted and unsung, although the sea-girt sanctuary of Nature demands interpretation through the terms of Art and Poetry.

GORONTALO AND THE EASTERN COAST. [146]

The steamer's first halt on the wild eastern coast of Celebes is the gold-mining settlement of Todok, where the Company's rustic offices of palm-thatched bamboo border an enchanting bay, with a string of green islets studding the shoaling blue and purple of the gleaming depths. Two passengers disembark for the ebony plantations on the slopes of a volcanic range, declaring itself by a slight earthquake rocking the *atap* shanty, where the ship's officer who tallies the cargo, offers hospitality until the fierce heat modifies sufficiently for a stroll.

A dusty and shadeless road leads up into the wooded hills which bound the prospect, but the *campong*, largely consisting of recently-constructed dwellings, occupied by alien employés in the service of the Gold Syndicate, offers no inducements for exploration, and until the launch returns, a shadowy palm-grove by the wayside makes a welcome retreat from the dust and glare, the [147] creaking of innumerable bullock-waggons, and the shouts of crew and coolies, disputing over the loading of a raft.

The arrival at Gorontalo in the radiant dawn provides a more interesting experience. The river which forms the beautiful harbour, rushes through a profound ravine of the forest-clad mountains, which descend sharply to the water's edge. The scene resembles a Norwegian fiord, translated into tropical terms of climate and vegetation. A narrow track climbs the ledges of a cliff behind the brown fishing *campong* of Liato, but a rude wharf on the opposite side affords a less picturesque though safer landing, for the swirling currents of the swift stream require more

careful navigation than the amphibious boatman, unembarrassed by clothing, is wont to bestow on craft or passenger. The spirit of enterprise is also in abeyance, scotched if not killed by the struggles of the memorable pilgrimage through the Minahasa. The quiet haven in the shadow of the guardian hills looks an ideal haunt of peace. A Dutch battleship lies at anchor, and the red sails of a wide-winged *prau* make broken reflections in the rippling clearness of the green water. A wooden bridge crosses the river at the narrow end of the funnel-shaped harbour, connecting it with the town in the steaming valley, the usual medley of open *tokos* and *atap* huts, supplemented by two dubious hotels, a green *aloon-aloon*, and a few stone houses denoting the [148] presence of the European element. The original inhabitants of Gorontalo are of Alfoer race—dark, glum, and forbidding. How this ancient stock, indigenous to some of the southern islands in the Malay Archipelago, wandered from thence to distant Celebes has not been satisfactorily accounted for. The records of savage tribes depend on oral tradition, but the outlines of an oft-told tale become blurred and dim during the lapse of ages, when the mental calibre of the racial type lacks normal acumen. The graces of life are ignored by the Alfoer woman, her mouth invariably distorted by the red lump of betel-nut, accommodated with difficulty, and rendering silence imperative. Her bowed shoulders become deformed with the heavy loads perpetually borne, for the rising trade of Gorontalo supplies the men with more congenial employment than the field work, which frequently becomes the woman's province. A straight road between crowding palms crosses a wide rice-plain, opening out of the cleft carved by the mountain river, and leads to the curious Lake of Limbotto, a green mass of luxuriant water-weeds, the dense vegetation solidifying into floating islands of verdure, intersected by narrow channels, only navigable to a native *bloto* skilfully handled, for Nature alternately builds up and disperses these flowery oases, blocking up old water-ways and opening new ones with bewildering confusion. Buffaloes wallow between the tangled clumps of pink lotus and purple iris, and wild ducks nest in [149] the waving sedges, or darken the air in a sudden flight down the long lake. A noisy market flanks the water, and bronze figures, in red turbans row gaily-clad women, laden with purchases, to some distant *campong*, reached through the mazes of verdure. The country *passer*, a shifting scene of gaudy colouring, contains greater elements of interest than commercial Gorontalo, where the native *campong* loses individuality in gaining the prosaic adjuncts of a trading centre. The lovely harbour dreams in the moonlight as we steam slowly out of the widening estuary to pick up cargo in the great bay of Tomini, which sweeps in a mighty curve round half the Eastern coast of Celebes. The conical island of Oena-Oena rises sheer from the waves, the red peak of a lofty volcano composing the apex of a green pyramid, formed by a forest of palms. Until six years ago no anchorage for ships was possible at this forest-clad isle, but a volcanic eruption deepened the bay, and a thriving trade in *copra* was initiated, for the whole surface of Oena-Oena is clothed with a dense mass of drooping cocoanut trees. Scattered dwellings nestle in the thick woods, but no regular *campong* exists in this thinly-peopled spot, a vernal Eden set in the purple sea. The heat of the day, though intense, is everywhere tempered by the interlacing canopies of the [150] feathery fronds, until sunset fuses them into the vivid transparency of green fire, and a fluttering zephyr stirs the whispering foliage. The shy brown people, who at first hide in their *atap* huts at the approach of strangers, venture out to see the last of the departing steamer, which forms the sole link between barbarism and civilisation, and a month must elapse before any contact with the outside world can vary the seclusion of this lonely spot, a dreamland vision of repose. At Posso, the next port on Celebes, we land a Dutch officer, bound for the important barracks on a hill above the straggling *campong*, after a successful expedition against the tree-dwellers, cannibals, and slave-traders of the interior, still sunk in barbarism. An olive-green river, infested with crocodiles, flows sluggishly through rank vegetation into the sea below the dilapidated huts of the depressing native town. This forlorn outpost of military duty involves exile from civilisation, and the risk of occasional raids from the wild tribes of the surrounding hills.

At Parigi, canopied by spreading palms, the *atap* houses, with bamboo rafters strengthening the fragile walls, stand in neglected gardens, overgrown with a tangle of flower and foliage. The low tide makes the dangerous *bloto* a necessity, though the hollowed tree, top heavy and water-logged, is in imminent peril of capsizing every minute of the long course between ship and shore. Objections to a boat upsetting in shallow water being beyond Malay comprehension, the only way [151] of accomplishing the transit in safety is by a summary command that two brown boys should immediately jump overboard to lighten the rocking craft. Nothing loth, they swim to shore in our wake, rolling over in the sand to dry themselves like Newfoundland dogs, and with less embarrassment on the score of clothing. A native Queen or Maharanee rules Parigi from her bamboo palace in the deepest recesses of the adjacent palm-forest, but she is invisible to her subjects, and dwells in the seclusion of *purdah*, possibly a relic of Indian origin. Her nominal authority proves insufficient to keep the peace between the native population and the Dutch, for Parigi has been for months in a state of insurrection and unrest. Only a year ago a raid was made on the Eurasian merchant's office wherein I take shelter from the noonday sun, and two white men were attacked by a band who rushed down from the mountains and cut off their heads. The ringleader of the assassins is now imprisoned for life in the gaol of Batavia, no capital punishment being permitted in the Netherlands India. An immense cargo of *copra* and rattan fills a fleet of boats and rafts. The great stacks of cane cause no annoyance, but the sickening smell of *copra* (the dried and shredded cocoanut used for oil) pervades the ship, and an occasional cockroach of crab-like dimensions clatters across the deck in his coat of mail from a hiding place [152] in the unsavoury cargo. The philosophic Hollander accepts these horrors of the tropics with undisturbed composure, but happily for the peace of the English passenger, the Malay "room-boy" welcomes a new idea, and becomes gradually inspired with the ardour of the chase. Ominous clouds darken over the Bay of Tomini as we embark once more on the rolling waters, having completed the circuit of the vast island, possessing a coast-line of 2,500 miles. Blue peaks

and waving palms recede into the mists of falling night. We are once more afloat on a sleeping sea, the restful monotony of wind and wave enabling indelible impressions of each varying scene to sink deeply into mind and memory, and preventing the too rapid succession of travelling experiences.

A GLIMPSE OF BORNEO.

[153]

An element of uncertainty attends the cruise among the Malayan islands, through sudden orders to include strange ports of call in the programme of the route. During the stay at Makassar, a cable from Batavia necessitates a flying visit to Borneo, and though the détour was made from the western coast of Celebes, the great sister island demands a special notice. In steaming thither through the radiant glory of an Equatorial sunset, strange atmospheric effects denote fresh variations of climate and temperature. The rounded horizon, which suggests the rim of the terrestrial globe, seems within a stone's throw of the ship, and as the crimson sun sinks below the sharply-defined curve outlined by the sea, a glowing hearth of smouldering embers appears burning on the edge of the water. The eastern sky blooms into vivid pink from the reflection of this fiery incandescence, which fades only to give place to the leaping brightness of phosphorescent waves, and the nightly pageant of tropical skies ablaze with lambent flames of [154] summer lightning. Morning reveals the dark forests of mysterious Borneo, rolling back to the misty blue of a mountain background. The pathless jungles of teak and iron wood, inextricably tangled by ropes of liana or ladders of rattan, latticed with creepers and wreathed with clambering fern, make an impenetrable barrier between the settlements of the coast and the unknown interior, where barbarism still reigns triumphant, and "head-hunting" remains the traditional sport. Insurmountable difficulties of transit and progress are reported, even by the few enthusiastic botanists, who merely penetrate the outworks of Nature's stronghold in search of rare orchids, worth more than a king's ransom if we take into account the sacrifice of life, and the hardships suffered in wresting these floral gems from their forest casket. Any complete exploration of these tropical wilds seems at present beyond human means and capacities, but even a few months of the soil and climate of Borneo can transform a forest clearing into a wilderness of riotous vegetation, more impassable than that woodland maze of a century's growth encircling the palace of the Sleeping Beauty in the loveliest of old-world fairy tales. Our present quest has no connection with the mysteries of the interior, and only concerns itself with the prosaic task of taking in a cargo of oil, used as the ship's fuel. We steam into a wooded bay, [155] beneath a hill covered with the brown *atap* bungalows of European colonists. Colossal oil-tanks, painted red, disfigure the shore. Each tank holds 4,000 tons of oil, 30,000 tons per month being the usual export. Kerosene taints the air, but is considered to be innocuous, and to drive away the curse of mosquitos. The unimaginable and ferocious heat makes every step a terror, during a snail's progress up a wooded road. Sun-hat and white umbrella scarcely mitigate the scorching rays on this perilous promenade, but there is only a day at disposal, and it cannot be wasted. Towards noon a breeze springs up, and exploration of the long line of *tokos* beyond the wharves is simplified by the spreading eaves of palm-leaf thatch. A row of workmen's dwellings forms a prosaic continuation of the *campong*, inhabited by a mixed population, chiefly imported to Balik-Papan in the interests of the oil trade. A chance rencontre with the Scotch doctor of the European settlement affords an opportunity of visiting the Oil Refinery, with the varied distillations, culminating in the great tank of benzine, a concentration of natural forces like a liquid dynamite, capable of wrecking the whole settlement in a moment. Endless precautions and vigilant care alone secure the safety of Balik-Papan from the perils incidental to the vast stores of explosive material. The raw petroleum brought from the mines of Samarinda, farther down the coast, by a fleet of *hoppers* (the local steamers which ply round the indented shore), is extracted [156] by boring a stratum of coal known as "antichine," and always containing indications of mineral oil. Dutch and English Companies work this valuable product; fortunes are quickly made, and the industrious inhabitants, absorbed in dreams of a golden future, appear untroubled by any consciousness of metaphorically sleeping on the brink of a volcano. Iced soda-water, and a brief siesta, revive drooping spirits after the broiling exertions of the morning, and as the shadows of the palm-trees lengthen on the edge of the jungle, it becomes possible to mount the hill behind the wharf to the picturesque bungalow of another kindly Scot, who invites me to tea. The pretty tropical dwelling of plaited *atap*, through which every precious breath of air can penetrate, stands in the midst of a gorgeous thicket, composed of scarlet hybiscus and yellow Allemanda, the splendid blossoms growing in wild luxuriance on this sandy soil. The glare of the sun still requires the *atap* screens to be closed on the broad-eaved verandah, but the freshness of the evening breeze steals into the twilight of the pretty drawing-room, the simple but refined appointments of a restful home intensely refreshing after weeks of ship and hotel existence. The fragrant tea, with dainty cups and saucers, and the home-made cakes, seem almost forgotten luxuries, for the amenities of British civilisation stop short at Singapore. A cheery party [157] assembles round the table, and these exiles on a foreign shore extend the warmest of welcomes to the stray bird of passage, who will soon leave behind only the shadowy "remembrance of a guest who tarrieth but a day." The idea so familiar to the self-seeking spirit, that "it is not worth while" to trouble about a passing acquaintance, finds no echo in this hospitable coterie. To the visitor, the bright hours of that afternoon, ten thousand miles away from England, remain as an

evergreen memory of genuine human sympathy, the true "touch of Nature" linking hearts and lives. A long walk through the encroaching jungle fills up the day. The narrow track skirts dark depths of matted foliage, with strange bird-calls echoing through the gloom. The phenomenal growth of vegetation in Borneo is so rapid that a month's neglect in cutting back branches, and rooting up masses of strangling creeper, would entirely obliterate the path. In six months a tree, supposed to be cut down beyond possibility of resurrection, lately shot up to the height of seventeen feet, with a girth of several inches in diameter, so tenacious is the exuberant life of this irrepressible vegetation, eternally renewing itself in immortal strength and primeval freshness. From the edge of the sombre jungle the azure bay, set in the dark frame of forest and gilded with sunset light, resembles a Scotch loch at midsummer, and the poignant counterpart [158] brings a sigh to the lips of my companion, exiled for years from his Highland home. A long slow river, navigable for native craft, widens into an estuary as it approaches the sea, through the shadowy and impenetrable mazes of the virgin woods traversed by the winding waterway. The Dyaks and other wild aborigines of Borneo still haunt the forest depths, though the fringe of civilisation drives them further inland, and some of the local Sultans begin to fraternise with the settlers, who alone can develope the riches of the extensive island. At present the northern territory of Sarawak, successfully governed by an alien race, finds no adequate counterpart on the island, though coast towns, springing up at wide intervals, open small districts to the enterprise of the European world. Balik-Papan, rising tier above tier on the dark hillside, and brilliant with a multitude of flashing lights, looks picturesque as Naples itself, when we steam away in the gathering gloom, and the dazzling illumination, reflected in the tranquil sea, appears a miraculous transfiguration. Oil tanks and warehouses, refineries and factories, vanish under the veil of night, and only a fairy vision of unearthly brightness remains as a final recollection of our brief visit to Borneo.

THE MOLUCCAS. [159]

TERNATE, BATJAN, AND BOEROE.

The Birds of Paradise (known by the Malay as *Manuk Devata*, "birds of God") were traditionally represented as lured from their celestial home by the spicy perfume of these enchanted isles, from whence perpetual incense steals across the sea, and rises heavenward with intoxicating fragrance. A Dutch naturalist in 1598 says, "These birds of the sun live in air, and never alight until they die, having neither feet nor wings, but fall senseless with the fragrance of the nutmeg." Linnaeus asserts that "they feed on the nectar of flowers, and show an equal variety of colour, blue and yellow, orange and green, red and violet." Portuguese naturalists also represent the *passaros de sol* as footless, their mode of flight concealing the extremities. Birds of Paradise were articles of tribute from native chiefs, and a sacred character belonged to the feathered tribe, [160] wheeling between earth and sky above the spicy groves of the alluring Moluccas. This island group, for ages the coveted prize of European nations, exercised an irresistible attraction on Arabia and Persia. Various expeditions were organised, and in the ninth century Arab sages discovered the healing virtues of nutmeg and mace, as anodynes, embrocations, and condiments. A record remains of a certain Ibn Amram, an Arabian physician, whose uncontrolled passion for the *nux moschata* overthrew his reason. The story, continually quoted as a warning to subsequent explorers of the Spice Islands, has apparently kept his memory green, for no previous details of his career have come down to us. Eastern spices were favourite medicines in Persia during the tenth century, and fifty years later the *karoun aromatikon* was added to the Pharmacopeia of Europe. In A.D. 1400, Genoa and Barcelona became the principal spice markets, though the attention of Northern Europe had been directed to the Moluccas by those voyages of Marco Polo which, especially in lands of fog and snow, fired popular imagination with myriad visions of realised romance. Camöens, in the Lusiad, chanted the praises of the *verde noz* in those poetic groves, which he regarded as a new garden of Hesperides, when the magic lure of an untravelled distance, and the dreamful wonder of an untracked horizon, wove their spells over the mind of an [161] awakening world. Powers of observation and comparison were still untrained and untried; superstition was rife, and a necromantic origin was frequently ascribed to the unfamiliar products of the mystic East. Portugal, in the zenith of her maritime power, became the first European trader in the Southern Seas, and in A.D. 1511 Albuquerque reached the Moluccas, but was quickly followed by the Spaniards under their great Emperor Charles V. Incessant war continued for the possession of "the gold-bearing trees," until Spain and Portugal, united by a common danger, combined their forces to exclude the northern nations from any share in the coveted spoil. The rage for spices spread throughout Europe, and kindled a fire of international animosity which lasted for centuries. In A.D. 1595 the unwieldy Dutch ships started on a perilous voyage round the Cape, to trace the unknown path to the mysterious Moluccas, described as "odorous with trees of notemuge, sending of their fragrance across the sea on the softe breath of the south winde," and Holland, at the climax of her power, eventually secured the monopoly of spices. The islands so fiercely contested were twice owned by England, but finally relinquished in

that readjustment of power necessitated by the fall of Napoleon. Although the Moluccas were declared open to the flag of every friendly nation in 1853, it was not until twenty years later that every vestige of monopoly disappeared, and the Spice Islands were liberated from the political [162] chicanery of rival Powers. Peace brooded at last over the sea-girt Elysium, where "Nature tries her finest touch," and in the green shades of these "ultimate islands," the tumult of the world died away into silence. Old German and Flemish ballads borrow quaint anachronisms from that sylvan sanctuary of incense-laden sweetness, which coloured the thoughts and dreams of contemporary poets, and added exotic traits to their descriptions of northern scenery. "The nutmeg boughs in the Garden of Love," droop over the fair-haired Teutonic maiden in her home amid German pine-forests, and she gathers "the scented fruit of gold," as a worthy *gage d'amour* for her stalwart Saxon lover, with that picturesque incongruity of poetical license permitted to mediæval versifiers. The canvas of many an early painter depicts the sacred figures of Madonna and Child on an incongruous background of German or Italian landscape, and the mediæval poet seldom hesitates to enrich his verse with whimsical allusions, full of fantastical inaccuracy, but valuable as revelations of current thoughts and ideas. Only a slight sketch of the prolonged conflict waged for centuries round the nutmeg groves of the remote Moluccas is possible in this little record, but even the briefest account of the Spice Islands demands mention of evidence proving the value attached to the precious "fruit of gold," then outweighing every other product [163] of tropical climes in popular estimation.

Three volcanic peaks tower up before us on reaching Ternate, the first of the Molucca group. This mountain chain includes types representing every period of volcanic agency. The smoking cone of Ternate slopes in sweeping contours to the blue strait unbroken by bay or creek, and smaller satellites flank the central height, grooved by wooded gorges. The serrated ridge of Tidore, the opposite island, culminates in the red pinnacle formed by a fresh pyramid of lava above the ruined wall of a broken crater, the gap creating a sheltered inlet, where a fishing boat with yellow sails skims like a huge butterfly across the shimmering purple of the flowing tide. The fretted turquoise of the further range rises on the great island of Halmaheira, inhabited by an Alfoer population of Papuan origin, but beyond the scope of the present cruise. The port of Ternate, on the southern slope of the volcano, shows the pointed gables of palm-thatched dwellings rising from masses of glorious greenery, brightened by purple torrents of bougainvillea, or golden-flowered ansena trees, wreathed and roped with a gorgeous tangle of many-coloured creepers. The breath of heavily-scented flowers mingles with the pungent sweetness of clove and nutmeg. An avenue of dadap trees skirts the shore, with varied foliage of amber and carmine. The dark figures sauntering in the shade, and clad in rose-colour, azure, or [164] orange, add deeper notes to the symphony of colour, only marred by the white-washed Dutch conventicle, like an emphatic protest against Nature's response to her Creator. Ruined arches and pillars of white Portuguese houses, standing in a wilderness of verdure amid tumbled heaps of stone and concrete, testify to the earthquakes which have continually wrecked the little port. The mixed population includes Chinese, Arabs, and Malays. The original native race also contains Malay, Dutch, and Portuguese elements, European descent resulting here as elsewhere in darkening the native brown of the pure-blooded Ternatian to ebony blackness in the second and succeeding generations.

The discovery of an English-speaking schoolmistress simplifies the day's itinerary, which begins with the thatched palace or *kedaton* of the Sultan. The tiered roofs of the royal *Messighit* rise above the *atap* dwellings of the rustic Court, still professing a slack Mohammedanism. The Dutch territory includes the Chinese and Oriental *campongs* divided by Fort Orange, but though the palmy days of Ternate's hereditary Ruler have long since passed away, he retains a shadowy authority over a limited area. Sir Francis Drake, on one of his romantic voyages, touched at Ternate in the early days of the 16th century, and in graphic words records his amazement at [165] "the fair and princely show" of this barbaric potentate, who sat robed in cloth of gold, beneath a gold-embroidered canopy, and wore "a crown of plaited golden links." Chains of diamonds and emeralds clasped his swarthy neck, and on the royal right hand "there shone a big and perfect blue turky." This regal splendour was attained by monopoly of the Spice Trade, the incalculable profits inducing Europeans to exchange fortunes of gold and jewels with native magnates. The Dutch, when seizing the islands, often compelled the local Sultans to destroy acres of spice-bearing trees, in order to concentrate the focus of commerce. The thriving industries of *copra*, rattan, and *damar* (the gum used in making varnish) were increased tenfold by the abolition of private spice-trading, and by emancipation of the slaves in 1861, when the Dutch Government placed the liberated population under police surveillance, compelling each individual to prove honest acquirement of the slender means necessary for subsistence. Contact with the world begins to sharpen native intelligence, already heightened by the fusion of European blood with the island race, and external cleanliness being enforced systematically in Dutch territory, the concrete cottages which alternate with the thatched dwellings are dazzlingly white, the diligent sweeping and watering at fixed hours helping to energise the indolent people of the Moluccas. The warm air, redolent of spices and flowers, the riotous profusion of richest foliage, and the [166] depth of colour in sea and sky, imbue Ternate with the glow and glamour of fairyland. Bright faces and gay songs manifest that physical *joie de vivre* of which Northern nations know so little. The grass screens hanging before the open houses are drawn to keep off the burning sun, but the twang of lutes (a relic of the Portuguese occupation), and the sound of laughter echo from the dusky interiors. A forest of mangos, mangosteens, bread-fruit, and cocoa-palms, extends between the town and Fort Teloko, the first Portuguese stronghold, and now a rocky outpost of Fort Orange, the headquarters of the Dutch troops. Beyond shadowy nutmeg groves lies the Laguna, a volcanic lake between mountain and sea. In the poetic Moluccas one draws closer to the warm

heart of Nature than in any other part of the vast Archipelago, for the great Mother seems calling her children to rest, as she raises the veil from her inmost shrine and discloses her altar of peace. The presence of the smoking volcano which dominates the landscape, supplies that poignant note which, like a minor chord, accentuates the sweetness of the melody. "Gather ye roses while ye may," sounds Nature's admonition to humanity amid the lavish loveliness of blossom and foliage, clothing the mysterious height which hides the smouldering fountains of eternal fire beneath the vivid splendours of tropical vegetation. The population of Ternate—native, Malay, Dutch, and [167] half-caste—throngs the wharf; the pretty schoolmistress, in spotless muslin, waves a smiling farewell. Though we are to each other but as "ships that pass in the night," the memory of cheery words and gracious deeds throws rays of light across the surging seas, and the golden cord of kindness anchors heart to heart. Passengers are few from these remote parts. A Dutch officer, with a half-caste wife and two unruly children, whose violent outbreaks would even give points to the juvenile English of British India, are returning from a three years' exile at Ternate. The incompetence of Malay nurses is equalled by the maternal indifference to kicking and squealing, which threatens pandemonium for the remainder of the voyage. At the last moment the native Sultan of Batjan embarks for his island home, after commercial negotiations in Ternate, for this native prince, a keen-faced man in European dress and scarlet turban, trades largely in *damar*, the basis of his wealth. When at anchor next morning in the wooded bay of Batjan, the green State Barge of his Highness, with drums beating and banners flying, flashes through the water, the blades of the large green oars shaped like lotus-leaves. A horse's head carved at the prow, and a line of floating pennants—red, black, and white—above the gilded roof of the deck-house, enhance the barbaric effect of the gaudy boat, the brown rowers clad in white, with gay scarves [168] and turbans.

Although our ship possesses a launch, various modes of landing are required by the vagaries of the tide, the outlying reefs, and the position of the ports. A wobbling erection of crossed oars, a plank insecurely poised on the shoulders of two men, a rocking *bloto*, and an occasional wade to shore, with shoes and stockings in hand, vary the monotony of the proceedings. Landing at Batjan is accomplished in a chair, borne aloft on two woolly black heads, but the shore, being cut off by a crowd of fishing craft, can only be reached by sundry scrambles over intermediate boats. The Sultan's modest mansion stands in the midst of the palm-thatched *campong*, ostensibly guarded by a grey fort, among rustling bamboos and tall sugar-canes. A friendly native offers me a palm-leaf basket, filled with nutmeg sprays of glossy leaves and yellow fruit from a roadside plantation, and a tribe of children, dancing along through the delicious shade of a palm-grove, leads the way to a point of view on a green knoll, with merry laughter and eager gesticulation. Blue mountain crests soar above dark realms of virgin forest, where the sombre conifers exude the precious *damar*, which glues itself to the red trunks in shining lumps often of twenty pounds' weight, or sinks deeply into the soft soil, from whence the solidified gum needs excavation. The *damar*, pounded and poured into palm-leaf tubes, serves for the torches of the fishermen, and for [169] the lighting of the dusky native houses. Batjan—rich in gold, copper, and coal—awaits full development of the mineral treasures hidden in the mountains of the interior. The island was colonised in early days by a band of wandering Malays, who exchanged the perils of the sea for the tropical abundance of this unknown anchorage, sheltered within the reefs of the lagoon-like bay. If an aboriginal element existed in Batjan, it probably died out or mingled with the immigrant race, which broke off from the main body of the nomadic Malays, and formed one of the numerous sub-divisions of the stock eventually planted on almost every island and continent of the vast Pacific. The weaving of a bark cloth, stained with the red juice of water-plants, suggests an industry of these early days. The native cuisine still includes the unfamiliar Malay delicacy of flying fox cooked in spice, and the hereditary skill in hunting finds endless satisfaction in forests abounding with deer, wild pig, and edible birds. A touch of barbarism lends a charm to mysterious Batjan, and the marked individuality which belongs to every portion of the Molucca group is nowhere more apparent than in this island, which lies on the borderland of civilisation without losing the distinctive character stamped upon it by the influences of an immemorial past.

Crescent-shaped Boeroe, where difficulties in landing involve launch, *bloto*, and paddling through [170] a long reach of shallow water to a black swamp, possesses a commercial rather than an artistic value, being the only place in the Archipelago which exports eucalyptus oil, locally known as *kajopoetah*. A fleet of *praus*, with graceful masts of bending bamboo, surrounds the steamer, the aromatic cargo packed in long bamboo cases. The head-man of the *campong*, lightly attired in his native brown, with a few touches of contrasting colour in scarf and turban, acts as escort through a maze of weedy paths, and across bamboo bridges in various stages of dilapidation to a couple of dreary villages. The religious interests of Boeroe are represented by two ruinous *Messighits*, and a deplorable Dutch conventicle. Some Hindu element underlies native idiosyncracy, for nearly every forehead bears a white prayer-mark, but the unchanging conservatism of localities almost untouched by the lapse of Time, often retains symbolic forms when their original meaning is entirely forgotten, and the lack of missionary or educational enterprise among the Dutch exercises a paralysing effect on the small communities of distant islands. Only a relative poverty belongs to a clime where the shaking of a sago-palm provides a large family with rations for three months, but the physical energies of Boeroe have ebbed to a point where "desire fails," and the [171] unsatisfactory conditions of life meet for the most part with apathetic acceptance. The marshy coast abounds with harmless snakes, but these gruesome inmates of the tropical morass seldom leave their hiding-places before sunset. The presence of the steamer awakens a faint simulacrum of life and interest in sleepy Boeroe, and a native woman, in the rusty black calico wherewith Dutch Calvinism counteracts the Eastern love of glowing colours, brings a rickety chair from her dingy hut, and sets the precious possession under a shadowy nutmeg-tree in the village street. A

little crowd assembles, for local excitements are few, and the Malay phrase-book, an inseparable companion, aids in carrying on a halting conversation, eked out with signs and facial contortions. No school is found on Boeroe, and the simple people assert with submissive sadness that nothing is done for them. The tone of regret suggests an underlying consciousness of the hopeless ignorance inevitable under the conditions of their narrow lot. The watery plain, covered with tangled verdure, extends to the foot of the twin peaks which merge into a low range of wooded hills, their lower slopes glistening with the grey-green foliage of the great *kajopoetah* trees. The writhing roots of screw-palms rise above the green marshes, and patches of tobacco alternate with ripening millet, but every crop seems allowed to degenerate into unpruned disorder, and the feeble attempts at cultivation soon lapse into the surrounding wilderness. The ruddy trunk of the [172] candelabra-tree towers above the ferns and oil-palms of the tall undergrowth, the glossy sword-like leaves, often ten feet long, being woven into the *cocoyas*, or sleeping mats, peculiar to Boeroe. The whistle of the steamer proves a welcome summons from this melancholy island, a solitary exception to the divine beauty and irresistible witchery of the Molucca group.

AMBON. [173]

The fiord-like Bay of Ambon flows into the heart of the fragrant Clove Island, between the peninsulas of Heitor and Léitemor, which gradually ascend from the harbour's mouth until their heights of glowing green merge into wooded mountains, behind the white town of Amboyna. This old European settlement ranks as the tiny capital of the Molucca group. *Praus* and fishing smacks dot the blue inlet with tawny sails and curving masts, the local craft varied by a fantastic barque from the barbarous Ké isles, with pointed yellow beak and plume of crimson feathers at the prow, suggesting some tropical bird afloat upon the tide. The glossy darkness of the clove plantations enhances the paler tints of the prevailing foliage, and the virginal tints of the sylvan scenery indicate a climate of perpetual spring. Thatched roofs, and walls of plaited palm-leaf, stand among white-washed cottages of coral concrete, for low houses, or slight material, afford [174] comparative security against collapse by earthquake. The brown population throngs the pier, and a little fleet of *dug-outs* escorts the steamer through the bay with gay songs and merry laughter, for the lively Ambonese value every link that binds them to the outside world, and this is their gala day. Bold, eager, craving for foreign intercourse, and possessing the quickened intelligence due to the mixture of Dutch and Portuguese blood with the native strain, a roving spirit of adventure counteracts the lazy independence of a life where daily needs are supplied without exertion. The sea swarms with fish, the woods teem with sago, and cultivation of the clove procures extra wages when any special purpose requires them. The Portuguese who colonised Ambon, in the zenith of their maritime power, were of vigorous stock, and the mental heritage of the island was permanently enriched by elements derived from a foreign source.

The Ambonese soldiers of the Netherlands India manifest a courageous and warlike character; their rate of payment equals that of their European brothers-in-arms, and in the raids or skirmishes frequent throughout the wild districts of Celebes and Sumatra they play a spirited part. The burghers of Ambon show more of the Dutch element in their composition. The island, Christianised in the dreary mode of Calvinistic Holland, accepts in half-hearted fashion the creed [175] so incongruous with tropical Nature. Dutch missionaries, waging aimless war against brightness and colour, arrayed their brown converts in funereal gloom. The Sunday attire of the men consists of black calico coats down to the heels, and flopping black trousers. The women wear a shapeless gown of the same shabby and shiny material, with a white scarf dangling from the left arm. These blots on the brilliancy of the scene produce a curious impression when approaching the wharf, where the native bronze of children and coolies, the blue robes of Chinamen, and the gay turbans of Mohammedans, blend harmoniously with the scheme of colour in flower and foliage. The *praus* which follow in our wake make ready the rustic Malay anchor, a forked branch of stout timber, strengthened by twisted rattan, which also secures the stone cross-piece. This relic of a distant past can scarcely have changed since the days when the wandering tribe first launched upon the blue waters of the Pacific, in that mysterious voyage which moulded the destinies of the Malay race. A rudimental feeling for art co-exists with imperfect civilisation, and elaborate carving adorns rude skiffs, floats of fishing lines, and even wooden beaters of the clay used in native pottery. A dervish, in turban of flaming orange and garb of green and white, beats a huge drum in the pillared court of a large mosque, for the followers of the Prophet are [176] numerous, and though the usual deadly conventicle occupies a conspicuous place, it produces no effect on the Arab element. The son of the Dutch pastor who, after his grim fashion, Christianised the former generation, proves better than his condemnatory creed, and acts as personal conductor to the sights of Amboyna. After a rest in the flower-wreathed verandah of his home, and a chat with his kindly half-caste wife, we visit the gilded and dragon-carved mansion of a leading Chinese merchant, friendly, hospitable, and delighted to exhibit his household gods, both in literal and figurative form. A visit to the Joss Temple follows, liberally supported by this smiling Celestial, whose zeal and charity may perchance plead for him in that purer sanctuary not made with hands, and as yet unrevealed to his spiritual sight. The appalling green and vermilion deities who guard the temple courts, indicate fear as the chosen handmaid of faith in this grotesque travesty of religion, but the costly tiling of violet and azure, the rich gilding of the curling eaves terminating in scarlet dragons, and the deeply-chiselled ebony, falling like a veil of thick black

lace before the jade and porphyry shrines, prove that even the despised Chinaman offers of his best to the Divinity dimly apprehended by his darkened soul.

The large Malay School of Amboyna manifests an educational position in advance of the smaller islands, and knowledge of the wider world beyond the Archipelago stimulates the spirit of [177] enterprise inherited in different degrees and varying conditions, both from Malay and Portuguese ancestry.

A dilapidated carriage is chartered with difficulty, as only three vehicles belong to the island, and the driver evidently expects his skeleton steed to collapse at any pace quicker than a walk. The green lanes, with their hedges of scarlet hybiscus overhung by the feathery foliage of tamarind and bamboo, wind along the shore, and penetrate into the depths of the hills. Rustling sago-palms sway their tall plumes on the mountain side, and shadow luxuriant clove gardens, their pungent aroma mingling with nutmeg and cinnamon to steep the soft sea-wind in a wealth of perfume. European houses of white stone nestle among palm and tamarind, the broad seats flanking the central door, and the bulging balconies of old Dutch style recalling the 16th century dwellings on the canal banks of distant Holland, but the crow-stepped gable here gives place to the flat roof. Every green garden contains a refuge of interwoven *gaba-gaba* stalks, as a retreat during earthquakes, when the overthrow of the flimsy arbour would entail no injury, though it serves as a shelter from the torrential rains which often accompany volcanic disturbances. A wayside stall of palm-thatched bamboo provides *sageroe* for thirsty pilgrims. This fermented beverage often excites the Ambonese nature to frenzy, though only made from the juice of the *arên* or sugar [178] palm. The brown dame who presides over the bamboo buckets, in her eagerness to honour a white customer, wipes an incredibly dirty tumbler on her gruesome calico skirt before dipping the precious glass into the foaming pail, and tastes the draught by way of encouragement. With some difficulty she is induced to wash the tumbler, and to omit the last reassuring ceremony. The *sageroe*, sweet and refreshing, gains tonic properties from an infusion of quassia, which sharpens the flavour and strengthens the compound, packed in bamboo cases or plaited palm-leaf bags for transport to the neighbouring islands. A grey fort, and weather-worn Government offices, flank the green *aloon-aloon* of Amboyna, surrounded by tamarind avenues. The Dutch Resident finds ample employment, owing to the mania for litigation among the Ambonese. The honour of appearing before a Court of Justice is eagerly sought, and imaginary claims or grievances are constantly invented in order to satisfy the ambition for publicity. A modest and retiring temperament forms no part of native equipment, and the slight veneer of Christianity, in the crudest phase of Dutch Protestantism, increases the aggressive tendency. The missionary agencies of Calvinistic Holland seem incapable of practical sympathy with the island people; but half a loaf is better than no bread, and in any form of Christian faith the Heavenly Husbandman [179] scatters grains of wheat among the tares, that all His wandering children may reap a share of harvest gold even from a stubborn and sterile soil.

Amboyna shows signs of commercial prosperity in the crowded *passer* and the busy Chinese *campong*, for the enterprising Celestial forms an important element of the mercantile community in the Clove Island. Three memorial tablets erected in front of the hoary fort, the bare Dutch church, and the crumbling guard-house, record the worthy name of Padrugge, a Dutch Governor who restored Amboyna after complete destruction by a violent earthquake, that ever-haunting terror within the great volcanic chain of the Malay Archipelago. The steep acclivity behind the palm-shaded park of the Residency contains a stalactite grotto, infested by a multitude of bats, which cling to the sparkling pendants of the fretted roof, unless disturbed by the Ambonese coolies, who regard them as culinary delicacies, and catch them in this ancient breeding-place, with a noise which brings down the terrified creatures into unwelcome proximity, cutting short any attempts at exploration, and causing rash intruders to beat a hasty retreat.

In the hush of dawn, when the intensity of calm steals colour as well as sound from the motionless waters, we embark on an expedition to the *Zeetuinen*, or Sea Gardens, the fairy world [180] of the coral reefs, revealed through the magic mirror of the watery depths. As we gaze steadily through the silvery blue of the glassy sea, a misty vision of vague outline and shifting colour materialises into an enchanted forest, and appears rising towards the surface. Coral trees, pink and white, gold and green, orange and red, wave interlacing branches of lace-like texture and varying form, above the blue water-ways which divide the tremulous masses of rainbow-tinted foliage. The sinuous channels expand at intervals into quiet pools, bordered with azure and purple sea-stars, or studded with clumps of yellow lilies, spotted and striped with carmine. A circle of rock, enclosing a miniature lake, blazes with rose and scarlet anemones, and the boat, floating over the wilderness of marine vegetation, pauses above a coral growth, varied in form as any tropical woodland. Majestic trees, of amber and emerald hue, stand with roots muffled in fading fern, or sunk in perforated carpets of white sponge, and huge vegetable growths or giant weeds, lustrous with metallic tints of green and violet, fill clefts and ravines of coral rock. A grove of sea-palms mimics the features of the upper world, as though Nature obeyed some mysterious law of form, lying behind her operations, to regulate expression and bring order out of chaos. Giant bunches of black and mauve grapes, like the pictured spoils of the Promised Land, lie on [181] soft beds of feathery moss, but the familiar greens of the velvety carpet shade into orange and pink. A weird marine plant shoves long black stems, crowned with a circle of azure blue eyes, which convey an uncanny sensation of being regarded with sleepless vigilance by mysterious sentinels, transformed and spellbound in ocean depths. Tree-fern and hart's-tongue show verdant fronds, flushed with autumnal red or gold, and a dense growth of starry flowers suggests a bed of many-coloured tulips. Dazzling fish dart through the crystal depths. A shoal of scarlet and green parrot-fish pursue a tribe striped with blue and orange. Gold-fish flash like meteors between

uplifted spears of blood-red coral, and the glittering scales of myriads, splashed with ruby, or flecked with amethyst, reflect the colours of the gorgeously-frilled and rosetted anemones in parterres between red coral crags. Tresses of filmy green floating from the mouth of a cavern, suggest a mermaid's hair, and her visible presence would scarcely add to the wonders in this under-world of glamour and mystery. Shells, pink and pearly, brown and lilac, scarlet and cobalt, strew the flower-decked floor with infinite variety, concave and spiral, ribbed and fluted, fretted and jagged—the satin smoothness of convoluted forms lying amid rugged shapes bristling with spines and needles. We gaze almost with awe at the lovely vision of a dainty Nautilus, sailing his [182] fairy boat down a blue channel fringed with purple and salmon-coloured anemones, beneath a hedge of rosy coral. The shimmering sail and carven hull of iridescent pearl skim the water with incredible swiftness, and tack skilfully at every bend of the devious course, not even slackening speed to avoid collision with a lumbering star-fish encountered on the way. These submarine Gardens contain the greatest natural collection of anemones, coral beds, shells, and fish, discovered in the ocean world. The richest treasures of Davy Jones's Locker lie open to view, as the boat glides through the ever-changing scenery mirrored in the transparent sea. Opalescent berries resemble heaps of pearls, and the lemon stalks of marine sedge gleam like wedges of gold in the crystalline depths. The long oars detach pinnacles of coral like tongues of flame, and a cargo of seaweed, shells, and anemones, fills the boat as each enchanted grotto contributes a quota of treasure trove, but the vivid colouring fades apace when the sea-born flora leaves the native element, and the deep blue eyes, gazing from their dark stems with weird human effect, lose their radiance in the upper world.

We land at the pretty valley of Halong, where a rippling brook traverses a wood of sago-palms, and falls in a white cascade over the rocks of a sheltered bathing-pool, screened by green curtains of banana and tall mangosteens, laden with purple fruit. Makassar-trees rain their [183] yellow blossoms into the water, cloves fill the air with pungent fragrance, and lychees droop over the clear current. A melancholy Malay song floats up from the sea, but the sad sweet notes only accentuate the haunted silence of the fairy glen, with an echo from that distant past which breathes undying music round these enchanted isles. Woodland shadows and wayside palms disclose the sweeping horse-shoe curves of numerous Chinese tombs, the white stone elaborately carved and covered with hieroglyphics. Plumy cocoanut and tremulous tamarind wave over the last resting-places of these exiles from the Holy Land of the Celestial Empire, for the second generation established on an alien soil is forbidden to seek burial in China. The so-called *Paranak* of the Malay Archipelago frequently marries a native wife, and, as purity of race becomes destroyed, ancestral obligations lose their power even over the mind of the most conservative people in the world.

The woods of Ambon teem with the abundant bird-life peculiar to the Moluccas. An exquisite kingfisher, with golden plumage and emerald throat, darts across the stream, and the scarlet crests of green parrots resemble tropical flowers, glowing amidst the verdant foliage hardly distinguishable from the fluttering wings of the feathered tribe, which includes twenty-two species indigenous to the islands. The megapodius or mound-maker, an ash-coloured bird about [184] the size of a small fowl, grasps sand or soil in the hollow of a powerful claw, and throws it backwards into mounds six feet high, wherein the eggs are deposited, to be hatched by this natural incubator, through the heat of the vegetable matter contained in the rubbish heap. The young birds work their way through the mound, and run off at once into the forest, where they start on an independent career. They emerge from their birthplace covered with thick down and provided with fully-developed wings. The maternal instinct of the megapodius ceases with the laying of eggs, and, having supplied a safe cradle for the rising generation, she takes no further thought for her precocious progeny, capable of securing a livelihood in the unknown world from the moment of their first appearance in public.

A merry group, half-hidden in the shadows of clustering sago-palms, gathers the harvest of precious grain, the pith of a large tree producing thirty bundles, each of thirty pounds weight. The baking of the sago-cakes made from this lavish store occupies two women for five days, and the housekeeping cares of the largest family only need quarterly consideration in this island of plenty, where the struggle for the necessaries of existence is unknown and unimaginable. Leisure and liberty, those priceless gifts which can only be attained where the pressure of poverty is [185] unfelt, serve valuable purposes in Ambonese hands, for the European energies fused into the native race prevent mental stagnation, and spur tropical indolence to manifold activities. A variety of thriving industries belong to this far-off colony. Mother-of-pearl shells, and *bêche-de-mer* (the sea-slug of Chinese cuisine) supplement the important export of the cloves, the speciality of Ambon, chosen by the East India Company as the sole place of cultivation for this spice-bearing tree, when the system of monopoly extirpated the clove gardens of the other islands. Vases, mats, and miniature boats, of fringed and threaded cloves, are offered as fantastic souvenirs of Amboyna, and the spirit of the place seems imprisoned in these tiny curios which revive so many haunting memories of the romantic island.

Nominal adherence to Dutch Calvinism fails to repress the natural instincts of a gay and pleasure-loving race. The national dance known as *Menari*, and often performed on the shore in honour of the outgoing steamer, no longer satisfies Ambonese requirements, with the slow gyrations and studied postures of Oriental tradition. The eager and passionate temperament finds truer expression in the walzes and galops of European origin, known as *dansi-dansi*, enthusiastically practised on those festive occasions, when the full dress of funereal black and [186] white seems specially inappropriate to the wild abandon of the merry-making populace. In sunny Amboyna the cowl does not make the friar, and the last recollection of the little Moluccan capital

is a vision of whirling figures and twanging lutes at the water's edge, while the receding steamer furrows the milky azure of the land-locked bay. The vivid green of one palm-clad shore burns in the gold of sunset, but the eastern side lies veiled in shadow, and as the sheltered inlet gives place to the open sea, the luminous phosphorescence of the Southern ocean bathes the rocky bastions of enchanted Ambon in waves of liquid fire. A strange history belongs to the physical conformation of volcanic shores, alternately raised and depressed by the agitation of earth and sea. The coast-line has varied from time to time; straits have become lakes, islands have severed or united, occasionally rising suddenly from the waves, or vanishing in the bosom of the deep. Geologists assert that the Malay Archipelago was originally thrown off by volcanic action from Asia and Australia, and that an interchange of animal and vegetable life has frequently taken place. Hurricanes have uprooted forest trees, and floods have borne them out to sea, the tide eventually washing them up on the shores of distant islands. A fresh growth of foreign vegetation was thus inaugurated, as these sylvan colonists struck their saplings into an alien soil. Insects, [187] preserved by the bark, propagated themselves in new surroundings, and seeds drifting on the waves, or clinging to roots and fibres, wreathed unfamiliar shores with exotic flowers. Animal migration has frequently been caused by natural catastrophes, and to birds directing their swift flight by faculties now attributed to keen observation rather than to unreasoning instinct, the change of locality was infinitely simplified. In the Moluccas we may read a compendium of the wide-spread history which applies to the vast regions comprised in the mighty Archipelago. The doctrine of earthly changes and chances, too often accepted as a mere figure of speech, is here recognised as a stern reality; the tragedies of destruction repeat themselves through the ages, the laboratories of Nature eternally forge fresh thunderbolts, and the fate of humanity trembles in the balance. Meanwhile a profusion of flowers wreathes the sacrificial altars, the fairest fruits ripen above the thin veil which hides the fountains of volcanic fire, and the sweetest spices of the world breathe incense on the air. The uncertain tenure of earthly joys gives them redoubled zest and poignancy, the passionate love of life becomes intensified by the looming shadows of Death, and the light glows with clearer radiance against the blackness of the menacing thunder-cloud.

BANDA. [188]

The exquisite islands of Banda, dominated by the stately volcano of Goenoeng Api (the mountain of fire), form the climax of the enchanting Moluccas. Contour and colour reach their utmost grace and softest refinement in this ideal spot, a priceless jewel resting on the heart of the Malay Archipelago.

The mists of dawn have scarcely lifted their gossamer veils from the dreaming sea, when the pinnacled rocks of Rum and Aye, the outposts of the Banda group, pierce the swathing vapours. The creamy cliffs of Swangi (the Ghost Island), traditionally haunted by the spirits of the departed, show their spectral outlines on the northern horizon, and the sun-flushed "wings of the morning" span the sapphire arch of heaven as we enter the sheltered gulf of the Zonnegat, fringed by luxuriant woods clothing a mountain side, and brushing the water with a green fringe of trailing branches. Gliding between Cape Lantaka and two isolated crags, the steamer enters a glassy lake, encircled by sylvan heights, with the menacing cone of the Goenoeng Api rising sheer [189] from the water's edge. A white town climbs in irregular tiers up the shelving terraces of a fairy island, the central hill crowned by the crenellated battlements of a grey citadel. The largest ship can anchor close to shore, for the rugged boundaries of Banda descend by steep gradients into the crystalline depths. Chinese and Arab *campongs* border European streets of concrete houses, long and low, with flat roofs and external galleries.

The southern shore of Banda Neira faces the forest-clad heights of Great Banda, clothed from base to summit with nutmeg trees, shadowed by huge kanaris, their interlacing canopies protecting the precious spice plantations from the sun. A slender rowing boat, known as a *belang*, makes a brilliant point of colour on the blue strait between the sister islands. Red and yellow flags and pennants flutter above the green deck; the clash of gongs and cymbals echoes across the water, and a weird chant accompanies the rhythmic plash of the short oars, as the brown rowers toss them high in air, and bring them down with a sharp splash. A splendid avenue of kanari-trees extends along the shore, the usual Dutch church symbolises the uncompromising grimness of Calvinistic creed, and the crumbling fort of Orange-Nassau, the scene of many stirring incidents in the island past, adjoins the beautiful thatched bungalow of the Resident, the [190] broad eaves emerging from depths of richest foliage. A subterranean passage connects the deserted stronghold on the shore with Fort Belgica, the citadel now used as barracks, but formerly for the preservation of the nutmegs from the fierce raids of foreign powers, when the new-born passion for spices intoxicated the mind of the world, and kindled the fires of war between East and West. The lofty peak of the Goenoeng Api still smoulders, although the main crater is supposed to be extinct. The lower slopes, where not planted with vegetables by enterprising invaders from the island of Boeton, abound with delicate ferns and rare orchids, for the fertility of the volcanic soil, rich in metallic ingredients, creates a luxuriant growth. Sulphureous vapours rise continually from a plateau beneath the summit, where tumbled boulders of blackened lava lie sunken in deep layers of volcanic ash. Banda Neira evidently rose from the sea in some long-past eruption of the larger island, now the long ridge of a ruined crater

which collapsed in a fierce outburst, and threw off the fragments of rock which compose the outer group. A curious fatalism characterises the inhabitants of volcanic districts, and the incalculable value of Banda in the middle ages outweighed all risks of eruption and earthquake. The history of island colonisation by Portugal, Spain, and Holland, forms a continuous record of [191] battle, loot, and persecution, in which the native population was decimated, and even now the inhabitants would be quite insufficient to cultivate and gather the "golden fruit," without the aid of innumerable emigrants from Java. Hard measures were dealt out in order to maintain the monopoly of spices, and the injury to the native races, by destroying the nutmeg trees of the other islands, crippled the trade which had found a natural outlet in Asia. All the nutmegs were sent to Europe, but one-fifth of the yearly produce was diverted by smuggling into forbidden channels, though severe punishment was inflicted upon offenders. Economic administration was unknown in the 17th and 18th centuries, but the holocaust of spices burnt in the market-place of Amsterdam, and the extermination of the nutmeg trees in Moluccan islands, sent a thrill of horror through the European world, which placed such an exaggerated value on the possession of spices that the wars waged to secure them breathe the romantic fanaticism of a wild crusade. Monopoly and slavery were at length definitely abolished, and in 1873 the Dutch Government, realising the necessity of Free Trade, sanctioned the independence of the nutmeg planters. The far-seeing views of Sir Stamford Raffles during the second brief English occupation of the Moluccas, from 1810 to 1816, were disregarded in England (knowing little, and caring less, about the remote Spice Islands), though his counsels were eventually adopted by the Dutch Government as the [192] only means of ensuring an increased profit. A high-prowed native boat, known as an *orembai*, plies across the narrow strait which separates the islands of Banda Neira and Banda Lonthar, or Great Banda. The long range of hills covered with a dense forest of the precious nutmeg trees, attains an ideal of sylvan scenery surpassing even the glorious palm-woods of Java. These may be described in terms of comparative accuracy, and their beauty painted in realistic language, but none can translate into words the irresistible charm and glamour of the nutmeg aisles, the exquisite foliage and contours of the spice-bearing trees, the wealth of delicate blossom and peach-like fruit, and the flickering emerald light from hues shading through the whole gamut of colour, from the tender verdure of spring to the glossy darkness of winter evergreen. Colossal kanari-trees, veritable monarchs of the forest, tower over the nutmegs, and form an unbroken roof of interlacing boughs, for the nutmeg, needing shelter to bring the fruit to perfection, is not suffered to attain a height of more than seventy feet. The columnar trunks of the majestic kanaris wreathe their huge girth with lace-like fern and broad-leaved epiphytal plants, and the symmetrical beauty of the conical nutmeg-trees in these forest aisles suggests a vast sanctuary of Nature, enshrining the mystic presence of Divinity. Here, as amid the shades of unfallen Eden, [193] we can imagine a trysting-place of God and man in the perennial "cool of the day," which breathes through the green twilight of these solemn groves, redolent with the incense from myriad sprays of creamy blossom and ripened nuts in shells of pink-flushed amber, for flower and fruit deck the "gold-bearing tree" without intermission, and every day produces a fresh harvest of nutmegs. The brown kernel of the opening fruit, contained in a network of scarlet mace, falls to the ground in twenty-four hours, and unremitting care is needed in gathering and handling the nutmegs with the *gaai-gaai*, a long stick ending with a prong, to break off the ripe fruit into the woven basket accurately poised beneath the wooden fork. Only the female trees yield the precious crop, and the highest point of production, attained at the twentieth year, continues undiminished through four subsequent decades, after which the strength of the average tree declines, although it often lives for a century. The cooing of the nutmeg pigeon, which feeds on the abundant fruit, echoes through the shadowy glades with soothing monotony. Yellow canaries flit through the vivid green of the pointed foliage, and the scarlet crests of parrots glow through the dark canopies of the giant kanari-trees. The voices of children at play, the distant songs of the nutmeg-gatherers, the plash of the waves on the coral reef, and the scented breeze whispering in [194] the green crowns of a million trees, blend in harmonious concord to fill the sylvan temple of tropical Nature with mysterious music. At wide intervals the white houses of the planters gleam amid the drooping boughs, the prevailing green of the spacious woods relieved by the rosy purple of Bougainvillea mantling a pillared verandah, or by great vases of crimson and yellow flowers, bordering broad flights of stone steps. Life on a great nutmeg plantation retains patriarchal character and archaic charm; the multitude of dependents calls forth, in the present day at any rate, much of kindly solicitude, and though the unvarying sameness of existence sometimes proves the serpent which destroys the peace of the idyllic Eden in young and eager hearts, the ramifications of the large family party, gathered under one roof, mitigate the monotony of daily tasks, and supply the necessary mental friction. Work in the nutmeg-woods begin at 5 a.m., when a pealing bell summons the labourers to each plantation for their different duties of gathering the nuts, drying the mace, or sorting and liming the fruit. The beautiful forest constitutes the world of the nutmeg-gatherer, both for labour and recreation. In these dusky avenues youth and maiden tell each other Love's eternal story, wandering away into the dreamland shadows, vocal with sweeter melody than that of bird or breeze. The musical call of the nutmeg-pigeon serves as a [195] danger-signal, uttered by sympathising friends, when love must yield to life's stern realities in the person of the overseer. An ardent courtship often contributes to the rapid filling of the nutmeg-basket in the hand of a rustic beauty, whose admirers strive to secure for her the premium awarded for special diligence, and a judicious official learns on occasion to be conveniently deaf to the feigned voice of the *manoek faloer*. If the chivalrous zeal of the brown lover is apt to overleap frontiers, and to fill the baskets of one plantation with the produce of the other, the ethics of Banda demonstrate the identity of human nature when swayed by the passion which, according to circumstances, wrecks Troy or raids a nutmeg orchard. A story is told of a planter who, in consequence of engaging a bevy of attractive maidens for the year's work, was rewarded by a phenomenal harvest of nutmegs, though the adjacent estates were barren of fruit. Evening

shadows darken apace in the woodland world, and work ceases at three in the afternoon, when the store of gathered fruit is brought to the *pagger*, where drying and liming sheds surround the central warehouse. The nutmeg-pickers sort the ripe nuts in an open gallery before taking them to the drying-shed, where they are spread on a platform of split bamboo, twelve feet above a smouldering fire. The process continues for six weeks, the nuts being repeatedly turned until they begin to rattle. Only a slow method of drying prevents the escape of the essential oil, [196] necessary to the flavour of the fruit, which must afterwards be dipped in slaked lime to preserve it from insects. The coral-like mace contains a rich supply of aromatic balm, and when loosened from the nutmeg can be dried in the sun. The delicate scarlet branches, spread on wickerwork frames in open spaces of the woods, contrast vividly with the shaded verdure of the beautiful trees. The mace, trodden flat for facility in packing, resembles a dainty growth of finest seaweed, and in the 16th century shared popularity with the nutmeg which produced it. Even in the present day a pewter spice box is an indispensable present on that sixth anniversary of a Dutch marriage still known as "the pewter wedding," and a nutmeg-box, with a grater, remains as a favourite bridal gift, the fashion originating when the passion for spices first pervaded mediæval Europe. Trade, as well as Science, wrote many chapters of romantic adventure in the long history of the world's social development, and modern thought but dimly realises the magnetic spell of the days when the veil was first lifted between East and West, and the wonders of untrodden shores disclosed to the pioneer. Heine, in his *Lieder*, chants of the mystic nutmeg-tree as the ideal growth of the tropical forest, for every stage of life and growth reveals some fresh beauty in delicate bloom, glistening foliage, and fruit of roseate gold. The spreading boughs, with their [197] perfect contour and emerald depths of light and shadow, suggest a typical picture of that unfading Tree of Life in the midst of the earthly Paradise, round which the passing ages weave innumerable dreams, while faith transplants it to a fairer Garden than that of Eden. Where the winding woodland roads lead along the shore, colossal screw-palms and silver-flowered Barringtonias border the rocks, the sparkling azure of the sea visible through the fantastic boughs, and the eternal song of the surf vibrating through the still air with mysterious undertones. The brown *campong* of Banda Lonthar stands at the foot of the mossy steps which lead to the summit of the wooded range, and command a superb view of the island group. A further flight of stairs descends to the outside coast or Achterval, but wherever we go, to quote the words of a modern traveller, "we may imagine ourselves transported to the holy groves whereof ancient poets sing." From the rich carpet of velvety moss and plumy fern to the green vault of the leafy roof, the eye for once seems "satisfied with seeing," for no hint of imperfection breaks the fairy spell of enchantment in this poetic nutmeg-forest. Among serpentine kanari roots, which stream across the mossy turf as though poured out in liquid form and then petrified, we come across brown babies sleeping in the shade, and cradled softly in the tender lap of earth, while the mother, crooning a low song, pursues her work among the rustling leaves. Terrace [198] after terrace, the green aisles mount to the summit of the great ridge, and the ruined forts on each wooded promontory recall the long-past days when the "fruit of gold" demanded the increasing vigilance of military power to defeat the onslaught of merchantman or privateer, willing to run every risk in order to capture a cargo of spices, and secure fabulous gains by appeasing the frantic thirst of Europe for the novel luxury of the aromatic spoils. The mediæval craze has died away, and the pungent spices of the Orient have taken a permanent position of reasonable proportion in the culinary art of modern times, but the glamour of the past, like the amber haze of a tropical sunset, still environs the poetic tree in the island home where, amid evergreen foliage and waxen flowers, the famous "fruit of gold" still opens each coral-lined censer to exhale a wealth of undying fragrance on the balmy air.

THE SOELA-BESSIR ISLES. [199]

Outside the fairy circle of the exquisite Moluccas, a tiny cluster of palm-clad islets gems the wide blue spaces of the lonely sea, unbroken for many leagues by any foothold possible for human habitation. The Dutch steamer only calls thrice a year at the remote Soela-Bessir group, in quest of rattan, a plentiful product of these fertile isles, where the leafy ladders of the aspiring parasite climb to the green crowns of the tallest palms, wrapping them in the fatal embrace which eventually levels the strongest monarch of the tropical forest to the earth. The thick mantle of glossy foliage often hides the multitude of hooks, loops, and nooses which the pliant cane flings round branch and stem, gripped by long ropes of flexible fibre, hardening into thick coils, rigid and unyielding as iron. The immense export of rattan for chairs, couches, and innumerable domestic purposes, indirectly results in the preservation of myriad palm-trees, by releasing them from the deadly grasp of the tenacious creepers. The waving cocoanut trees of Senana, the [200] principal island of the Soela-Bessir group, kiss the blue water with sombre plumes, bowed down by the wealth of heavy fruit lying in green and golden clusters between frond and stem. The steamer anchors far from the shore, and the launch proving unable to cross the shallow bay, the landing of passengers can only be accomplished by two crossed oars, carried and steadied by four of the crew. The mode of progression is wobbling and risky, but the improbability of revisiting Senana supplied a mental argument of unfailing force in balancing pros and cons. The secluded island, so slightly influenced by the outside world, changes but little with the lapse of time, and the triple-tiered roofs of numerous thatched *Messighits* rising above the palm-leaf huts

of the brown *campong*, assert the hereditary creed. The green banner of Islam was planted here centuries ago by a fanatical horde of Arab pirates, who added religious enthusiasm to love of plunder and thirst of conquest. Their fiery zeal, though not according to knowledge, ensured a vigorous growth of the foreign offshoot from the questionable faith of these Arab corsairs, who left indelible traces on the whole of the Malay Archipelago. The *Messighits* of Senana are now only the ruined shrines of a decadent creed, but the simple islanders remain nominal adherents to the Monotheism of the past. Canoes and *blotos*, rowed by lithe brown figures, come out to [201] welcome the steamer, and a fantastic boat, with carven prow, darts from beneath a green bower of tangled foliage, laden with golden bananas. Merry-faced little savages line the shore, eagerly awaiting the arrival of the white strangers, who supply them with the amusement afforded by a travelling circus to the more sophisticated children of the West. An eager desire to please and gratify the extraordinary visitors, mingles with the uncontrollable delight, manifested in capering, dancing, and gay laughter, as they beckon us to follow them through the narrow lanes of the long *campong*. Naked brown forms dash into their native huts at sundry points of the route, to summon friends and kinsfolk, until the procession swells into formidable proportions, for the whole *campong* is eventually in tow, with the exception of the men and boys occupied in lading cargo. Through the dappled sunlight and shadows of the sweeping palms which flank the glassy bay, we are personally conducted to the principal *Messighit*, a bare, whitewashed building, without any decoration beyond the blue and white tiles outlining the horse-shoe arch of the *Mihrab* looking towards Mecca. The exterior with three roofs of mossy thatch supported on bamboo poles, offers a shelter from the sun on a flight of crumbling steps, overshadowed by the spreading eaves. A big cocoanut frond serves as an improvised broom in a dusky hand, and the [202] central step is carefully swept before the stranger, with respectful salaams and gesticulations, is invited to sit down. A turbaned *Imaum*, the custodian of the decaying sanctuary, comes forth from his dilapidated hut among the palms behind the shrine, at the unwonted excitement breaking the silence and solitude of the ancient mosque, but he evidently belongs to the dreamland of the past, and retires quickly from the disturbing present to meditations or slumbers in his obscure dwelling, closing the bamboo door against all intruders. This day's incident of the cruise in the Malay Archipelago seems absolutely cut off from ordinary experience—a solitary Englishwoman, resting in the shadow of the rustic mosque, and surrounded by a half-barbaric tribe of unfamiliar aspect, the dark woolly hair, flat noses, wide mouths, and dazzling teeth suggesting a liberal admixture of negro or Papuan blood. Native intelligence simplifies a halting conversation, carried on by means of the indispensable Malayan phrase-book. Wistful eyes rest on the stranger whose lot is cast under happier auspices, and unmistakeable characteristics manifest the Soela-Bessir islanders as a gentle and teachable race. Alas! the Dutch Government plants neither schools nor missions in distant Senana, too far from the beaten track to commend itself to the religious or educational care of a nation apparently indifferent to the claims of small [203] communities, in the vast Archipelago subject to Holland. Only the quarterly call of the Dutch steamer stirs the stagnation of ages on the Soela-Bessir isles, but although the young, sharing in that wondrous heritage of mirth and gladness peculiar to the joyous early life of the tropics, recognise no limitations in their lot, the mothers sadly repeat the complaint heard elsewhere that no chance of improvement is given to them. The steamer, frequently bringing hither the inhabitants of more favoured islands in the interests of trade, already begins to stir feelings of unrest, and vague longings for the better things as yet withheld. A chieftain's daughter joins the throng round the old *messighit*. A red-cotton drapery, thrown over bronze limbs, is her only garment, but a diamond glistening on her dark hand looks incongruous with the scanty clothing. The gem seems a talisman or heirloom, but a request to examine it terrifies the owner, and she rushes away into the woods to safeguard the precious possession from perils suggested by the presence of the white pilgrim from across the seas. The delicious breeze which always spring up after ten o'clock in these latitudes renders walking a delight, the two following hours being invariably cooler than the trying time between eight and ten, when the fierce sun, on a level with the face, creates an atmosphere of blistering glare. The brown procession forms an orderly escort [204] to the lading shed beneath a clump of tall cocoa-palms, and the kindly merchant who negotiates the commerce of the Soela-Bessir isles for the Dutch Government, sends a native boy up the smooth stem of a colossal tree in search of a fresh cocoanut, which fills two tumblers with refreshing sap. The thatched *campong* stands against a background of green hills and dense woods, rich in tropical verdure, but lacking the loveliness of the Moluccas. The return to the ship involves a *bloto* across the bay, with many misgivings as to the seaworthy capacities of the clumsy craft, but four bamboo safety-poles, fastened by forked sticks to the sides of the hollowed log, suffice to steady it enough to avoid capsizal. In the Soela-Bessir Isles, as in many other far-off and forgotten regions, the genius of commerce begins to awaken the desire of civilisation in untutored hearts, for Trade sharing in the romance no longer regarded as the exclusive attribute of Art or Science, now helps to fuse opposing elements into unity and order. The simple inhabitants of distant Senana seem only waiting for an outstretched hand to lift them to a higher level of creed and culture, for the modern pioneers of missionary enterprise raise the superstructure of Christianity with unexampled success on the substratum of truth contained even in imperfect and erroneous creeds. That solid foundation stone of belief in the One Eternal God, laid by Arab pirates centuries ago, amid the lust of rapine and the smoke of war, which ever [205] heralded the onward march of conquering Islam, should serve as a firm basis for building up these simple children of Nature into the mystical sanctuary of the Christian Church. The lapse of time obliterates countless landmarks of Moslem creed in localities removed from external contact, but amid the dust of disintegrating forces and forgotten forms, the central Truth remains imbedded, like a wedge of gold trodden in the mire, but retaining intrinsic value and untarnishable purity.

SUMATRA.

[207]

THE WESTERN COAST AND THE HIGHLANDS.

Passing through the straits of Saleir, between a cliff-bound island and the south-eastern Cape of Celebes, the returning steamer in due time reaches her moorings in Sourabaya, and a rapid railway journey through Java connects with the outgoing boat from Batavia to Padang, a three days' voyage through a chain of green islands breaking the force of the monsoon on a desolate and harbourless shore. The forest-clad ranges of Sumatra draw nearer at Benkoelen, buried in cocoa-palms on the rim of a quiet bay, within a terrific reef which makes landing impossible in stormy weather. Fort and Residency, villas and gardens, manifest Benkoelen as an oasis of civilisation, the steeply-tiled roofs remaining as relics of the English occupation a century ago. Beyond the little military settlement, the Sumatran mountains tower in majestic gloom beyond a [208] broken line of bristling crags, like granite outworks guarding the eleven hundred miles of coast-line facing the Indian Ocean. The rugged backbone of mysterious Sumatra, descending sharply to the western sea, overlooks a vast alluvial plain on the eastern side, where rice and sugar-cane, coffee and tobacco, flourish between the wide deltas of sluggish rivers, though rushing streams and wild cascades characterise the opposite shore. Ridges and bastions of rock, above profound valleys, culminate in cloud-capped Indrapura, at a height of 12,000 feet. Geologists affirm the vast age of Sumatra, indicated by the Silurian rock, the bastions of granite, the extraordinary vegetation fossilised in the huge coal-beds, and the sandstone formation, often a thousand feet thick, carved by time and weather into fantastic ravines. Inexhaustible mineral wealth lies hidden in these weird ranges, together with the costly chemical products of a volcanic soil, but the rich treasures of the virgin rocks are for the most part unknown and unexplored. Columns of smoke rise continually from numerous active volcanos, and the beautiful mountain lakes fill extinct craters. The great island, lying north-west and south-east, possesses a glorious climate, and the superb vegetation shows a distinctive character from that of Java. The Dutch, though supreme on the coast, have never yet subdued the interior, and unconquerable Acheen remains a perpetual [209] centre of unrest. The flower of the Malay race belongs to Sumatra, and the wild Battek tribes of alien origin are fast merging themselves into the dominant stock, though the Redjanger clan, retaining curious customs of a remote past, and possessing a written character, cut with a *kris* on strips of bamboo, is slow to assimilate itself to the Malayan element. The Sumatran language shows traces of Indian and Arabic influence, and that the early civilisation of the huge island was of Hindu origin is evidenced by innumerable Sanskrit words, and by the fact that the consecrated pipal tree, the "Ficus Religiosa" of India, remains to this day the sacred tree of the Batteks. Native chronicles record the descent of Sumatran princes from Alexander the Great, but though the pages of Javanese history are comparatively legible, those of Sumatra, designated in early days as "the older Java," resemble a dim palimpsest, marred by erasure or hiatus, and barely decipherable beneath the lettering on the surface of the age-worn parchment.

Little *campongs* of palm-thatched huts stand on piles at the water's edge, and skirt the over-shadowing forest; fairy islands, encircled with red-stemmed *arén*-palms, lie like green garlands on the indigo sea, dotted with the yellow sails of native *proas*, and the little train which conveys us to Padang, the western capital, seems an incongruous feature in a scene suggestive of [210] primeval peace and solitude. A sylvan charm belongs even to this Sumatran township, for the wooden houses, with pointed roofs of dried palm-leaves, and broad eaves forming shady verandahs, stand far apart in flowery gardens, aflame with orange or scarlet cannas, and fragrant with golden-hearted frangipanni. The sweeping boughs of giant cocoanut trees make a green twilight beneath their interwoven fronds, Bougainvillea drapes crumbling wall and forest tree with curtains of roseate purple, and thatched stalls of tropical fruits and glowing flowers brighten the dusky avenues with patches of vivid colour. The determined aspect of the Sumatran people denotes the superior calibre of the ancestral stock which colonised the Archipelago, for foreign intercourse, which elsewhere modified national character, scarcely affected the Sumatran Malays, independent of the servile yoke imposed by the mighty princes of Java. The forty *Soekoes*, or clans, of Sumatra, are sub-divided into branches consisting of numerous families, all descended from a common stock in the female line. This curiously constituted pedigree is known as the Matriarchate, an ancient social system only retained in Western Sumatra, and among certain South American tribes. The resolute mien and dignified carriage of the Sumatran woman denote clear consciousness of her supreme importance. The cringing submission so painfully [211] characteristic of Oriental womanhood is wholly unknown, and though nominally of Mohammedan faith, the humble position prescribed by the Korán to the female sex is a forgotten article of Sumatra's hereditary creed. After marriage (forbidden between members of the same clan) both man and woman remain in their own family circle. The husband is only an occasional visitor, and the wife is regarded as the head of the house. Her children remain under her exclusive care, and inherit her property, together with the half of what their father and mother earn together. The other half goes to the brothers and sisters of the husband, whose titles descend to his own brothers and sisters. Sumatra is veritably El Dorado to the Eastern wife and mother, conversant with every detail respecting the management of land or money, and jealously guarding the time-

honoured rights and privileges of her exalted position.

The hereditary chieftains of Sumatran clans exercise a patriarchal rule of uncompromising severity, and combine in every district to form the *Laras* or local Council, the distance separating forest and mountain *campongs* often necessitating sub-division into a village assembly. The *Laras*, and those rural chieftains nominated by popular consent, possess a seat on the Supreme Council of the Dutch Government, thus forming the transitional element between Asiatic and [212] European rule. There is no Sumatran nobility, and although the hereditary chief of a clan is invested with official authority, the stringent regulations of the Matriarchate acknowledge no superiority of social status as an appanage of his power.

The hothouse atmosphere of Padang is gladly exchanged for the freshness of the mountain heights, approached by a cog-wheel railway, and affording truer pictures of Sumatran life than the hybrid port of the steaming Lowlands. The luxuriant verdure of the swampy plain basks in the sunshine of a blazing March day, and children in gaudy *sarongs* drive a brisk trade at palm-thatched wayside stations, with bamboo trays of sliced pineapple sprinkled with capsicum, the approved "pick-me-up" of Sumatra. The little train burrows through a forest-lined pass, and skirts the chafing waters of the Anei river, foaming over swarthy boulders. The turbulent stream, now deeply sunk between granite cliffs, rises with terrific violence when lashed by the wild mountain wind known as the *bandjir*, and rushes up the rocky walls, overthrowing bridges, and dragging along immense crags with resistless impetus. The shrill laughter of the black bush-apes echoes from sombre masses of matted foliage, as the train ascends the lofty range, and curves round the basin of a sparkling waterfall, dashing from a fern-draped height. Granite cliffs soar above [213] tropical jungle and solemn forest; the narrow gap of the Anei widens into a luxuriant valley; sago-palms rustle in the breeze, and tree-ferns spread their green canopies over the brawling river. The splendid scenery is viewed to advantage from a platform of the foremost railway carriage, the train being pushed up the mountains by an engine in the rear. Beyond the climbing forests, a bare plateau affords a glimpse of ever-burning Merapi, with wooded flanks and lava-strewn summit, from whence a grey cloud of smoke mounts in a spiral curl to the azure sky. Beyond this point of view lies the green plain of beautiful Fort de Kock, the gem of the Sumatran Highlands, to be numbered henceforth among those ideal scenes which remain permanently photographed on mind and memory. The crystalline atmosphere seems the very breath of life after a long sojourn in the steaming tropics, and Fort de Kock, under the shadow of mysterious Merapi, an Elysium of health and repose. The little Hotel Jansen offers clean and comfortable accommodation, the kindly German hostess proving a model landlady. As a Residency and the headquarters of a Dutch garrison. Fort de Kock provides all the necessaries of life, and the broad military roads of the vicinity simplify exploration. The little white settlement beneath the wooded volcano possesses a bright and cheery character, in keeping with the exhilarating climate, and [214] the beautiful Sturm Park, from palm-crowned hill and flowery terrace, commands an exquisite prospect of the blue peaks belonging to the borderland of those Native States extending to the Dutch possessions on the Eastern coast. The curious houses of the Sumatran Highlands, with their adjacent rice-barns, form distinctive features of this unique island. The ridge of the steep thatch rises in sharp horns, interlaced with black fibres of *arén* palm, or covered with glittering tin. These tapering points are considered talismans of good fortune, a fresh horn being added on every occasion of marriage, for the married daughters, under the provisions of the Matriarchate, remain in the home of their childhood, and portions of the central division belonging to the house are reserved for their use. Manifold horns frequently bristle above the lofty roof, and the front of the main building is the common living room for unmarried members of the large household. Houses and rice-barns stand on high poles, after the Malay fashion, which originated in the malarious districts of the Lowlands. The typical rice-barns are lavishly decorated with gilding, carving, and colour, inlaid with glass mosaic, and edged with balls of red and blue crystal, the upward sweep of the slender horns sharply silhouetted against the glowing cobalt of heaven. In every *kota* (the Sumatran word signifying a fortified place, or village), the beauty of the picturesque roofs culminates in *Messighit* and *Balei*, respectively the Mosque and Hall of [215] Consultation for the Village Council. The roofs of the Mosque rise on thatched tiers, mounted on slender pine-stems, and the long *Balei*, with mossy thatch prolonged into an open verandah on either side, shows a multitude of curving horns pointing to Heaven, and symbolically invoking celestial aid for the solemn assembly gathered beneath them, when the full moon floods upland Sumatra with molten silver. Primitive hospitality provides a *roemah negari*, or "House of Strangers," in every village rich enough to erect this refuge for the toil-worn wanderer, but where no special resting-place for pilgrims can be offered, lodging can always be had in the open *Balei*, on application to any member of the Village Council. The primitive simplicity of Sumatran life remains practically unchanged in these remote hamlets of the Western Highlands, and though Fort de Kock poses as the nucleus of modern progress, European influences glance off the indurated surface of native character like water poured over a granite slab.

Across the rice-plain of Agam, dotted with brown *kotas*, crowned by myriads of interweaving horns, we reach the scattered village of Paja-Kombo, shadowed by dense woods of cocoanut palms, and famed for one of the most picturesque native markets in the East. The women of Paja-Kombo are noted for their beauty, enhanced by the splendour of many-coloured *sarongs*, [216] gleaming with gold and silver thread. Gay turbans swathe the stately heads, and the golden filagree of barbaric breastplates, heavy earrings, and broad armlets, lights up the shadowy gloom of stone galleries and *al fresco* stalls, beneath the drooping boughs of ancient waringen-trees. The Sumatran Malays are energetic traders, and the dignified personality of the Sumatran woman is perpetually in evidence. Keen, thrifty, economical, and thoroughly versed in all the details of commerce, she shows herself the predominant partner in domestic life, and to her all

decisions on financial matters are referred, in accordance with the laws of the Matriarchate, which protects her independence. The husbands and fathers in attendance on their womankind at the great Market, submissively defer to the gentler sex, which in Sumatra has ever held the reins of social and domestic management, exercising authority wisely and well within the wide area deputed to feminine sway. The Fair of Paja-Kombo is a treasury of native Art in most delicate filigree, silver-threaded cloth, baskets or fans of scented grass, and the heavy jewellery of burnished brass which copies the designs of the many golden heirlooms treasured by Sumatran womanhood. Streets of palm-thatched stalls, alleys of eating-houses, and the wide enclosure of a Mule-Fair, cover an open meadow, fringed by great sago-palms, the central grain and rice [217] Market crowded with picturesque figures in striped *sarong* and gold-flecked turban. The feast of colour provided by Paja-Kombo is scarcely surpassed even by the famous Fair of Darjeeling, the remoteness of the little settlement in the Sumatran Highlands preserving the unfaded charm of an immemorial past. The wonderful Gap of Harau may be reached by cart from Paja-Kombo; the palm-shaded road narrows at the mighty gorge, where vermilion cliffs, grooved and ribbed as though by some convulsion of Nature, tower up in colossal majesty on either side. Splendid waterfalls flash down in foam and thunder, scoring deep channels in the perpendicular heights, and bathing thickets of tree-fern and maidenhair in pearly spray. A wild river swirls through the deep ravine, opening towards the ethereal blue of clustering peaks, which lie fold upon fold in the hazy distance of the Native States, and disclose a mystic pathway into dreamland.

Another deep gully of yellow tufa-rock behind Fort de Kock, forms the first stage of the romantic route to Lake Manindjoe. Crossing the twin rivers which have carved their winding gorge in the bosom of the hills, the rude track through the mountains ascends to smooth plateaux forming a flight of gigantic stairs, supported by rocky girders like natural cross-beams. In early days of Dutch colonisation these successive points of vantage, occupied by hostile tribes, were stormed [218] in vain by the invading army, and eventually only captured by surprise. The beauty of upland Sumatra culminates at this mountain lake, lying within the foundered crater of the Danau. The volcanic walls rise fourteen hundred feet above the dark blue mere, a glitting sheet of *lapis lazuli* set within the black cleft of the profound chasm. Brown and purple rocks enamelled with orange lichen, and garlanded with waving verdure, open to display a mysterious vision of the glistening sea, with one white sail like a butterfly's wing, crossing the distant waves. The flushing rose-tints of a tropical sunset glorify the landscape into transcendent beauty; the rude sculpture of the river crags, the black shadows of primeval forest, and the far-off gleam of the Indian Ocean, composing an ideal picture, enhanced by vague impressions of Infinity and Eternity.

The great Lake of Sinkarah, flanked by volcanic ridges, and by the dense foliage of palm forests and coffee plantations, also presents a succession of entrancing landscapes. White and purple orchids wreathe the forest trees, troops of red monkeys chatter among the boughs, and woodland vistas reveal leagues of emerald rice and golden millet. Beyond Sinkarah lies the famous coal district of the island, where Chinamen, convicts, and Hindu coolies, in perpetual bustle and commotion, manifest an activity unique in the thinly-populated interior of Sumatra, dependent on [219] the labour of alien races. Javanese act as woodmen, gardeners, and road-makers; the Klings serve as cowherds and drivers of ox-waggons; the Bengalese prove efficient policemen, and the Boyans skilful carpenters; the clearing of the forest pertaining to Malays and Batteks, also responsible for the building of the marvellous rice-barns, the apotheosis of Sumatran architecture. The ordinary tourist omits Sumatra from his itinerary. Occasional elephant-hunters penetrate the dense forests of the interior, and engineers or tobacco-planters flock to the monotonous levels of the eastern coast, but the glorious Western Highlands, the Sumatran *Bovenland*, is seldom visited. Warlike Acheen, for ever at feud with the Dutch Government, is forbidden ground to the European traveller. The unconquerable independence of the Achinese, fiercely resenting the sovereignty of Holland, proves an insoluble problem to the Dutch methods of subjugation. The bold and lawless character of this rebellious clan defies military discipline. The spirit of insurrection animates every man, woman, and child of the brave but treacherous race, and Acheen remains the dark centre of countless tragedies, due to the spurious patriotism which counts a stab in the dark, a poisoned arrow, or a cruel betrayal, as heroic and laudable modes of resistance to the hated invader of Sumatra's ancient liberties. The forest-clad interior of [220] the vast island remains an unknown wilderness. Cannibals still lurk in the black depths of the pathless jungle; weird tribal customs linger unchanged in barbarous *campongs*, where strange gods are worshipped with the immemorial rites of an ageless past, rude carvings and weird symbols showing the personification of those natural phenomena deified by primeval tribes. Sumatra, with her wealth of mines and forests and her important geographical position, remains as yet an almost undiscovered country, and though her undeveloped resources excite the cupidity and arouse the envy of European nations, political greed and private enterprise have proved powerless to open up the hidden treasures of the vast island, apparently intended by Nature to become the key of the Southern Seas.

A VIEW OF KRAKATAU. [221]

Emma-Haven, the little port of Padang, twenty minutes by train from the palm-girt Sumatran capital, scarcely mars the beauty of the secluded inlet with the red and white warehouses

standing against the sylvan verdure which fringes the blue arc of the deep bay. Cloud upon cloud, the spectral vision of distant mountains gleams through the vanishing veil of mist melting in the sunrise, and the departing steamer, hugging the shore, but halting for cargo at sundry barbaric *campongs*, affords numerous glimpses of native life. Passengers are forbidden to land at these rural ports of call, for a herd of twenty frolicsome elephants battered down one brown village of palm-thatched bamboo only a week ago, and although the ruined architecture possesses the advantage of being as easily restored as destroyed, the unpleasant proximity of the dark jungle suggests the need of prudence. At another point of the little voyage, we anchor for a cargo of rattan before a thatched shed on a shell-strewn beach, but even here a solitary elephant, disturbed in bathing, has lately attacked a woman, rescued with difficulty from formidable tusks [222] and lashing trunk. A tribe of coolies come on board from the pepper plantation on a terraced hill, covered with the vivid green of the festooning creeper, twined round long poles, and resembling hop-vines in growth and foliage. The landing of this contingent involves a call at Anjer, the northern extremity of Java, distinguished by the white column of the colossal Pharos on the green headland. A halt at nightfall outside a bristling reef, in consequence of a Malay lighthouse-keeper omitting to trim his lamp, after the fashion of his unthinking kind, secures the compensation of steaming within sight of world-famous Krakatau, the volcanic cone, which in 1883 was split in half by the stupendous eruption affecting in various degrees the whole of the world. The successive waves of atmospherical disturbance, travelling with the velocity of sound, were traced three times completely round the globe. Krakatau, though uninhabited, was the occasional resort of fishermen who plied their calling in the Sunda Straits. A Dutch record exists of a violent eruption in 1680, but the Krakatau volcano was afterwards considered extinct, and until the spring of 1883 no signs of activity occurred. At this date, smoke, pumice, and cinders, fell without intermission. For eight weeks Krakatau blazed and thundered, the explosions being audible at Batavia, eighty miles off. As the fatal dawn of an August morning broke with lurid light, the [223] culminating shock of an appalling detonation, described as "the very crack and crash of doom," echoed across the ocean, and was heard even in India and Australia, two thousand miles away. Gigantic tidal waves swept the Sundanese shores, destroying the adjacent villages, 36,000 people being either washed away or buried under the boiling rain of mud, fire, and ashes. The Royal Society estimated the altitude of the vast black and crimson column of flame and smoke, mounting from the volcano, at seventeen miles. The ashes fell at Singapore and on the Cocos Isles, respectively five and eight hundred miles away, the ejection of volcanic matter being computed at more than four cubic miles in extent. Krakatau, reduced from thirteen to six square miles, from the northern portion of the symmetrical pyramid being completely blown away by the volcanic fires, retains the conical peak of Mount Radaka, nearly three thousand feet high. Some of the contiguous islands sank beneath the waves, others changed their shape, and the formation of various banks and shoals added fresh difficulties to the intricate navigation of reef-bound seas. Thrilling stories are told of the enveloping pall of smoke and ashes, which shrouded Java in midnight gloom, amid the continuous roar of violent explosions which led up to the awful climax of the final catastrophe. Red-hot stones and burning cinders fired the ships, the weight of pumice [224] sinking *praus* and fishing smacks as it fell into the hissing sea, and a 600-ton schooner, thrown by the force of the world-shaking concussion into a mountain cleft of the opposite coast, still lies wedged between the black walls of rock. The floating pumice, which filled the harbour of Batavia with layers so deep that planks resting upon it made a safe bridge over a mile in length, drifted even to Zanzibar and Madagascar. The fine dust, expelled into the upper air, painted the sunset heavens with these translucent green and violet tints which enhanced the pageantry of cloudland throughout the world for many months after the fiery forces had expended themselves. Smoke still issues from Krakatau, though the vast rent in the cloven pyramid must materially diminish the power of any future eruption, and Nature's busy hand already covers the torn side of the precipitous cone with a green veil of sparse vegetation. A curious marine growth of weed and moss rooted itself on Krakatau three years after the phenomenal eruption, from seeds floating on the tide or carried by the wind. The thin soil formed by these decaying plants, and enriched by the chemical ingredients of disintegrating volcanic ash, in time produced a more luxuriant verdure, and in the interval elapsing since the threefold ravages of fire, flood, and earthquake, caused by Krakatau, convulsed the East with terror, the dread mountain has become wreathed [225] with flower and fruit, for orchards and gardens, tended by the Malays from the surrounding islands, now flourish at the foot of the quiescent peak. Javanese colonists, who experienced the terrors of the overwhelming catastrophe, assert that no similes drawn from the most appalling thunderstorm, or from the roar of the heaviest artillery, could convey an adequate idea of the stupendous detonation which seemed to shatter earth and sky, as the pent-up fires burst forth in the final explosion, which tore the mountain asunder and poured forth the devastating forces of the abysmal depths over land and sea. Crimson lava-flood and burning hail, blackened heaven and rocking earth, roaring sea and clamouring volcano, represented an Apocalyptic vision of Divine wrath, but probably no survivor remained to record the actual sight of the unprecedented phenomenon, transcending every terrestrial convulsion recorded in the chronicles of scientists. Only a slender feather of grey steam now issues from the lofty crater. Leaves and grasses flutter in the soft breeze, and a shower of white petals drifts upon the iron boulders, once incandescent amid the red torrents of rushing fire. A sheer precipice remained as the severed half of the shattered cone, when the rent cliffs shivered into fragments, and toppled over into the sea. Nature again breathes "peace and safety," as she did before "the sudden destruction" gave the lie to her mocking voice, and as the ruined pyramid of terrible Krakatau sinks below the horizon, [226] and the good ship speeds on her way, a weight of awe seems lifted from the mind, oppressed by imagination and association with the ghastly tragedy of those untameable forces which defy calculation or comprehension.

History has often proved the truth of the assertion that Time turns memories into dreams, but in the presence of Krakatau's smoking crater, the memories looming over the haunted volcano translate themselves into a nightmare of horror, for the shadows of doom still cling to the monumental pyramid, a menacing witness to the existence of those occult laws which baffle human investigation with their insoluble problems, and compel the defeated scientist to acknowledge himself a mere chronicler of inexplicable mysteries. The extent of the volcanic zone encircling the Malay Archipelago minimises the risk of catastrophe by numerous safety valves for the imprisoned forces of Earth's fiery abyss. In isolated Krakatau only one outlet existed for the vast accumulations of destructive agencies, gathering irresistible impetus through the protracted period of condensation and suppression which heated this mighty furnace of Nature's subterranean laboratory with sevenfold power. A generation has grown up since the hell of devouring fire swept across land and sea from this solitary mountain peak; villages have been [227] rebuilt on their ancient sites, and the activities of life go on from year to year undisturbed. The story of Krakatau, told under the drooping boughs of dusky waringen-trees in the evening hour of leisure, seems veiled in the mists of legendary lore to youth and maiden, listening to the oft-told tale. Poverty clings to familiar soil, and in the deep groove of a narrow existence the popular mind takes little thought for the future. The realities of life are bounded by the daily needs, and the shadow of Krakatau fails to destroy the present peace of the simple folk, who, like children gathering flowers on the edge of a precipice, heed none of the grim possibilities of a perilous environment.

PENANG. [229]

Poelo-Penang, *The Isle of the areca-nut*, separated by a narrow strait from the Malay Peninsula, was ceded to England in 1785 by the Rajah of Kedah, from whom the present Sultan of Johore is lineally descended. The little territory, chiefly consisting of a mountain covered with palm-forests, was then almost uninhabited, but the strategetic importance of the position resulted in the establishment of an English Presidency, until the phenomenal growth of Singapore made it the eventual centre of local authority. "Sinhapura," "the City of Lions" (or, more accurately, of tigers), founded by the Hinduized Malays, and developed by Sir Stamford Raffles into the principal trading port of the Eastern seas, of necessity drew off from Penang a large contingent of the polyglot races which flocked thither from all parts, when the British flag first waved above the newly-built fort, but at least 100,000 inhabitants still occupy the verdant island, where the graceful areca palm attains unexampled perfection. Penang was merely regarded as an [230] unimportant appendage of ancient Malacca, captured in 1311 by Albuquerque, and though the territory of the principal Sultan underwent innumerable vicissitudes through the changing fortunes of war, the royal line retained Johore at the foot of the Peninsula, up to the present day, the last scion of the old-world dynasty now accepting the suzerainty of England.

A tribe of Klings (the Malay corruption of the word Telinga), sailing from the Coromandel coast, were the first immigrants under British rule. The half-breed Indian Malays, or *Jawi-Pekan*, followed, and the Chinese, finding a new outlet for their commercial genius, soon secured a firm footing on the fairy isle, a cone of emerald set in a sapphire sea. As the rickshaw wheels away from the noisy wharves of busy Georgetown into green aisles of areca and cocoanut, the spice-laden breeze blowing from the heights, and mingled with the breath of a thousand flowers, suggests Penang as "the mountain of myrrh, and hill of frankincense," described in the Canticle of Canticles. Present surroundings atone for the lack of life's amenities in the Dutch dependencies. The ripple of the sea, and the rustle of swaying palms, just stir the silence of the wave-washed terrace above the glassy straits. The gloomy blue of the Kedah mountains on the peninsula of Malacca, with black thunderclouds gathering round their serrated crests, heightens the brilliant loveliness of immediate surroundings, steeped in the ruby glow of the magical [231] evening. Every road is an over-arching avenue of gorgeous foliage—dark tunnels of interwoven cocoa-palms, huge Amherstias alight as with lamps of fiery orange, tremulous tamarinds, and, more wonderful than all, a wide highway roofed by a continuous aisle of ansena-trees, the golden canopy of blossom overhead rivalled by the thick carpet of yellow petals, which deadens every sound, for the prodigal bounty of tropical Nature quickly replaces the loss of falling flowers. Exquisite lanes, smothered in glorious vegetation, surround the picturesque Racecourse, that *sine-qûa-non* of English occupation. Stately emperor palms, kitools with crimped green tresses, fan and oil palms, with the slender areca in countless thousands, vary the shadowy vistas branching out in every direction, with huge-leaved creepers and glossy rattans garlanding the gnarled trunks of forest-trees. The sculptured outlines of the splendid traveller's palm adorn the green lawns of European bungalows, embowered in torrents of trailing creepers, the scale of colour descending from white and pink to royal purple and burning crimson. Snowy arums and golden lilies choke the brooks, overflowing from the constant showers combining with a vertical sun to foster the wealth of greenery, the incandescent scarlet and yellow of hybiscus and allemanda glowing with the transparent depth of hue, beside which the fragile fairness of [232] European flowers, is but a spectral reflection of those colour-drenched blossoms fused into jewelled lustre by the solar fires. Night drops her black curtain suddenly, with no intervening veil of twilight to temper Earth's plunge into darkness. Great stars hang low in the sombre sky, and the open interiors of Malay huts, aglow with lamp or torchlight, produce Rembrandtesque effects,

revealing brown inmates cooking or eating their "evening rice."

Georgetown, loyally named by British pioneers after a monarch eminently incongruous with any ideas belonging to a tropical fairyland, possesses neither architectural beauty nor salient character; wooden warehouses, Malay shanties, and white-washed streets being merely attractive from the ever-changing scheme of colour painted by varieties of race and costume. Tamils of ebon blackness drive picturesque teams of humped white oxen in red waggons laden with purple sugar-cane. Noble-looking Sikhs, in spotless linen, stride past with kingly gait. Brown Siamese, in many-coloured scarves and turbans gleaming with gold thread, chaffer and bargain at open stalls with blue-robed Chinamen, and the bronze figures of slim Malays, brightened by mere wisps of orange and scarlet added to Nature's durable suit, slip through the crowds, pausing before an emporium of polished brass-work, or a bamboo stall of teak wood carving. The [233] sloping black mitre of a stout Parsee merchant, accompanied by a pretty daughter in white head-band and floating *sari* of cherry-coloured silk, varies the motley headgear of turban and fez, straw hat and sun-helmet, worn by this cosmopolitan population, the pink headkerchiefs, tinselled scarves, and jewelled buttons of the beautiful Burmese dress, drawing attention to the energetic bargaining of two astute customers for cooking utensils; these elegantly-attired but mahogany-coloured dames, rivalling the Sumatran women in business capacity, and equally determined on securing the *quid pro quo*. The long esplanade between town and sea borders a series of green lawns, where carriages draw up round a bandstand, and the youthful element of European Penang plays tennis with laudable zeal in the atmosphere of a stove-house. Chinese and Malay boyhood look on, and listen to the regimental music. The pallid English occupants of the carriages, in spite of diaphanous muslins and fluttering fans, appear too limp and wilted to bestow more than a languid attention to their surroundings, until the sea-breeze, springing up as the sun declines, revives their flagging spirits. The smartest turnout and the finest horses generally belong to John Chinaman, got up in irreproachable English costume, with his pigtail showing beneath a straw hat, though considerably attenuated, and lacking those adornments of silken braid and red tassels, generally plaited into the imposing queue of the orthodox Celestial. [234] The indefatigable Chinese, frequently arriving on an alien shore without a dollar in their pockets, continually prove potential millionaires. Immune from climatic diseases, working early and late, tolerant and unaggressive, the iron hand in the velvet glove disentangles and grasps the threads of the most complicated commercial enterprise, for the idle Malay, "the gentleman of the East," here as elsewhere, cares for little beyond the sport of hunting and fish-spearing, which satisfies the personal necessities of his indolent existence. The wonderful solidarity of domestic life is an important factor in the Chinese career, for centuries of ancestor-worship, in spite of their arrestive tendency, have strengthened the bonds of family union and filial obedience by insisting on the supreme sanctity of blood-relationship.

The luxuriant Botanical Garden, situated in a green cleft of an angle formed by encircling hills, is a paradise of dreamland, though but a miniature when compared with Buitenzorg for extent and variety. In the restful charm of the Penang garden Art and Nature go hand in hand, giving it an unique character among the horticultural pleasaunces of the Eastern world. The rolling lawns of the exquisite valley, the song of the waterfall which bounds the view as it leaps down the lofty cliffs, the abundant shade of tamarind and palm, and the gorgeous flowering shrubs, suggest [235] nothing artificial or conventionalised in the deep seclusion of the fairy glen. Tall bamboos mirror fluffy foliage and white or golden stems in stream and pool. Orchids of the Brazils festoon unknown trees with the rose and purple butterflies formed by their brilliant blossoms, and colossal traveller's palms, so-called from the draught of water obtained by incision of the stem, stud the glades with stiffly-fluted fans. Lilac thunbergia wreaths over-arching boughs, and passion-flower flings white and crimson garlands over turf flushed with the pink blossoms of the sensitive plant. Gold mohur and red poinsettia blaze with fiery splendour, and huge crotons, with velvety leaves of pink, violet, and chocolate, grow to the height of forest trees. The tangle of brilliant flowers, systematically arranged by the concealed art of the Eastern horticulturist, shows many weird botanical forms. Green spears, bristling on mossy banks, are starred with crimson and barred with orange. Wine-coloured cacti twist blue-green spikes and stems in grotesque contortions, and topaz or ruby-tinted calladiums flame in thickets of hot colour outside cool green dells, filled by a forest of tropical ferns, mosses, and creepers. Lack of botanical knowledge constitutes a sore disadvantage in this treasury of floral beauty, but happily we may "consider the lilies," without cataloguing them, in this garden, "beautiful for situation," and [236] worthy to be a "joy of the whole earth." The sombre jungle on the mountain side supplies the atmosphere of mystery which enhances the ideal peace of the cloistered Paradise, wrapt in the embrace of the haunted hills, and numbered among those visions of an earlier Eden, only realised in the Asiatic birthplace of Humanity which contained the typical Garden of the World, Divinely planted, where the Voice from Heaven deepened the music of whispering leaves and sighing breeze.

A purple-red pat—for even the jasper-tinted tropical soil is beautiful, climbs through the glorious woods to the chief Sanatorium of the Malay Peninsula. A free fight among the coolies before starting demands a lengthy exercise of that stolidity with which the Western pilgrim must invest himself, as the invulnerable armour needed by the conflict of daily life. As a mere matter of personal convenience, this quality bears scant resemblance to the weapons enumerated by S. Paul in the Christian panoply. The oppressive heat, the futility of argument in an almost unknown tongue, and the general uncertainty of the subject in dispute, gradually producing this spurious virtue as the external decoration of sorely-exasperated souls. The exertion of the long ascent in the steaming heat requires six coolies for every chair. The red road mounts through enchanting vistas of palms and creepers, on the edge of the dark jungle, each turning point bringing a whiff [237]

of cooler air, as the evening gold flickers through the velvety fronds of tree-ferns, and the green feathers of spreading bamboos. From the white hotel near the summit, the blue Straits and the flats of Province Wellesley, the English portion of the Malay Peninsula, stand out against the frowning ridge of mountains, for black thunder-clouds continually brood over Malacca. Monkeys caper and chatter in the teak-trees bordering a circular terrace, and an ideal sylvan path leads to the Signal Station, Hospital, and Post Office, on an opposite height, dotted with the bungalows of summer visitors. A palm-shaded plateau beneath the hotel offers an ideal resting-place, but the impenetrable jungle covering the Penang Hills makes expeditions on foot or by chair, impracticable, and the wild deluges of rain, with terrific thunder peals bursting in uncontrolled fury on this exposed peak, minimise the delights of a mountain sojourn. The invasion of an army of jungle rats, behind the walls and above the ceiling of a room sodden and dripping with the afternoon's flood, completes the disillusion, and compels a hasty descent to the warmer damp of the lowlands, for the Equatorial climate, and the general absence of bed-coverings, causes a rheumatic stiffness on rising, which has to be steamed out by the atmospheric vapour-bath of the tropical island. A long rickshaw ride to Tanjong Bungah ("Flowery Point") completes the day's [238]
cure in a sweltering heat, which on the return journey at 8 a.m. causes even the Chinese coolies to stop perpetually at wayside stalls, for the coloured syrups and sticky sweetmeats on which they perform prodigies of endurance and speed. An English planter, in his solitary cacao-garden on the edge of the sea, hails his compatriots with delight, and leads the way through the rocky ravines bordering his solitary bungalow. The glories of the tropics seldom alleviate the sense of exile, and cloudy England, with her "green fields and pastures dim," remains dearer than all the pageantry of Nature elsewhere to most of her absent sons.

The Buddhist temple of Ayer-Etam, built in ascending tiers on a steep acclivity, varies the natural interests of Penang, with the marvels of Chinese architecture elaborated in the deep seclusion of mountain and forest. The dewy areca-palms throw a dark network of interlacing shadows across the red road, winding for miles through the sylvan scenery, the alchemy of the rising sun transmuting the myriad feathery fronds into fountains of green fire. Only the creaking of a bullock-waggon, or the thud of a falling cocoanut, breaks the hush of the tropical daybreak, when the leaves only whisper in their dreams, and the vernal earth, fresh as from her Creator's hand, renews her strength for the heat and burden of the coming day. The colossal pile, consisting of temple, monastery, and innumerable shrines, amid fountains and fish-ponds, bridges and [239]
balconies, courts and terraces, gleams whitely against the green gloom of the vast palm-forest on either side, sloping sharply to the shimmering sea. The usual appalling images of vermilion and gold guard every sculptured gateway, and surmount the painted shrines encircled by parterres of votive flowers, for the philosophic Buddhism of Ceylon and Siam gathers the moss and weeds of many an incongruous accretion in countless ages of pilgrimage through the Eastern world. The transcendental mysticism which spun the finest cobwebs of human thought, crystallises into concrete form when interpreted in the terms of China, where dim reminiscences of early Nature worship, and the terrors which upheld the authority of many obsolete creeds, have been incorporated into the vague ideals of Prince Gautama's prophetic soul. Altars, strewn with fragrant champak-flowers, stand beneath lace-carved alcoves of black teakwood, on the broad plateaux which form welcome resting-places beside each flight of steps on the marble stairway, the gilded pinnacles and aerial spires of the white temple sparkling against the sea of rich foliage. A knot of Burmese worshippers, with rose-coloured scarves and turbans, throw their infinitesimal coins on the palm-leaf mats of a red-roofed shrine, and tell the wooden beads of the Buddhist rosary, chanting the perpetual refrain of "*Pain*, *Sorrow*, *Unreality*," as a warning against [240]
the temptations of *Maya*, the world of illusion. The brown faces raised imploringly to the presiding deity, a leering demon with green face and yellow body, inspire the hope that the grotesque monster may prove his own unreality by vanishing from the hearts of his devotees into the limbo of nightmares from which he has emerged, for the philosophic quietism of Buddhist creed offers no disguise to the horrors of a hell far surpassing the terrific literalism of Dante's Inferno. Rippling conduits edge pillared courts and cloistered arcades, resplendent with frieze and cornice of blue and scarlet, a central fountain falling in prismatic showers over a sacred pond of golden carp. A white-robed monk smilingly conducts us across hump-backed bridges and colonnaded galleries to a bench beneath a grey frangipanni tree, starred with fragrant flowers, and brings welcome cups of tea, before another struggle up the interminable steps, which symbolise the mystic "path" leading to Nirvana's rest. Further hospitality meets us at a yellow kiosk, higher up the sacred hill, where a dainty breakfast of eggs, cakes, and honey stands on a white table-cloth, bearing a steaming coffee-pot. The temple paraphernalia of Buddhist worship strangely resembles Catholic imagery. Incense rises from open censers on the dais, the blue cloud enveloping a gorgeous altar, encrusted with gold. The central figure of Gautama Buddha, on the lotus leaf expresses supernal calm, and the symbolic flower, in bud, blossom, or foliage, [241]
forms the prevailing design of vase and amphora, within golden lattice-work. Hanging lamps glow on rapt faces of attendant saints, or on those supplementary local Buddhas which Chinese doctrine adds to the comparative simplicity of the original system. The foreshadowing of Christian truth culminates in the fact stated by a Buddhist priest, that bread and wine of mystic meaning are reserved on the altars of many among the forty subdivisions of Buddhism. The mountain Sanctuary, though marred by debased decoration and heathenised by the lurid figures of the guardian demons, inspires a reverent devotion, and exercises a solemnising influence on many souls whose faith differs from that of the white-clad monks, who seek to scale the dim heights of perfection from this lofty peak. "The Light which lighteth every man" must needs throw a faint and far-off ray even on an erroneous creed, groping through the darkness for the outstretched Hands which embrace all Humanity with boundless Love.

Penang, as a little field of missionary enterprise, possesses many privileges often denied to the further islands of Malaysia. The variety of immigrant races, the constant intercourse with the Indian mainland, and the needs of travellers belonging to every nation, keep the settlement in touch with a multitude of spiritual needs. Christianity, both in Anglican and Roman guise, sows [242] diligently in fields gradually whitening to harvest. The English Church, with reverent services and kindly priest, remains a little centre of cherished associations. The S. Francis Xavier Institute, which brings many Chinese boys into the Christian fold, through the labours of another Communion, carries on the work of the great mediæval missionary, who reached the farthest East in his apostolate of love. The scarlet, yellow, and white veils of Eastern converts, the crowd of Eurasian Christians in both churches, and the presence of a devout Malay priest assisting at the English service, add unfamiliar notes of colour among the snowy muslins and flower-decked hats of English residents, but correctness of costume, both in men and women, contrasts refreshingly with the slovenly déshabille of the Netherlands India, the last and easily-snapped link between civilisation and barbarism.

An opportunity occurs for a visit to Taiping, the capital of the Native Federated States, and situated in Province Wellesley. The launch crosses to Prai, the rising port of Malacca, and the northern terminus of the railway, sure to upset the passenger lists of the great steamers by traversing the entire peninsula to Johore. Through a channel bordered with weird mangroves, the boat enters a long, slow river, flowing between boundless palm-forests. The "black but comely" captain of the snorting boat escorts his European passengers to the station, arranges tickets, and [243] waits on the platform till the train starts; the portly sailor in spotless linen, surmounted by his genial ebony face, waving encouragement as long as we remain in sight. The perils and dangers of the way are *nil*, and none of the threatened contingencies arise, but to Eastern thought risks, however remote and improbable, add to the value of a journey. Real drawbacks seem seldom mentioned, but imaginary lions in the way offer unlimited scope to Oriental fancy, and help to create a thrilling drama of destruction. Green paddi-fields, tall sugar-canes, and a world of palms, rise from the alluvial flats of Province Wellesley. The great rubber plantations, which form the chief source of wealth in Malacca, follow in endless succession, but, as usual, the astute Chinaman has obtained almost a monopoly of the industry, from which the greatest fortunes of the tropics are now derived. The bushy trees, with their black stems and ragged foliage, are destitute of the beauty so lavishly bestowed even on the weeds of this fertile soil. The tangled splendour of the wild jungle, which presently borders the track, demonstrates the immense difficulty of pioneering in a tropical forest, where the interlacing boughs of the myriad trees, with their impenetrable screen of climbing parasites, make perpetual walls of living green, defying human progress. Malay villages, brown and palm-thatched in the immemorial style, stand on [244] piles above the swampy ground, which seems the approved site of habitation. A barren district devastated by a forest fire, contains the disused pits of ancient tin-mines, but these unsightly hollows have been decorated by Nature's hand with a luxuriant growth of the frilled pink lotus. Malay children, themselves unadorned, stand on wayside platforms, every brown hand filled with the rosy chalices of the sacred Buddhist emblem. Tradition says that the blossom, drawn up from the mire by the rays of the morning sun, symbolised the earth-stained soul, made pure and stainless by the attraction of that Divine Glory which Buddhism, though in distorted form, strove to attain.

At the end of the sixty-mile journey, the English station-master at Taiping proved a veritable friend in need, arranging for a hot breakfast at the station, chartering rickshaw coolies, and—greatest blessing of all—directing the route, with a menacing pantomime concerning any shirking of duty, which saved all further trouble. Taiping is in an early stage of progress, and the open *tokos* in waringen-shaded streets, show nothing but the necessaries of life, with terrible mementos of Birmingham in petroleum lamps, hideous oleographs, and machine-made household goods. Pretty bungalows stand beyond the interlacing avenues of dusky trees, and a framework toy of a church in the green outskirts, contains numerous brass tablets recording English lives [245] laid down in this weary land. These pathetic memorials seem the only permanent features of the frail edifice in the shadowy God's-acre already filled with graves. The newly-planted park, with a lake fringed by a vivid growth of allemanda and hybiscus, stands below the purple heights of a long mountain chain, but Taiping offers few inducements to a prolonged stay, and after a hurried glimpse of terrific beasts and snakes of the jungle, preserved in the local museum, we return to the station, the kindly chef-de-gare disturbing his wife from her siesta in the adjacent bungalow, to feast us on tea and bananas. Darkness falls before the train reaches Penang, but a Chinese gentleman acts as pilot across some rocking boats, with only a faint flare from expiring torches to light the way, and starts the cringing coolies, with true politeness to the "foreign devils," but manifest wonder at their eccentric customs. Chinese womanhood, painted, bedizened, and tottering on the pink and gold hoofs which cause a sickening shudder to the Western spectator, indicates the barrier of prejudice to be surmounted before China can mould national ideals into harmony with modern progress.

The vicinity of Penang to the Equatorial junction of the maritime world, widens local interests by the development of the Malay Peninsula, partly governed through the instrumentality of native Sultans under English guidance, but the abiding charm of the island lies beyond the radius of the [246] thriving port. Nature still reigns supreme in this jewel of the Equator, where the amber swathes of Indian laburnum, the golden-hearted whiteness of luscious frangipanni blossom, and the red fire of the flamboyant tree, light up the endless aisles of swaying palms, where temple-flower and tuberose mingle their fragrance with the breath of clove and cinnamon, interpreting the imagery of the Eastern monarch's bridal song, and luring each lover of Earth's manifold beauty to "go down into her garden of spices and gather lilies."

EPILOGUE.

[247]

The infinite variety of interests connected with the vast Malay Archipelago, mainly dominated by European authority, can only be inadequately mentioned in the simple record of a half-year's wandering through scenes which stamp their unfading beauty indelibly on mind and memory. Virgin fields of discovery still invite scientific exploration, and the green sepulchre of Equatorial vegetation retains innumerable secrets of Art and architecture. The geological mysteries of these volcanic shores offer a host of unsolved problems, the surpassing magnificence of flower and foliage makes every island a botanical Paradise, and the varieties of race and language which moulded and coloured the destinies of the Equatorial world, supply historian and philologist with opportunities of unlimited research. The dim chronicles of a distant past, inscribed in vague characters with faint traces of the earliest Malay wanderers, link their shadowy pages with historic records of falling dynasties and warring creeds, preceding the eventful period of colonial [248] enterprise, initiated by the wild campaigns in quest of the precious spices. Although the Malay voyagers remain veiled in the twilight which clouds the verge of authentic history, the track of their keels may yet be followed through the conflicting currents of that hitherto unknown ocean which they opened to a future world. The forests and fishing grounds of every coast and island still support the manifold divisions of the nomadic race which forms the substratum of island life, and the star of hope which led them onward, shone for many subsequent adventurers across those Southern seas which aroused the energies and ambitions of later ages. The symbolical stories of the world's infancy join the actual experience of struggling humanity to the dreamland from whence it emerged, as some syren song lured it into unknown regions. The old-world legends of mankind "launching out into the deep, and letting down the nets for a draught," repeat themselves from age to age, for the human heart has ever sacrificed comfort and safety in order to set sail upon some trackless ocean, on the chance of reaping that harvest of life's sea for which man yearns with insatiable desire. The wanderings of Odysseus, in the youth of the world, illustrate the eternal pursuit of a visionary ideal, in those adventures which breathe the undying romance of the sea. The resemblance between the traditions of savage and civilised nations [249] appears too strong to be fortuitous, and indicates the underlying unity of feeling and purpose implanted in the human race. Modern environment renders it impossible to calculate the tremendous force of the mysterious impulse which swayed the onward march of primeval tribes; even the later obstacles, overcome by bold spirits who followed in their wake, can never be adequately realised amid the artificial conditions of our present life. The charmed circle of the "Equator's emerald zone," encloses a region of marvel and mystery, where Imagination, the fairy with the magic mirror, helps to interpret and reveal the secrets of Beauty and Truth, which transfigure material form and colour with the halo of idealism. The tale of the mysterious ages when "the threads of families" were first "woven into the ropes of nations," still sways mind and fancy, but the romance of the world continues, though the progress of Humanity varies the pictured page. In the warm heart of the tropical Archipelago, Nature, triumphing in eternal youth, seems to mock the transient phases of aspiration and achievement, which vanish by turn into the misty past. The great Mother chants her "Song of Songs" throughout the myriad changes of Time, in terms so similar to the imagery of the Divine Epithalamium that, from a human standpoint, it seems swept by the spice-laden breezes of the Malayan Lotus-land, rather than by the fainter fragrance wafted from the orchards and gardens of Palestine or Egypt. Possibly the [250] Syrian fleet, in search of ivory and peacocks, touched at the enchanted shores where "all trees of frankincense" perfumed the air, and produced those aromatic "powders of the merchant," regarded as priceless treasures both in primitive and mediæval days. The story might well capture the fancy of the royal poet, and enrich the music of his verse with the luscious fragrance of a more luxuriant land than even his own pastoral Canaan, flowing with milk and honey. The hyperbole of Eastern thought often rests on a solid foundation of fact, and the Hebrew love-song weaves tropical Nature's lavish wealth of flower, fruit, and fragrance into a symbolic garland, flung in passionate rapture at the feet of the beloved one. The spiritual significance of the sacred lyric only transposes the mystic melody into a higher key, and heaps the thurible of the sanctuary with the frankincense of praise, to celebrate the typical bridal of Earth and Heaven.

The diadem of palms on the last outlying islet of the Malay Archipelago, stands out in dark relief against the golden haze of the afterglow, which floods the sky, and changes the purple waters into a sea of fire. The pageant of sunset lingers for a moment, and then vanishes beneath of the pall of the swiftly-falling night. The fairyland of eternal summer sinks below the horizon, and realities melt into the shadows of that mental subconsciousness which holds the wraiths of [251] departed joys. Memories of the golden hours spent in threading the flowery maze of the vast Archipelago, seem a mere handful of shells gathered on the surf-beaten shores, but if even the empty shell can hold the sound of the waves, this brief record of a cruise in sunny seas may also convey faint whispers of that syren voice which echoed through the ages of the past, and still allures the spellbound listener to the swaying palms and spice-scented bowers of Malaya's Island Paradise.

Transcriber's Notes:

The preference has been to retain inconsistencies and idiosyncracies in spelling, especially of proper nouns, except in the case of obvious typographical errors. Any corrections made are noted below.

Many Javanese names use the "oe" group of vowels. In a few cases, the original text uses "oe" ligatures. Since such usage is inconsistent, even for the same name, and the number of instances are few, the "oe" ligatures have not been retained.

Inconsistencies in the hyphenation of words retained. (dream-like, dreamlike; ear-rings, earrings; re-adjustment, readjustment; sandal-wood, sandalwood; sub-consciousness, subconsciousness; sub-divisions, subdivisions; thunder-clouds, thunderclouds; waist-cloth, waistcloth; white-washed, whitewashed; wicker-work, wickerwork)

Table of Contents, entry for "The Solo-Bessir Isles". The chapter heading in the main text reads "THE SOELA-BESSIR ISLES." The original wording has been retained in both cases.

Pg. 34, "int oa" changed to "into a". (forest aisles into a)

Pg. 35, "sanatorioum" changed to "sanatorium". (a favourite sanatorium of the Dutch)

Pg. 38, "possing" changed to "possessing". (possessing a notable)

Pg. 79, unusual spelling "pourtrayed" retained.

Pg. 89, "ominious" changed to "ominous". (played an ominous part)

Pg. 94 and 202, "unmistakeable" is also spelled "unmistakable" on page 140. Original spellings retained in all cases.

Pg. 114 and 115, "sulphureous" is also spelled "sulphurous" on page 44. Original spellings retained in all cases.

Pg. 118, "prisets" changed to "priests". (while the priests of Siva)

Pg. 144, "elswhere" changed to "elsewhere". (here as elsewhere)

Pg. 155, "benath" changed to "beneath". (beneath a hill covered)

Pg. 156, "pentrate" changed to "penetrate". (of air can penetrate)

Pg. 166, "smoulderng" changed to "smouldering". (which hides the smouldering)

Pg. 179, "he" changed to "the". (from the motionless waters)

Pg. 187, "inagurated" changed to "inaugurated". (growth of foreign vegetation was thus inaugurated)

Pg. 189, "Calvanistic" changed to "Calvinistic". (grimness of Calvinistic creed)

Pg. 223, "violents" changed to "violent". (continuous roar of violent explosions)

Pg. 239, "Buddhim" changed to "Buddhism". (philosophic Buddhism of Ceylon)

Pg. 239, extraneous dot in between sentences: "through the Eastern world. . The transcendental". It does not appear to be an ellipsis and has thus been removed.

Pg. 243, extraneous dot in between sentences: "derived. . The bushy trees". It does not appear to be an ellipsis and has thus been removed.

Pg. 247, "Archipegalo" changed to "Archipelago". (the vast Malay Archipelago)

Page number anchors have not been inserted for pages 12, 122, 206, and 228 as these were blank pages in the original text.

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