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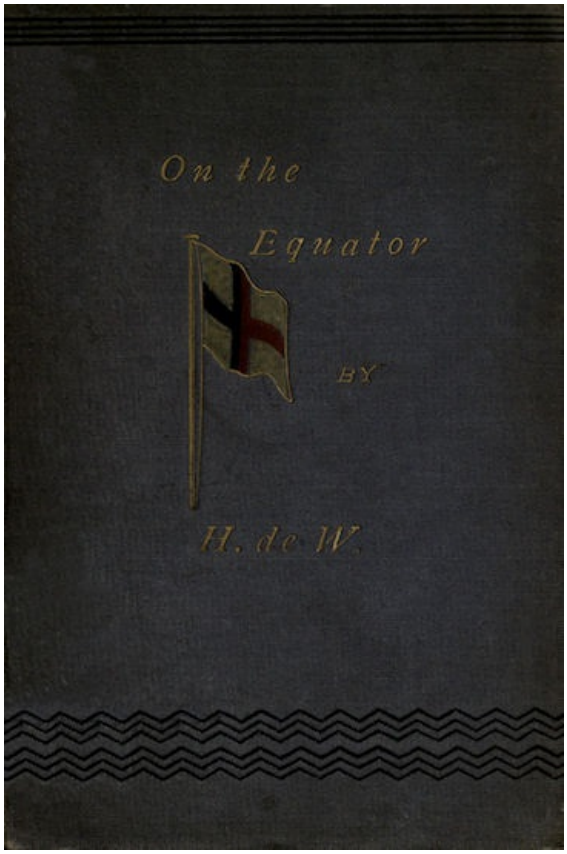

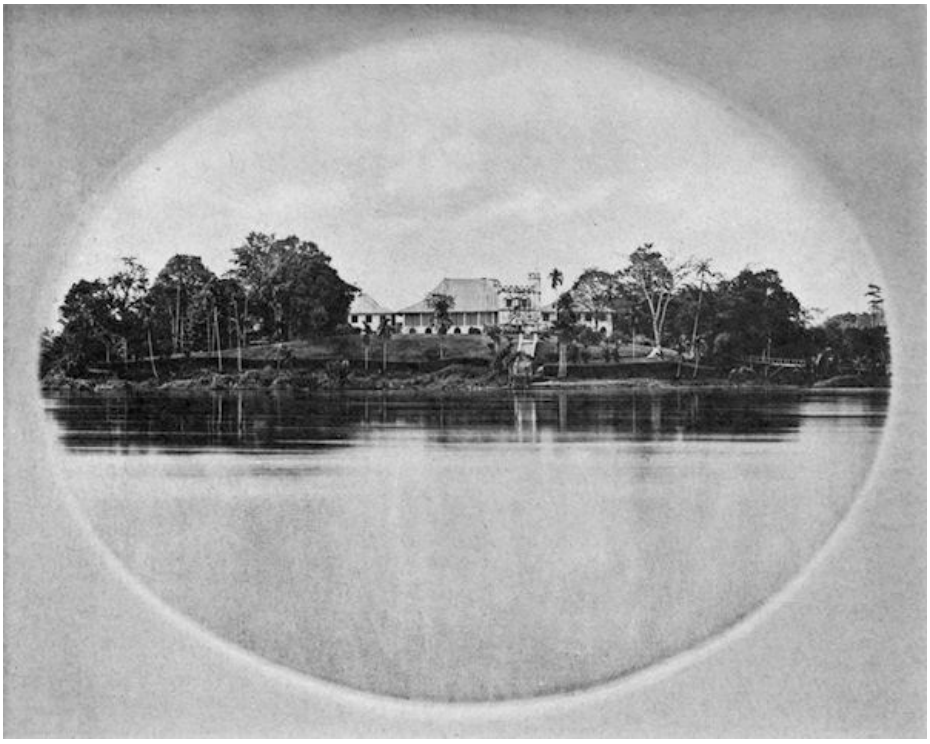

ASTANA, KUCHING.

THE RESIDENCE OF THE RAJA.

On the Equator

BY

H. de W.

Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co.

LUDGATE HILL, LONDON E.C.

To

JOHN LANCASTER, ESQ.,

OF

BILTON GRANGE, NEAR RUGBY, WARWICKSHIRE.

This Volume

IS DEDICATED, WITH THE BEST WISHES OF

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

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[9]

ON THE EQUATOR.

CHAPTER I.

Our Plan of Travel Outfitters—Journey to Marseilles—Departure—"The Inevitable"—Journey Out—Singapore—Leave for Kuching—The *Aline*—"Talang-Talang"—The Sarawak River—Kuching—The Bazaar, &c.—Comfortable Quarters.

It was on the 13th of April, 1880, that, accompanied by an old College friend (whom throughout these pages I shall call L.), I left London for the Eastern Archipelago, *via* Marseilles and Singapore, our destination being Sarawak, the seat of government of Raja Brooke in the island of Borneo. Our expedition had been a long-projected one, but it was not until the latter end of March, 1880, that we finally decided to start.

Thanks to the small experience gained from a former voyage to these parts we successfully resisted the efforts of our outfitters to supply us with, in addition to what was really necessary, almost every useless thing ever heard of, from a cholera-belt to a velvet smoking suit. We were, however, resolved to take nothing more than was absolutely necessary, as on a journey of this [10] kind nothing is more embarrassing than a large amount of luggage. A small but complete outfit was therefore got together, which was easily carried in one small overland trunk, one small portmanteau for cabin use on board ship, and a gun-case each. This we afterwards found ample to contain all the necessaries required.

On the evening, then, of the 13th of April, we stood on the platform of the Charing Cross Station, awaiting the departure of the mail train for Dover, and—our luggage duly registered for Paris—we ensconced ourselves in a smoking-carriage, and lit up the fragrant weed, not sorry that we were really off at last.

Our journey to Paris was pleasant enough—a quick run to Dover, a smooth moonlit passage to Calais, a sound sleep in a comfortable *coupé lit*, and we awoke to find Paris around us, white and cheerful in the bright spring sunshine. Putting up at Meurice's Hotel, three days were enjoyably spent here, and on the 17th we left for Marseilles, which was reached at 6.30 a.m. on the 18th, after a tedious journey of twenty hours. We at once drove to the ship, on alighting at the railway station, not forgetting to purchase on our way through the town those essentials on a long sea voyage, a couple of cane easy-chairs.

On arrival at the quay we found active preparations for departure going on, as the ship was to [11]

sail at 10 o'clock a.m.; and, being Sunday, she was thronged with holiday-makers, who had come to see her off. Having got on board, we dived below and installed ourselves in a comfortable and roomy cabin (which we were lucky enough to get to ourselves the entire voyage), and returned on deck to watch the busy scene. The hubbub and the noise were deafening, for the squeakings of some sixty or seventy pigs, which were being hoisted on board a vessel alongside bound for Barcelona, added to the din, and combined to make what the French would call "*un vacarme infernal*."

By 9.30, however, decks were cleared of all but passengers, and at 10 precisely hawsers were cast off, and we steamed out of harbour.

Our vessel, the *Sindh*, was a very fine one of over 3,000 tons burthen, and our fellow-passengers chiefly Dutch and Spanish bound for the Eastern Archipelago and Manilla, a few French, and but seven English including ourselves. Among the latter was an individual who is usually to be met with on the ships of the P. & O. Company and those of the Messagéries Maritimes, though more frequently on the former. L. and I christened him "The Inevitable," as a voyage to India or China [12] can rarely be made without coming across him. He is invariably an Englishman, and my Indian readers will readily recognise him when I say that he is always (in his own estimation!) perfectly *au fait* on every subject whatever, be it political, social, or otherwise, that he always knows how many knots the ship has run during the night, and is continually having what he calls "a chat" with the captain and officers of the vessel he is on, returning to tell the first unlucky passenger he may succeed in button-holing the result of his conversation. He is also a great hand at organising dances and theatricals on board, and constitutes himself master of ceremonies or stage-manager at either of these entertainments. Our specimen of the genus, however, subsided soon after leaving Naples, finding all his lectures in vain, and confided to us his intention of "never coming out again by this infernal line"—a consummation most devoutly to be wished for the sake of the Messagéries Maritimes.

Among our number was also an amusing Yankee, fresh from the States, and bound for Singapore, who announced his intention of "getting to windward of those 'Maylays' before he'd been long in the clearin'."

The arrangements on board the *Sindh* for the comfort of passengers were simply perfect—a roomy cabin (cool even during the severe heat in the Red Sea), good bath-rooms, and, above all, [13] civility from every one connected with the ship, was the order of the day on board. The food and cooking were excellent, fresh meat and fish, and a good French salad, being provided for dinner daily—even during the run from Point de Galle (Ceylon) to Singapore, in which no land is touched at for nine days—and a good sound claret, iced, supplied at every meal free of charge. When it is considered that the first-class fare from London to Singapore (including the journey through France) is only £70 5s., it is to be wondered how the passenger fares of this line can even be made to cover the outlay.

It would scarcely interest the reader to be told how we beguiled the long tedious days at sea with ship's quoits, "Bull," and other mild amusements of a similar nature, or the still longer evenings with whist; how we went ashore at dirty glary Port Said, and drank bad coffee, while a brass band of German girls discoursed anything but "sweet music"; how "the inevitable" made a desperate effort to get up a dance in the Red Sea on one of the hottest nights, but was instantly suppressed by force of numbers, determined, though well-nigh prostrate from the heat; or how we went to the Wakwalla Gardens at Galle, to drink cocoa-nut milk and admire the first glimpse [14] of tropical scenery. Suffice it to say, that on the 15th of May we arrived at Singapore, after a singularly quick passage from Marseilles. Bidding adieu to our fellow-passengers, including "the inevitable," who of course recommended us to the best hotel in the place (though I very much doubted his ever having been there before), we entered a little red box on wheels drawn by a Java pony, which is designated a "gharry," and drove to Emmerson's Hotel, near the Esplanade. This was reached after a drive of four miles under a blazing sun, and we were not sorry to find ourselves located in two good bed-rooms, which felt delightfully cool and airy after our comparatively close cabin on board. After a cold bath, doubly enjoyable by its contrast with the lukewarm sea-water we had been accustomed to during the voyage, it was not long ere we were doing justice to an excellent breakfast under the cool swing of the punkah.

Singapore is an island 27 miles long by 14 broad, and is divided from the main land, or Malay peninsula, by a narrow strait of three-quarters of a mile broad. The town consists of about 70,000 inhabitants, comprising Europeans, Indians, Chinese, and Malays, the two latter forming the bulk of the population. It is well laid out, and from the sea presents a very picturesque appearance. [15] The neighbourhood is slightly undulating and well wooded, and the country around studded with well-built and substantial houses, belonging to the European merchants and other officials in Singapore. No Europeans live in the town, as the heat there during the south-west and even north-east monsoon is insupportable. The Esplanade, which faces the sea, and near to which our hotel stood, is the fashionable drive, and where the inhabitants enjoy the sea-breezes when the heat of the day is over. The horses and carriages here, however, were a sorry sight, the former being nearly without exception cast-offs from Australia, and sent here as a last resource. The carriages, too, were fearfully and wonderfully made contrivances, and would have caused the inhabitants of Long Acre to shudder, could they have seen them.

The view of the roadstead from the Esplanade is very striking, and is generally alive with shipping of all kinds and nations, from the smart and trim British man-of-war to the grimy collier, and from the rakish Malay prahu to the clumsy junk laden with produce from China. These latter

are, however, fast dying out, and most of the larger Chinese firms have now steamers.

We were anxious to make as short a stay in Singapore as possible, and therefore made inquiry the day after our arrival as to the best means of getting over to Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, [16] and a journey of forty-eight hours by sea. What was our dismay to find that the *Raja Brooke*, the only steamer running between Kuching and Singapore, had left the day before, and would not be back for a week at the very least. As she made a stay of five days at either place every trip, this was anything but pleasant news, as nearly a fortnight must elapse ere we could leave Singapore. Luckily, however, the Sarawak Government gunboat *Aline*, which had been into dock at Singapore, was then lying in the roads, and sailing for Kuching in two days' time, and through the kindness of the Sarawak agents we were offered a passage in her. This we gladly accepted, agreeing to be on board the following Thursday at 10.30 p.m., the *Aline* sailing at 11.

On the evening appointed, accordingly, we set out from our comfortable hotel to embark. The weather, which had all day been oppressively hot, had suddenly changed, and the rain was now pouring down in torrents. To make matters worse it was as dark as pitch, and it was some time ere, after shouting ourselves hoarse, we could procure a sampan to take us on board. The *Aline* was luckily lying close in-shore, and we stood on her deck, after a short pull in the sampan, wringing wet. A pleasant welcome from her captain, however, dry clothes, and a glass of grog in [17] her cheerful and well-lit cabin, soon set things right, and we turned in and slept soundly, undisturbed by the bustle and noise that always attends the departure of a ship.

We were awoke at six next morning, and, swallowing a cup of most excellent coffee, *Sarawak grown*, went on deck. The sun shone brightly, and the air felt cool and fresh after the rain of yesterday. No land was in sight, and with a fair wind and sail set we were making good way through the water.

The *Aline* is the largest of the gunboats (of which there are four) belonging to the Sarawak Government. She is about 200 tons, schooner rigged, and carries two 32-pounders, fore and aft. Her accommodation, state rooms and saloon, are forward, a good plan in the tropics, as the smell of steam and hot oil from the engine-room are thus avoided, and it is also cooler than aft when the vessel is under weigh. The quarters of the crew are aft; and I was surprised to see how clean and neat everything on board was kept, the more so that the ship's company consisted entirely of Malays, who are proverbially careless and dirty in these matters. She had but two European officers, the captain and engineer. The former, Captain K., who had been in these seas for many years, had some interesting tales to tell of the old pirate days, when Sir James Brooke first visited [18] Borneo in his yacht the *Royalist*.

Our voyage across was very enjoyable, and our host a very agreeable companion. It seemed but a short time, then, since our departure from Singapore, that on the 25th of May at 4.30 p.m. we sighted the high lands of the island of Borneo; the mountain of Gunong Poë, in Dutch territory, towering high above the rest. By eight o'clock we were abreast of Cape Datu, a long spit of land running far out to sea, and the southernmost point of Sarawak territory. Rounding this we passed Sleepy Bay, in which a boat in search of pirates, commanded by an officer of H.M.S. *Dido*, was nearly captured by them some years ago. The whole crew, including the watch, had fallen asleep one night while at anchor in the bay, but one of their number happening to wake just in time, gave the alarm, just as the pirate prahus, which had pulled out from the land, were within about thirty yards of them. A sharp skirmish ensued, and the Illanuns were at length driven off, but had they not been warned in time the English must have perished to a man, as these ruffians made it a rule to spare none but *Hajis*, or Mahometans who have made a pilgrimage to Mecca. The bay derives its name from this occurrence.

At daybreak the next morning we were summoned on deck by Captain K. as we were passing [19] *Talang-Talang*, or Turtle Island, and should shortly be off the mouth of the Sarawak river. *Talang-Talang* is a small island literally swarming with turtle, whose eggs form a staple article of commerce in the Sarawak market. The mode of procuring them is curious. Turtles lay only at night, and having dug holes in the ground deposit their eggs therein, and cover them over with sand. Natives who have been on the watch then place sticks in the ground to mark the place where they may be found, and they are the next morning dug out in enormous quantities, and exported to various parts of Borneo and the adjacent islands. The eggs have a stale fishy flavour, are very sandy, and to my mind extremely nasty, although they are considered a great delicacy by the natives, who eat them raw with their curry.

By seven o'clock we were entering the Santubong mouth of the Sarawak river. There are two entrances to this; the other, Moratabas, some few miles farther down the coast, being the larger, is used by men-of-war and other large craft. Vessels of 300 tons and under, however, always use the Santubong entrance, excepting during the north-east monsoon, when it is unsafe for vessels of any size, and Moratabas is always used. The Santubong entrance is far superior to the other as [20] far as scenery is concerned. On the right bank of the river, its base stretching for some way out to sea, stands the Peak of Santubong, rising to a height of over 2,000 feet, and covered with dense forest to a height of nearly 1,700 feet, from which point a perpendicular sandstone precipice rises to the summit.[1] At the foot of the hill, and almost hidden by trees which surround it, lies the little fishing village of Santubong, inhabited by Chinese and Malay fishermen. Kuching is supplied daily with fresh fish from this place. The left-hand bank is a flat, swampy plain of impenetrable jungle, having its river banks lined with mangroves and nipa palms. This extends for about ten miles inland, until the mountain of Matang, which can plainly be seen from the mouth, is reached, and on the near side of which lies the capital, Kuching.

The journey up river from the mouth is flat and uninteresting, and little is to be seen but nipa and other palms on either side, and although Kuching is but seven miles from Santubong as the crow flies, it is quite twenty by river. It was not till ten o'clock, therefore, that signs of civilisation commenced, in the shape of a few Malay houses built close to the water's edge. These are usually [21] built in the same manner on piles of wood of ten to fifteen feet high, the walls and roof being made of "atap," or the leaf of the nipa-palm dried, and the flooring of "lanties" or split bamboo.

The Chinese brick-yards and potteries of "Tanah Puteh," a suburb of Kuching, came into view shortly after this, and immediately after this Fort Margaret, which stands on a hill on the left-hand bank of the river, and commands the entrance to Kuching, and, rounding the bend that hides it from our view, we now come to the town itself, so unique and picturesque a place that a far abler pen than mine is needed to do justice to its description.

Lining the right bank of the river, which is here about 400 yards broad, is the Chinese Bazaar extending for nearly a quarter of a mile along the shore, the houses, which are of brick, presenting a very curious appearance, with their red roofs and bright-coloured façades—the latter, in the case of some of the wealthier owners, embellished with designs of porcelain and majolica ware. The row of acacia trees which line the street from end to end would give the place rather the look of a boulevard in a small French town were it not for the palms growing at the back of the Bazaar, and the Chinese junks and Malay craft moored alongside the bank. At the end [22] of the Bazaar, and separated from it by a small stream running into the main river, which is crossed by a wooden bridge, is the Chinese joss-house, an imposing edifice erected by the principal Chinese merchants here at a cost of over 10,000 dols.[2]

Next to the "Pangkalan Batoo," or principal landing-place, is the prison, a large stone building, on the right of which is the Borneo Company's (Limited) Wharf; and behind this again stands the Court House, containing all the Government offices, such as Treasury, Post-Office, &c., and wherein the Court of Justice is held.

Stone buildings cease here, and the Malay town extends for half a mile up both banks of the river.

On the left bank, in the midst of beautifully laid-out gardens, is the "Astana," or Palace of the Raja, a handsome stone building built in three blocks, connected with each other by means of small bridges. The centre building, which is surrounded by a fine broad verandah, supported by massive stone pillars, contains drawing-room, dining-room, library, and billiard-room, and is flanked by a tower which forms the principal entrance. The buildings on either side of this consist of sleeping apartments, while on the right of the house, and standing on somewhat lower ground, [23] is a bungalow set apart for the use of guests. With the exception of the fort and commandant's house, the "Astana" is the only building on this side of the river. The passage across to the opposite shore, or town side, is made by means of boats built on the model of the Venetian gondola, and propelled by paddles, there being as yet no bridge.

The *Aline* was anchoring off the town when a message was brought us from the Raja, who kindly offered to place the "Astana" bungalow aforementioned at our disposal during our stay in the country. We gladly availed ourselves of his invitation, and were soon ashore and comfortably installed in our new quarters.

Footnotes:

[1] The outline of this mountain, as seen from Kuching, bears a remarkable likeness to the profile or side face of the late Raja, Sir J. Brooke.

[2] About £2,000.

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[24]

CHAPTER II.

Territory of Sarawak—History of the Country—Raja Brooke and Muda Hasim—Rebellions in Sarawak—Brooke proclaimed Raja—Chinese Insurrection—Military and Naval Establishment—Exports—Progress of Sarawak—Death of Sir James Brooke.

The territory of Sarawak extends for nearly 300 miles along the south-west coast of Borneo from its southernmost boundary, Cape Datu, to Kidorong Point, its northern frontier. It is bounded on the north by Brunei, or kingdom of Borneo proper, and on its other borders by the Dutch possessions, which comprise considerably more than half the island. Sarawak has a mixed population, consisting of Malays, Milanows, Chinese, Dyaks, and other minor races too numerous to mention. These number about 220,000.

Sarawak was ceded by the Sultan of Brunei, under whose suzerainty it originally was, to the late

Raja Sir James Brooke; and a short history of the country from the time in which it first came into possession of the Brooke family may be of some interest to the reader.

On the 15th of August, 1838, the *Royalist*, a yacht of about 200 tons, anchored off the town of [25]
Kuching, with Sir James (then Mr.) Brooke on board. The capital was then but a small straggling Malay village, consisting of a few nipa-palm houses. The Raja's palace, so called, was a dilapidated building constructed of the same material, although the state and formality observed within its walls were considerable, and contrasted strangely with the dirt and squalor in which Muda Hasim, the reigning sovereign, was living.

Sarawak was in a sad state in those days. Her coasts were infested with pirates, who effectually prevented anything like trade being carried on, while anarchy, rebellion, and bloodshed reigned inland. The Raja, Muda Hasim, was, as he assured Mr. Brooke, utterly powerless to act. The rebellion in the interior was affecting his government even more seriously than the piratical raids on the coast. He concluded by begging that Mr. Brooke would remain with his yacht, which was fully armed, at Kuching until things looked brighter, hoping that when the rebels heard there was an armed British ship lying at the capital they would be intimidated, and surrender. This arrangement, however, Brooke could not agree to, and, notwithstanding the Raja's entreaties, was obliged to leave for Singapore on the 31st of September of the same year, not, however, without a promise to the Raja to return at some future time. [26]

After an absence of nearly two years, during which he visited Celebes, and other parts of the Archipelago, Brooke returned to Sarawak on August 29th, 1840, only to find the country in a worse state than ever, for, encouraged by their repeated successes, the enemy had advanced to within thirty miles of Kuching. The poor Raja received him with open arms, and implored his assistance, offering to make over the country to him if he would only give him his help. Brooke, conceiving quite a friendship for the poor man, who, with all his faults was kind-hearted and sincere, now determined to do so, and organised an expedition against the enemy, headed by himself in person.

After months of hardship and privation, during which time he was several times deserted by his faint-hearted followers, Brooke succeeded in his efforts, and peace was restored on December 20th, 1840.

Although hostilities were now over, and danger past, Muda Hasim did not forget the promise he had made Brooke concerning the country in his adversity, and a form was drawn up by him for the signature of the Sultan of Brunei. The terms of this document were not, however, quite in accordance with what the Raja had undertaken to do, but this being pointed out to him by [27]
Brooke, he replied that the paper was merely a preliminary, and it would come to the same thing in the end. With this explanation Brooke had to be content, and await the return of the deed from Brunei.

Like all Easterns, Malays are most dilatory, and time hung very heavily on Brooke's hands at Kuching. Although the Raja was then (and ever after) a firm friend to Brooke, the native chiefs who surrounded him were not best pleased at the turn affairs were taking, and did their utmost, secretly, to undermine his influence with the people.

These intrigues were carried to such a dangerous extent by a certain Pangeran Makota (who had formerly been Governor of Sarawak, and the chief cause of the troubles in the interior, by his acts of cruelty and oppression), that Brooke determined to act forthwith, and bring matters to a crisis. Loading the *Royalist's* guns, and bringing them to bear, he went ashore with an armed party to the Raja's palace, and at once pointed out to him Pangeran Makota's treachery. He went on to say that Makota's presence in the country was dangerous both to the safety of the Raja and the Government, and announced his determination of expelling him from it. Brooke concluded by saying that a large force of Dyaks were at his call, and the only way to prevent bloodshed was to [28]
instal him Governor then and there.

This speech, and the determined way in which it was spoken, decided Muda Hasim. Brooke's terms were unconditionally accepted, and Makota outlawed. An agreement was signed by the Raja making over the government of Sarawak and its dependencies to Brooke, on his undertaking to pay a small annual tribute to the Sultan of Brunei, and this document having been duly signed by the latter, Brooke was proclaimed Raja of Sarawak on the 24th September, 1841.

From this day matters mended, and under the influence of a just government the country soon showed signs of improvement. In 1847 Raja Brooke went to England for a while, and was there received with great honours. Among others he received the order of knighthood while on a visit to Windsor Castle; and the freedom of the City of London was presented to him in recognition of his deeds in Borneo. He was not long away, however, from his adopted country, returning to Sarawak early the following year.

Sarawak now steadily progressed, and the revenue, which in the first year of Brooke's accession, was next to nothing, began to show a considerable increase. Several Englishmen also were employed by the Raja to maintain order throughout his dominions. An incident, however, [29]
occurred in 1857, which, had it not been for the prompt and decisive action shown by the Raja's Government, might have led to serious consequences.

A colony of Chinese (of whom great numbers had come into Sarawak on the accession of Sir James) had settled at Bau, a short distance above Kuching, on the Sarawak river, for the purpose of working gold. These men were members of a "Hue," or Chinese secret society, and, instigated

by the three chiefs or leading members thereof, determined to attack Kuching, overthrow the Raja's government, and seize the country.

Descending the river in twenty-five large boats, some 600 strong, and fully armed, they reached the capital about midnight on the 18th of February. Their plan of attack had been carefully laid, and on arrival off the town they divided into two parties: the smaller of these turning up the Sungei Bedil, a small stream running close by the Government House, for the purpose of attacking it, and the larger proceeding down river to attack the fort situated on the opposite bank. Sir James Brooke had already been warned by some Malays that an attack was to be made by the gold-workers on Kuching, but knowing how prone natives are to exaggeration, had given the report no credence.

Roused from his sleep at midnight, however, by the yells of the Chinamen, he quickly guessed the [30]
state of affairs, and calling to his European servant—the only other inmate of the house—to follow him, dashed through his bath-room on to the lawn at the back of the house, intending, if possible, to cut his way through the rebels, and so escape. The latter were, however, luckily, all assembled at the front entrance, and the coast clear. Making his way, therefore, with all speed to the Sungei Bedil, the Raja, who was a good swimmer, dived into the stream and under the Chinese boats (which were luckily void of their occupants) in safety, only to fall exhausted on the opposite bank, for he was suffering from a severe attack of fever at the time.

In the meanwhile death and destruction of property were busy. Mr. Nicholetts, a young officer of nineteen, who had but just joined the Sarawak service, was killed; also an Englishman on a visit to Kuching; while Mr. and Mrs. Crookshank[3] were cut down, and the latter left for dead. Two children of Mr. Crymble, the police constable, were hacked to pieces before their mother's eyes, while she lay hidden in a bathing jar, from which she was eventually safely rescued; but Mr [31]
Steele,[4] and Penty the Raja's European valet, succeeded in escaping to the jungle, and were both saved.

The larger party were in the meanwhile attacking the fort, which was then but a small wooden stockade. A desperate resistance was made by Mr. Crymble, who was in charge, assisted by only four Malays, but seeing after a while that he was overwhelmed by numbers, he escaped, leaving the position in the hands of the enemy.

The Raja had by this time been discovered by native friends, who at once conveyed him to the house of the *Datu Bandar*, or principal Malay chief in Kuching. Here he stayed the night; and, next day, accompanied by a small number of officers who had escaped and joined him, set out on foot through the jungle for the Siol stream, leading into the Santubong branch of the Sarawak river, intending to procure boats at the mouth and make his way to the Batang Lupar river, where a sufficiently powerful force of Dyaks and Malays could be organised to attack the rebels and retake Kuching. But the Raja's nephew,[5] Mr. C. Brooke, who was then Resident of the Sakarran district, had already heard the news, and was even then proceeding to Kuching with a [32]
force of nearly 10,000 Dyaks and Malays, but of this the Raja was of course ignorant, and was on the point of putting out to sea with his small party for Lingga, a small village at the mouth of the Batang Lupar, when they descried a steamer making for the mouth of the river. This proved to be the B. C. L.'s steamer *Sir James Brooke*, from Singapore. Those on board had, of course, heard nothing of the disastrous events at Kuching, and were hailed with great joy by the Raja and his little band, who were soon on board and making for the capital with all speed.

The sight of a steamer approaching the town created quite a panic among the Chinese, for they well knew the *Sir James Brooke* was armed, and as soon as her guns had opened on them, they fired one wild volley at her from every available firearm they possessed. This took no effect whatever, and the wretches fled in dismay into the jungle, intending to reach the border, some twenty-eight miles distant, and cross into Dutch territory.

But the wild and fierce tribes of Saribus and Sakarran had now arrived, led by Mr. C. Brooke, and were soon on their track. Encumbered as were the Chinese by women and children, they found escape next to impossible, but were cut off one by one by the Dyaks, with whom in jungle warfare [33]
they had no chance whatever. At length, after days of fearful suffering, about sixty of their number contrived to reach Sambas in Dutch Borneo, this being all that remained of a force of 500 men.

Thus ended the Chinese insurrection, which, although resulting in the loss of valuable lives and much property, was not altogether without its good results, for it served to place the Raja's Government on a firmer basis than before, by showing the natives, Malays, Chinese, and Dyaks alike, that it was a strong one, and to be relied on in the hour of need. It pointed also to the danger of tolerating secret societies in small states, and the penalty for belonging to such in Sarawak has ever since been death.

Trouble is now over for Sarawak, for, with the exception of occasional brushes with the more distant Dyak tribes, the country is thoroughly settled. Natives in great numbers and from all parts of the island settle here yearly, and take refuge under the Sarawak flag,[6] for nowhere, say they, throughout Borneo is such security found for life and property as in the dominions of Raja Brooke.

The Government of Sarawak now employs twenty-two European officers. The Resident Commandant, Treasurer, Postmaster, and Medical Officer, and two or three others holding minor [34]
posts, reside in Kuching, while the remainder are quartered at the various forts or out-stations

along the coast, and in the interior of the country at the heads of the principal rivers. There are eight of the latter, each of which is in charge of a European Resident and assistant Resident.

The military force of the country consists of about 200 men, who are quartered in the fort barracks at Kuching. The out-stations are garrisoned by these men, who are drafted for certain periods in batches of ten to each fort. Their time over, they are relieved by others, and return to Kuching. The "Sarawak Rangers," as they are styled, are recruited from Malays and Dyaks exclusively, and are instructed in battalion and gun drill by an English instructor. The Raja can, however, always count on the services of the tribes of Batang Lupar, Seribas, and other sea Dyaks. These, who could muster over 25,000 fighting men, are ready at any time to assemble at the call of the Government.

The naval establishment consists of three steamers: the *Aline*, *Ghita*, and *Young Harry*. The former, which I have already described, is principally used to convey the Raja to the various out-stations, while the *Ghita* is stationed at Sibu on the Rejang river. The *Young Harry*, which lies at [35]
Kuching, is used as a despatch boat, and is very fast.[7]

The chief exports of Sarawak are antimony, quicksilver, coal, timber of many kinds, gutta-percha, rice, sago, and rattans. Gold is also worked in small quantities by Chinese.[8] The principal imports are cloths, salt, tobacco, brass, and crockery-ware. The Borneo Company, Limited, have the monopoly of all minerals.

A better proof of the progress the country is making cannot be shown than by comparing the revenues of 1877-78—185,552 dols. and 197,855 dols. respectively—with that of 1871, which was only 157,501 dols., thus showing an increase of about £40,000 in seven years.

On the 11th of June, 1868, at Burrator, in Devonshire, Sir James Brooke breathed his last, leaving Sarawak to his nephew, Mr. C. Brooke, the present Raja, his heirs and assigns, for ever. To realise the importance and extent of the deeds wrought by the late Raja, the State of Sarawak must be visited—a state which forty years since was a hot-bed of piracy and bloodshed, a state now as peaceful and secure as any of the British possessions in the East.

Footnotes:

[3] They were both saved eventually, and the courage shown by Mrs. Crookshank on this occasion will not be readily forgotten in Sarawak. Mr. Crookshank was afterwards appointed Resident of Sarawak proper, and retired from the service in 1873.

[4] Mr. Steele was afterwards murdered by Kanowits.

[5] The present Raja.

[6] Black and red cross on yellow ground.

[7] Another vessel of 300 tons, the *Lorna Doone*, has been added since this was written.

[8] Silver has lately been found to exist also.

CHAPTER III. [36]

Kuching—Society—The Club—Amusements—The *Sarawak Gazette*—The Bazaar—Health of Kuching—Life in Kuching—Rats—Preparations for Journey to the Matang Mountain.

Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, although smaller than Pontianak and other Dutch settlements on the coast of Borneo, is generally acknowledged to be the first town in Borneo so far as civilisation and comfort are concerned, and is renowned for its Bazaar, which is the best-built and cleanest in the island. There are two good roads extending at right angles from the town to a distance of seven miles each, at which point they are united by a third. These form a pleasant drive or ride, an amusement unknown in most Bornean townships, where the jungle and undergrowth are usually so dense as to defy any attempts at walking, to say nothing of riding or driving.

The number of Europeans in Kuching, although limited, and consisting of but some twenty in all (five of whom are ladies), form a pleasant little *coterie*, and there is a marked absence of the scandal and squabbling which generally seems inseparable from any place wherein a limited [37]
number of our countrymen and women are assembled. The occasional presence of an English or Dutch man-of-war, also, breaks the monotony of life, and enlivens matters considerably.

The Club, a comfortable stone building, was founded by the Government a few years ago, and contains bed-rooms for the use of out-station officers when on a visit to Kuching. A lawn-tennis ground and bowling alley are attached to it, and serve to kill the time, which, however, rarely hung heavily on our hands in this cheerful little place.

Riding and driving are but still in their infancy, and Kuching boasted of only some dozen horses and four carriages—including a sporting little tandem of Deli (Sumatra) ponies, owned by the Resident. The Deli pony is a rare-shaped little animal, standing from 13 hands to 13.2, with immense strength, and very fast. They would be worth their weight in gold in Europe, and an enterprising Dutch merchant lately shipped a cargo of them to Amsterdam from Singapore, *via* the Suez Canal, with what result I never ascertained. A new road was being cut when we were there from Kuching to Penrisen, a mountain some thirty miles off, which, when completed, may bring a few more horses here; but Borneo (except far north) can never become a riding or driving [38] country.

Kuching has its newspaper, which is published fortnightly, in the English language, and brought out under the editorship of the Postmaster. This journal contains, among other subjects, the doings of the law courts, reports from the various Residencies, and arrivals and departures of ships, with occasionally an interesting account of a journey inland made by the Resident of one of the up-coast districts. The *Sarawak Gazette* was organised in 1871, and will form an interesting history of the country in years to come.

But the most interesting and novel sight in Kuching is its Bazaar, which is built in arcades *à la* Rue de Rivoli, the shops therein belonging chiefly to Chinamen, excepting three or four held by Indians. Birmingham and Manchester furnish these emporiums to a large extent, the article finding most favour with the natives in the edible line being Huntley & Palmer's biscuits, which are imported to Kuching in great quantities. All kinds of brass and crockery-ware, cheap cloth (shoddy), Sheffield cutlery, imitation jewellery, gongs, &c., form the greater part of the goods for sale; but I was surprised, my first walk down the Bazaar, at the great number of large china jars exposed for sale, four or five of these standing at nearly every door. I subsequently found that [39] these are held in great esteem by the Dyaks, and I afterwards saw some in their houses that the owners refused 300 dols. (£60) for! The latter were, however, *bonâ fide* ones, some 400 years old, and came from China. Worthless imitations have been sent out from England and Holland of late years, but they proved a bad speculation to the importers, for the Dyak is, in his way, as good a judge of jars as the veriest chinamaniac at home of Sèvres or Dresden.

The Chinese are, as I have said, the principal householders in the Bazaar, the richest among them being the Brothers Ken-Wat, a firm trading in gutta, gold-dust, and diamonds, with Singapore and China. Borneo has ever been famous for its diamonds, and, although scarce in quantity, I have heard good judges affirm that they are the finest in quality of any in the world. Some large stones have been found in Sarawak territory, and, only lately, one was discovered by a Chinaman, and sold to Government, weighing 87 carats.

The silver coinage in use in Sarawak is the Mexican dollar, but the copper coinage of cents and half-cents bear the head of the Raja.

A walk under the arcades of the Bazaar in the busy part of the day (11.30 a.m.) is well repaid by the curious spectacle presented—thronged as it is with the quaint dark blue dresses of the [40] Chinese and the gaudy, rainbow-hued garments of the Malays, while now and again a land Dyak from up river may be seen, clad in his "chawat" (waist-band) and turban, evidently quite out of his element, and half-scared at the busy scene around him.

The public health of Kuching, which has a mixed population of 20,000, is good, notwithstanding a severe outbreak of cholera which occurred in 1877 and carried off a great number of the inhabitants; and the climate, for a tropical one, is exceptionally healthy. Although the mid-day heat is during six months in the year excessive, the nights are nearly always cool, for a day seldom passes without a squall of wind and rain during the latter part of the afternoon, which clears the atmosphere. Consumption is unknown in Sarawak; and an English officer who came out to join the government service, afflicted with this complaint, completely recovered after a residence of three years in the country. Indeed, if due attention be paid to diet, and the excessive use of stimulants avoided, a long period may elapse in this climate without returning home to recruit; and there is now an officer living in Kuching who has not been out of the place for eighteen years, and who is in as good health as when he left Europe.

Our days at Kuching slipped pleasantly by. A plunge in the large Astana swimming-bath at dawn [41] began the day; after which, our light breakfast of coffee, eggs, and fruit over, we would go across river for a ride or stroll out with a gun; and during my morning's walk past the neat town and bungalows, the latter surrounded with their pretty gardens and trim hedges, I often thought of what poor old Muda Hasim would think could he arise from his grave and compare Kuching the modern with the Kuching of forty years ago—half a dozen Malay houses on a mud bank!

Déjeunner à la fourchette over, a siesta and cigar would be indulged in till five o'clock, when a ride or rattling set-to at lawn tennis, followed by a refreshing bath, prepared one for dinner—the more enjoyable for the violent exercise that had preceded it. Such was our daily life in Kuching, and one that I shall ever look back upon with pleasure.

But the loveliest countries have their little drawbacks, Sarawak not excepted. Mosquitoes and sand-flies are not, although very numerous, the worst evils in the land, for I was startled, my first night in Kuching, while lying half-awake in bed, to feel something cold and slimy run across my chest. Thinking it was a snake, I was out of bed like (to use a Yankee expression) "greased [42] lightning," and was not a little relieved to find that the cause of the mischief was only a "chik-chak," or common lizard of the country, which was larger than usual in this case, being nearly a foot long.

But the true curses of Sarawak are the rats. Go where you will, avoid them as you may, there is not a bungalow that is not infested with them, and boots, shirts, and even cigars, suffer in consequence. No sooner in bed, and the lights out, than their gambols commence, and they sometimes make such a noise as to keep one awake for the greater part of the night. I have sometimes gone out to the verandah, thinking I heard men's footsteps, and found it to be rats, who fled at my approach. These pests occasionally migrate at night in large numbers, several hundred of them on one occasion passing through the Raja's bed-room at Astana on one of these nocturnal expeditions. Nor are mosquito curtains a guard against them, for an out-station officer at Simanggang, on the Batang Lupar river, woke up one night to find a huge grey rascal sitting on his chest and endeavouring to make a hearty meal off his jersey.

To get rid of rats is, therefore, well-nigh impossible, though a plan adopted by some Europeans of keeping a boa-constrictor between the roofs and ceilings of their bungalows is the most effectual. [43]

There are many snakes in Borneo, but none, with the exception of the cobra, are deadly. Centipedes and scorpions are common, and the Tarantula spider is also occasionally, though rarely, met with.

After nearly a fortnight's stay in the capital, we made preparations for an excursion to Matang, of which we wished to make the ascent, and whither we were about to accompany Mr. H., who was formerly agent of the Raja's coffee estate, half-way up the mountain.

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CHAPTER IV.

Travel in Borneo—Travelling Boats—Leave for Matang—Our Crew—Alligators—
Mosquitoes—Matang Bungalow—The Garden—Ascend the Mountain—The Waterfall—
A Nasty Jump—View from the Summit—Snakes—Return to Kuching.

Travelling in the south-western districts of Borneo, and indeed generally throughout the island, excepting in the far north and interior, is done in boats, the density of its forests and swampy nature of the ground rendering journeys overland in most parts of the territory next to impossible. Jungle paths there are, running inland to native houses, and "padi" (rice) clearings, as well as one or two native roads of considerable length, such as the one leading from Lundu, in Sarawak, to the Dutch settlement of Sambas, a distance of twenty-eight miles; but the walking is very severe, and the journey but seldom attempted except by Dyaks.

Its rivers may therefore be said to be the highways of Sarawak, and, fortunately for the traveller, it is a well-watered country. The Rejang, Batang Lupar, and Sarawak rivers are the largest, while among many other smaller streams are the Sadong, Saribus, Kalaka, Eyan, Muka, and Oya; the three latter, although small, are very important, as they run through the sago districts, where are large forests of that palm. [45]

The travelling boats used by Europeans are propelled by means of paddles, and vary considerably in size, from those pulled by six or eight men, to those having a crew of thirty or forty, some of the Dyak war canoes holding as many as eighty men. The latter are used only on expeditions against the enemy. The ordinary travelling boat is roofed over from stem to stern with "kadjangs," or dried palm-leaf awnings, having a space in the centre some 8 feet long or more, according to the size of the boat, walled in on each side with the same material, the better to exclude the fierce rays of the sun. Herein sits, or rather lies, the traveller, the lowness of the awning (which is removable) precluding any other position. Boxed up in this manner, but little can be seen of the surrounding country, but as in Sarawak one river is so precisely alike another this is no great loss. In the interior, however, the scenery improves, and is much finer, as I shall presently show.

A short journey in this style is pleasant enough, but when the unhappy traveller has to live, and cook, &c., for days together in one of these craft it becomes very irksome and trying to the temper. Moreover, the smell from the remnants of the crew's meals, such as stale fish and decayed fruit and vegetables—which they will not take the trouble to throw overboard, but invariably drop under the "lanties" or bamboo deck—is well-nigh insupportable. [46]

We left Kuching on the 4th of June for Matang, intending to make the ascent of Sorapi, the highest peak of the Matang range. The tide not serving further, Santubong was to be our resting-place that night, and we were to proceed on our journey early the following morning. Matang, though only eight miles from Kuching in a straight line, is fully thirty by river, the stream which runs past the landing-place at Matang having its outlet at Santubong. It was once intended by the Sarawak Government to make a road from Kuching to the mountain, but on being surveyed the intermediate country was found to contain a deep swamp four miles across, so the project was abandoned.

Our craft on this occasion was pulled by a crew of six men, and, though small, was, thanks to Mr. H. (who accompanied us), replete with every comfort. On our way down river, H. pointed us out

his crew with pride as being all prisoners, who, although he never took a gaoler with him, had never once taken advantage of him for three years, during which time he had made several trips. [47]

Three of these men were in for murder, and H.'s own body-servant, who cooked our meals, waited on us. He was working out a sentence of fifteen years for the murder of a Chinaman, whose head he had one day conceived a desire to possess, which desire he had promptly gratified! This man was a "Kayan," a tribe inhabiting the interior of Borneo, of whom more anon.

By six o'clock that evening we were at Santubong, and cast anchor a short distance from the shore, but were soon left high and dry on the sands by the receding tide. Stepping on to the beach, L. and I set out for a stroll on the sea-shore and a dip in the sea before dinner, leaving H. to superintend the culinary operations in the boat. He warned us ere we started to beware, when bathing, of sharks and alligators, which swarm here.

There has ever been something most repulsive to me about the latter, who, when they have seized their prey, human or otherwise, do not at once devour it, but stow it away in their nests under water for two or three days until the flesh becomes decomposed, when they return to their hideous meal. Alligators do not attain a very large size in Borneo, ranging from 10 to 15 feet long only. The offer by the Sarawak Government of 30 cents, per foot, when captured, has greatly decreased their number in most of the rivers. An amusing anecdote is told of an enterprising Malay fisherman, who, when these rewards were first offered, established a "farm" at the mouth of one of the rivers, killing them when they grew to their full size, and claiming the money for their capture. This did not last long, however, and the "wily Oriental's" ingenuity was nipped in the bud by a punishment that has deterred other natives from following his bad example. It is a curious fact that the eggs of alligators are invariably found in the following numbers—11, 22, 33, 44, 55, 66, &c. [48]

The following story, which, had it not been told me by the Resident of the district wherein it had occurred, and published in the *Gazette*, I should have greatly doubted, may interest the reader:—

Two Malay children, the elder a girl, aged seven and four years, were playing at low tide on a mud bank close to their dwelling, and some 15 yards from the water, when an alligator, which had advanced unperceived, seized the younger, and was making for the water with the child in its jaws. The little girl, on seeing this, had the presence of mind to leap on the animal's back and plunge her fingers into its eyes, when it instantly dropped the child unhurt, and made off into the river. [49]

We enjoyed a cool and refreshing dip in the sea, and it was almost dark ere we left the water to return to the boat. A light was placed in her little cabin, which shone like a firefly over the sands, giving promise of good things within, to which we were shortly doing justice, in the shape of an excellent fowl curry (prepared by the murderer), washed down by a bottle of claret cool and fresh from the spring on shore, where it had been placed on arrival. The night was beautiful and starlight, and, our repast over, the awning was removed, and we sat out enjoying our cigars in the cool night breeze blowing in fresh and strong from the sea. The quiet ripple of the waves as they broke on the sandy beach had a soothing effect very favourable to reflection (and baccy), and the lights of the little fishing village twinkling at the foot of the black and rugged peak of Santubong—which rose to a height of 1,500 feet above our heads, and behind which the moon was just rising—presented a fine and uncommon picture.

But, alas! our enjoyment, like many others in this world, was of short duration, and received a severe shock from a sudden exclamation by H. of "By Jove! we have forgotten mosquito curtains! We shall be eaten alive!" It was too true. In the hurry of departure, and forgetting that we were to pass a night at the mouth, we had left them behind, knowing that on Matang mosquitoes are unknown. There was no help for it, however, and, our cigars finished, we turned in with a foreboding that sleep that night was not for us. Nor were we wrong in our conjecture, for no sooner were we wrapped in our blankets, and the lights out, than the enemy, mosquitoes and sandflies—for the latter of which Santubong is famous—attacked us in myriads. We eventually gave it up as a bad job about eleven p.m., lit our lamps, and waited for daylight, when the cold land breeze came and dispersed these pests, leaving us a couple of hours' sleep ere we should start with the morning tide. [50]

The morning was bright and sunny, and, starting at seven, we were entering the Matang stream which runs past the Bungalow landing-stage at eleven o'clock a.m. Our destination was reached at one p.m., and, loading our amiable crew with baggage and provisions, we started off up the mountain for the bungalow, which was reached, after a rather severe climb, at three o'clock.

There was formerly a coffee estate on Matang belonging to the Raja. This was started in 1868, but the coffee, though good in quality, grew in such small quantities that it was deemed advisable to abandon the scheme, and this was accordingly done in 1873. The bungalow, however, which was built in the same year is still kept up as a sanitarium—a great boon to the Europeans in Kuching, as the climate here is delightful, the temperature at night never exceeding 80 even in the hottest season. The bungalow, which stands about 1,000 feet above sea level, is a comfortable wooden house, containing a sitting-room and three good bed-rooms. It stands on the sheer mountain side, the jungle for 100 feet or so below it having been completely cleared, and replaced by a pretty garden, built in five terraces one below the other, and containing roses, honeysuckles, sweetbriar, and many English flowers that would not live a day on the plains below. [51]

It was barely daybreak the next morning ere we were awoke by H., and, hastily swallowing a biscuit and cup of coffee, we set out for the summit. Our road for the first half-mile lay through the old coffee clearing, and the path was easy enough, which was, perhaps, lucky, as everything was enveloped in a dense mist issuing from the valley below, which rendered objects quite invisible ten yards off. By six o'clock, however, the sun was shining so brightly that we were not sorry to leave the open and enter the forest, from which we should not now emerge until we [52] attained the summit.

To arrive at the foot of the Sirapi mountain two distinct ridges must be ascended and descended, and after an hour's hard walking (though nothing to what we were coming to), we descended the second ridge, into the valley, and arrived at the waterfall, which here descends the mountain from a height of some 600 feet.

Seating ourselves on a huge black boulder overhanging the fall, we paused here for a while to regain our breath, of which we should shortly stand so much in need, for up till now the work had been child's play compared with what was coming. The most striking thing about this valley was its dense gloom, the huge forest-trees of Tapang, Pli, and other kinds, excluding every ray of light, excepting where here and there a bright patch of blue sky peeped in through the thick trellis-work of branches overhead. Beautiful palms, kladiums, and tree ferns, grew in profusion around us, and rare orchids filled the air with their sweet perfumes. Strangely enough not a bird, or living thing, was to be seen in this lovely glen, and the solemn stillness which reigned, broken only by the plash of the water as it fell from rock to rock, was almost oppressive.

We could have lingered here willingly for an hour, but our guide was inexorable, and "forward" [53] was again the cry. Climbing now commenced in real earnest, for, leaving the old track altogether, we began the sheer ascent of the mountain. Dense undergrowths and sharp rocks impeded our every step, and cut our feet cruelly, while, every now and then, a fall flat on the face was the result of misplaced confidence in a fallen tree trunk, which had become rotten from the ravages of ants or other insects. Falling any considerable height was, however, scarcely possible, as the binders and undergrowth, which tore our clothes and scratched our faces, legs, and arms, unmercifully, prevented that.

After three-quarters of an hour of this work—which in a tropical climate, with the thermometer something like 90° in the shade, was no joke—we again struck on the old path, which, though now completely overgrown, we determined to follow for a short time. With injunctions from H. to "hold on by our eyelids," and "'ware holes" where the path had given way, we proceeded along this track about three feet wide, whence descended a sheer precipice of at least 2,000 feet. Glancing upwards, however, we could see that the neck of the journey was broken, and, encouraged by this, we went ahead merrily. But our pride was destined to have a fall. L. and I were proceeding alone, H. having stopped behind to secure an orchid, when, on turning a corner, [54] we were brought up "all standing." About ten paces in front of us was an enormous landslip. It had commenced about 150 feet above the track, and, carrying huge rocks and trees with it, had swept down to the base of the mountain, demolishing the path on which we stood, and leaving a smooth, perpendicular precipice of earth, rocks, and trees, to mark its course. Going round was impossible, for it had left a gap about twelve feet wide, while under us yawned the dread gulf, a fall down which must have been fatal. Over this chasm lay a thin bamboo pole about a foot in circumference, evidently thrown over the chasm, and crossed by some native, for Dyaks and Malays are as active as cats, and in feats of this kind know no fear.

This mode of transit seemed to us, however, out of the question, and we were lamenting our bad luck in having to return without having reached the summit, when H. came up. Without a moment's hesitation, and merely remarking "rather an awkward place," he crossed the pole, while it swayed and oscillated with every movement he made, in a way that made my blood run cold. Having seen him over safely, there was no help for it but to follow, and, dissembling a feeling within me very much akin to what schoolboys denominate "funk," I determined to jump for it, but cross that infernal stick—never! Consigning Matang and all things connected with it to [55] a considerably warmer sphere than Borneo, I "threw my heart over" and followed it a run, a wild bound in the air, a scramble, and I was over, L. almost jumping on my back, and both being ignominiously hauled out of danger by H., who showed no more interest in the whole affair than he would have done in crossing Piccadilly!

This little adventure over, matters were easy enough, until within a short distance of the summit. It then became terrible work. Tearing and struggling through masses of briars and thorns, cut about the feet by sharp rocks, and having literally to pull ourselves upwards by tree trunks and branches, on we went, until a shrill yell from L. gave us a happy excuse for a halt. He had been bitten by a "sumut api," or fire-ant, the pain of whose bite is intense, and strongly resembles the running of a red-hot needle into the flesh. "Never mind," said H., "you won't feel it in a minute." We resume the climb, and I am just beginning to be aware that very few minutes more of this work will sew me up altogether, when, O joyful sound! a faint cry from H., who is some distance ahead, comes back to us. "Hurrah! here's the top!" Panting and exhausted, we at length reach the summit, and throw ourselves on the ground dead beat.

When sufficiently recovered in wind and limb to get up and look around us, we feel that double [56] the hard work undergone would have been amply repaid by the magnificent view now disclosed to us.

Far away in front of us, surrounded by an interminable forest of jungle, lies Gunong Poé, the south-west boundary of Sarawak, while behind it again rise the long low hills of Sambas, in Dutch

Borneo. Stretching far out to sea, and to the right of Poé, is the long spit of land, or promontory, known as "Tanjong Api," on this side of which lies the mountain of "Gading," or Mount Brooke, in Sarawak territory. Nearer to us again are Santubong and Moratabas, and far down the coast the Sadong mountains, the home of the Mias or orang utan of Borneo.

We can plainly trace the course of the Sarawak river, which looks from here like a thin silver thread, as it winds its way past Kuching, its white houses glittering in the sunshine. The mountains of Singgi and Cerambo are plainly discernible, as also the sharp rugged hills of Legora, where the cinnabar and antimony mines are; while farthest away of any on the dim horizon, we can distinguish the island of Burong, at the mouth of the Batang Lupar, and the flat-topped mountain of Lingga, where the Sarawak Mission has established its headquarters. The sky [57] was cloudless, and H. told us that never before had he been able to procure such a good view from the summit.

We enjoyed the fresh breeze at the top for half an hour, and then commenced our descent, avoiding the landslip, and reached the waterfall in a little over the hour. Pausing here for a few minutes to rest, and quench our thirst, we resumed our journey, and reached the bungalow at midday none the worse, with the exception of leech-bites and cut feet, for the climb. Remarking to H. on the extraordinary number of snakes I had noticed on the way up, he informed me that Matang is famed for them, and that, on rising one morning at the bungalow we were then in, he discovered a cobra eight feet long, curled up asleep under his pillow. It had evidently been there all night, and, not best pleased at the interruption, was crawling away when a bullet from H.'s revolver cut short its career.

We stayed two days more at the bungalow, after which we returned to our quarters at Kuching, not a little pleased at having accomplished the ascent of "Sirapi."

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CHAPTER V.

The Rejang Residency—Wild Tribes of the Interior—Start for Rejang—Timber Ships—Sibu—Attack by Katibus—A Dinner Party—The Fireship—Kanowit—"Jok"—Kanowits' Dwellings—Human Heads—"Bones" and "Massa Johnson."

Sarawak is divided into six districts or Residencies, each of which is under the supervision and control of a European Government officer. The latter, who is stationed at the fort established at the principal town of the district, is styled the Resident, and settles law cases, receives revenue, &c.; the entire Residency being under his control.

These districts are as follows:—(1) Sarawak proper (comprising Kuching); (2) Rejang; (3) Batang Lupar; (4) Muka; (5) Bintulu; (6) Lundu.

The Rejang Residency, whither we were now about to make an expedition, contains the largest and most important river in Sarawak, having a draught of five fathoms for a distance of over 130 miles from the mouth. The exports of Rejang are many, the principal ones being gutta-percha, rattans, and bilian wood. A curious article of export, which is found only in this river, is the [59] *Galega*, or Bezoar stone. This is a perfectly hard light green substance, very much the size and shape of a thrush's egg, which is found in the interior of a peculiar species of monkey inhabiting Rejang. The Bezoar stone, which is supposed to be caused by disease in the animal, takes a beautiful polish, and is used as a charm by the Malays, but the majority are sent to China, where they fetch their weight in gold, being held in great esteem by the Chinese, who use them as a drug.

The races dwelling on the banks of this great river are very numerous, varying from the totally wild and wandering Ukits at its head to the Malay and Milano races inhabiting its shores from Sibu to the mouth. The population of Rejang is roughly estimated at 103,000, but the difficulties of obtaining anything like an accurate census are obvious. The number I have given comprises 40,000 Dyaks (including the Katibus and Kanowit tribes), 30,000 Milanos, 30,000 Kayans, and 3,000 Malays—the latter do not live above Sibu. There are also other tribes of totally different language and customs to the above, whose number it has been found impossible to ascertain. Of these I shall give an account anon.

The Dyaks (who are the principal indigenous race in this part of Borneo) may be classed as follows:—(1) the Sea Dyak; (2) the Land Dyak.

The sea Dyaks are so called from their inhabiting the sea-coast east of the Sadong district, as far [60] as the Rejang river, though some are to be occasionally met with far inland. These, who are the most numerous of any Dyaks, are at the same time the bravest and most warlike, and in former days were greatly addicted to piracy and head hunting. They are of a dark copper colour, and although not tall men are wonderfully strong and well-built, and will endure a great amount of fatigue. They are also endowed with great courage, and are very skilful in the use of weapons, especially the Parang ilang[9] and spear. This tribe has been found by missionaries to possess

some small amount of religion, inasmuch as they believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, *Batara*, who made this earth and now governs it. They believe, also, in good and evil spirits, who dwell in the jungles and mountains. Sickness, death, and every kind of misfortune, are attributed to the latter, while *Batara* is the accredited author of every blessing.

The land Dyaks are inferior, both morally and physically, to the sea Dyaks. These occupy a portion of the Landu district, with Sarawak proper, Samarahau, and Sadong, and in colour only are similar to the sea Dyaks. The land Dyak is much shorter and weaker in frame, and is also far [61] less skilled in the use of arms. Cowardly, weak, and decimated by sickness, this race had up to the accession of Sir James Brooke in 1840, led a life of slavery and oppression. Since the establishment of the Raja's government, however, their state has greatly improved, although they are even yet a wretched set of people, having none of the nobler instincts or courage characterising their brethren of the sea. The years they have passed in oppression may account for this, as also the continual state of poverty and sickness in which they exist, their villages being seldom entirely free from dysentery or small-pox, while nearly all are more or less afflicted with *korrip*, a loathsome skin disease peculiar to the Dyak. The religion of the land Dyaks consists solely in superstitious observances, and they are given up to the fear of ghosts. Physical evils, such as poverty, sickness, &c., they try to avert by sacrifices, such as the killing of goats, pigs, &c., which they offer to these spirits. Their belief in a future state is that when a man dies he becomes an *autu*, or ghost, and lives in the forests.

Of the other races inhabiting Sarawak, and especially the Rejang district, may be mentioned the Kayans, a powerful tribe living at the head of the Rejang river, and occupying the vast tract of [62] land between it and the territory of the Sultan of Brunei in North Borneo; the Kanowits, who take their name from the stream of that name, which rises in the Batang Lupar Residency, and runs into the Rejang; and the Poonans, Pakatans, Sians, and Ukits, the latter of whom are acknowledged to be the wildest of the human race yet met with in Borneo. Of these tribes, all with the exception of the Ukits are tattooed, unlike the Dyaks, who look upon the practice with contempt, and say that they have no need to disfigure their faces to frighten their enemies. A curious mixture of the Dyak and Malay races are the Milanoes. These occupy the sea-coast and Oya, Muka, and Bintulu rivers. The custom (similar to that of the Indians on the Mosquito shore) of flattening their children's heads is prevalent among them.

We were fortunate enough to choose the right time for our expedition to the Rejang. The gunboat *Aline* was leaving Kuching for Sibu, the residence of the officer in charge of Rejang, in a week's time after our return from Matang, with instructions to him to proceed to Kapit, 200 miles up river in the interior, without delay, as a small wooden fort was being erected at that place, and required supervision. Such an opportunity was not to be lost, and we gladly availed ourselves of [63] the Raja's offer to accompany the expedition.

Such a journey undertaken at our own cost and responsibility would have been next to impossible, for, apart from the danger of travelling among unknown tribes without a guide, we should have lost all the valuable information we were able to obtain from the Resident. Of the Dyak language I had a slight knowledge, but this is practically useless at Kapit and in the interior, the natives around being, both in language and customs, totally unlike Dyaks.

Daybreak on the 16th of June saw us on board the *Aline*, *en route* for Sibu. Arrived at the latter place, we were to leave the *Aline* and proceed in the little launch *Ghita*; for although, as I have said, the Rejang is navigable for large vessels for a distance of over 150 miles, the stream above Kanowit (our first halting-place after Sibu) being very swift, renders it dangerous for ships of any size.

We arrived off the mouth after a pleasant run of seven hours along the coast, and entered the river Rejang, which is here four miles broad. On the right bank stands the little village of Rejang, and lying off it was a large Portuguese sailing vessel, loading "bilian" or iron wood. This is a tedious business. The wood is cut a considerable distance up river and floated down in rafts, an [64] operation which sometimes detains a ship here for three or four months. Deaths are frequent on board these timber ships, as the country for miles round is one dismal mangrove swamp, and very productive of fever. A great quantity of this timber is exported yearly to China direct from Rejang, and it must be a lucrative speculation for the shippers, as the cost is merely a nominal charge of 1 dol. per ton to Government, and it fetches a considerable price in the Chinese market.

We anchored at sundown off Sarikei, a lonely-looking place, twenty miles from the mouth, consisting of four or five tumble-down Malay houses on a mud bank, and starting next day at daybreak reached our destination at ten o'clock a.m.

Sibu is a clean-looking Malay town of some 30,000 inhabitants. All Malays living here are exempt from taxation on condition that they are liable to be called out by Government in the event of any disturbance among the up-river tribes. The Fort and Bazaar stand on an island in the centre of the river, which is here about one and a half miles broad, and are connected with the town on the right bank by a wooden bridge. "Fort Brooke," as it is styled, is built in a pentagon of solid bilian [65] planks, about 12 feet high; a sloping wooden roof reaching down to within 2½ feet of the plank wall. This interval is guarded by a strong trellis-work, so that when the fort door is shut the building is rendered perfectly secure against any *native* attack. The Resident's and fortmen's quarters are reached by a ladder inside the fort about eight feet high, while the ground floor is used as a kitchen, rice-store, &c. Fort Brooke is garrisoned by sixteen Malays, and armed with six nine-pounders. All forts in Sarawak are built of the same materials and on the same model as the

above, excepting that at Kuching, which is of stone, and much larger.

A daring attempt was made by the Katibus tribe eight years since to capture Fort Brooke, but although taken by surprise, the Resident and his handful of men drove them back with great ease, killing eight of their number, and shooting their chief with his own hand. The fort was attacked (as is the invariable Dyak custom) just before daylight, and the enemy were estimated to number about 150.

The Resident, who was not starting for Kapit until seven the following morning, asked us to dine, the evening of our arrival, at his quarters; where we found that, although in the wilds of Borneo, he (an old Garibaldian) managed to make himself uncommonly comfortable. An excellent dinner, [66] washed down by some champagne well cooled in saltpetre, is no mean fare for the jungle, and it was late ere we returned on board the *Aline*, which was lying in mid-stream.

A slight headache the next morning (which warned us that Irish whiskey on the top of champagne is *not* the most wholesome thing to drink in the tropics) was soon dispelled by a cup of hot coffee, and we were on board the *Ghita* by seven o'clock. The Resident was even at that early hour aboard and awaiting us, and the little launch was soon steaming merrily away up river. Kanowit was to be our halt for that night, as the Resident had some business of importance to transact there, and travelling on the Rejang at night is unsafe.

The scenery up the river for some hours after leaving Sibu presents the same flat uninteresting appearance as we had passed from the mouth to Sibu, the landscape being unbroken by hill or habitation of any kind, and newspapers and books that we had brought with us from Kuching, proved in great demand as the journey for the first few hours was sadly monotonous. Towards four o'clock in the afternoon, however, the scenery entirely changed, and books were discarded to look at the really beautiful country we were passing through, the narrowing of the stream to about 500 yards broad, and the swiftness of the stream indicating that we were approaching [67] Kanowit. The powerful current rushed by so rapidly, that the little *Ghita* had hard work to make any headway, and the "snags," or huge pieces of timber, that whirled past us, gave the steersman plenty of work in keeping the launch clear of them. The dense jungle here gave place to green park-like plains, broken by a succession of undulating hills, not unlike Rhine scenery. Several Dyak habitations were now passed, which gave evidence of Kanowits being near, their inmates thronging to the water's edge for a look at the *fire-ship*, a rare and novel sight to them.

At five o'clock we rounded the bend that hid it from our view, and came in sight of the little white fort and village of Kanowit, about a mile distant at the end of the reach we were entering. No sooner had we entered the latter than we were observed by the natives, and could distinguish them, through our glasses, shoving off from the bank in four or five large canoes, and paddling towards us. Their boats are all built flat-bottomed for greater facility in shooting rapids, and were each manned by a crew of ten or twelve men, who presented a curious spectacle—their faces and bodies completely covered with tattooing, their long black locks streaming in the wind, and bright brass ornaments flashing in the sun. As they came alongside us they brandished their [68] paddles and yelled—this being meant as a welcome to the Resident—and, although the *Ghita* was going at full speed, they laid hold of her bulwarks and commenced clambering on board in such numbers that the little launch's deck was soon so crowded as to offer scarcely standing room, and we should have shortly had to beat a retreat to the cabin had not their chief "Jok" arrived, and sent the majority back into their canoes with more force than ceremony.

The Kanowits are a small tribe, numbering about 500, and are quite distinct and totally unlike any other race in Borneo. They have not unpleasant features, are of lighter complexion than the Dyaks, and, though not so warlike, are fine, strongly-built men. Nearly all were tattooed from head to foot with most intricate patterns, and others representing birds, beasts, fishes, &c., while round the face and throat the marks were made in imitation of a beard, an ornament which none of the tribes yet met with in Borneo possess.

Their chief "Jok," who is a well-known character in Sarawak, may be taken as an example of the way in which the rest of the tribe were clothed: a cloth turban of gaudy colours constituted Jok's head-dress, from under which, and down to his waist, streamed his long black hair. Through his [69] ears were thrust, points outwards, a pair of wild boar's tusks, and from the top to the lobe of the ears about a dozen small brass ear-rings were secured. A linen waist-cloth was Jok's only garment, while around his waist was slung the deadly "Parang ilang," its sheath ornamented with tufts of human hair, trophies of the wearer's prowess on the war-path, for Jok's bravery is renowned throughout the Rejang district. Jok was tattooed from head to foot so thickly as to cause his body to look at a distance of a light blue colour, but a very small portion of his face, around the nose and eyes, being left *au naturel*. The remainder of the tribe were unarmed, as it is made a strict rule in Sarawak that on entering a fort or Government gunboat all arms, excepting in the case of a chief, shall be left behind.

Arrived off the village, we cast anchor for the night off the fort, and at the mouth of the Kanowit stream. Kanowit village consists of three long houses, built on wooden posts about 40 feet high. They are so built for the purposes of defence, and it is no uncommon thing in Bornean travel to come across a whole village living under one roof. The longest of these dwellings that I have ever seen was when travelling up the Baram River (North Borneo), in 1873, about 170 miles in the [70] interior. This was a house, 103 yards long, which contained the whole village, consisting of about sixty families.

Fort Emma stands on the opposite side of the river to the village, and is in charge of a sepoy and

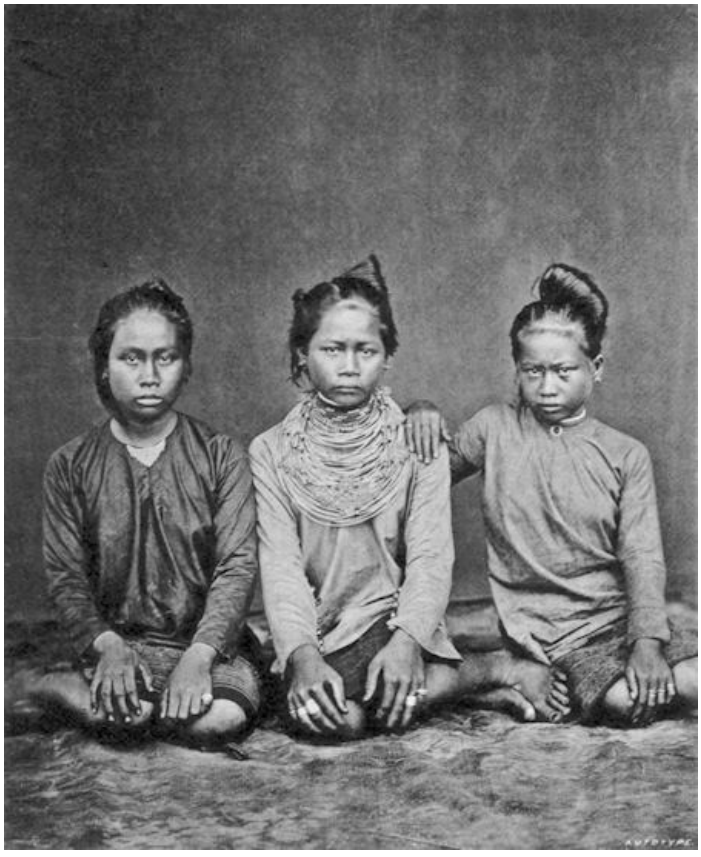
four Malays. It is on a good position, armed with three small guns, and commands the village and entrance to the Kanowit stream. It was on this spot that Messrs. Fox and Steele (then in charge of the station) were brutally murdered by the Kanowits in 1859; but ever since the terrible vengeance that followed, on the part of the Government, the tribe have always been among the firmest allies of the Raja.

We visited Jok's dwelling in the cool of the evening. As all houses belonging to the more civilised indigenous races in Borneo are built on the same principle as Jok's, a description of this will suffice for all.

The houses (as I have said) are built on wooden posts driven firmly into the ground, and ranging from thirty to forty feet high, according to the size of the dwelling. They are entered by a wooden pole, placed in a slanting position, at one end of the building, having notches cut into it to afford firmer foothold. This pole can be drawn into the house on occasion, thus cutting off all communication with the outside. The interior of the house (which in this case was over seventy [71] yards long, by about thirty yards broad) was divided by a thin wooden partition running its entire length and dividing it into two equal portions. On the one side of this partition is the "ruai," or large hall, which is the common dwelling-place of the tribe, and on the other a series of small boxes (for one can call them nothing else) about twelve feet square, which are sacred to the married people. Each of these compartments has a door of its own leading into the "ruai," and these are taxed by Government at 1 dol. a door. Overhead, again, is the "sadow," an upper storey which runs the length of the building, the residence of the unmarried girls, and wherein the valuables of the tribe are kept.

The floorings of these houses are made of split bamboo, which offers but a precarious footing to the unsuspecting traveller, as holes are numerous, and a slip through would precipitate one forty feet below. In front of the house runs a bamboo verandah about twenty feet broad, where domestic operations, such as cooking, padi grinding, &c., are carried on. The roof of dried palm-leaves is a high sloping one, and comes down to within about foot and a half of the floor, throwing the interior of the building into almost total darkness, even in broad daylight.

The Resident's entry was hardly a dignified one, as he had to clamber up the pole and into the [72] building on all fours, drawing his body through the small aperture hardly three feet square, which formed the entry of the house. Once in the "ruai," however, great preparations were made by the inmates for his welcome. Some beautifully-worked mats (in the manufacture of which the Kanowits are very clever) were spread out on the floor, and siri and betel-nut produced; and while the Resident was holding his "Bechara" (or Court business), surrounded by a ring of admiring natives squatted around him, L. and I slipped away with a young Kanowit warrior, who offered to show us round the building.



DYAK WOMEN.

Our guide first pointed with evident pride to the bunch of smoke-dried human heads (thirty in number) that were hanging from a post in the ruai, but hastened to assure us, on our examining

them rather closely, that they were all *old* ones, the Kanowits having a great dread of being suspected of head-hunting. Proceeding along the ruai, we followed our cicerone into one of the little doors at the end, leading into one of the small compartments of the married people, but a pair of bare legs escaping through the side door into the adjoining "box," warned us that the fair occupant was evidently not at home to *us*! Bidding us sit down, however, and await his return, [73] our guide gave chase, and presently came back to us, dragging two females of the tribe with him, notwithstanding their cries and protestations to the contrary.

These women were fair specimens, as we were afterwards informed, of the tribe, and were, like the men, tattooed from head to foot. But for the disgusting habit (which I shall mention anon) of blackening their teeth and disfiguring the lobes of their ears, they would not have been bad-looking. They wore a light brown petticoat of cloth woven by themselves, and reaching from the waist to just above the knee. Their hair was not left to fall loose, but tied tightly into a knot at the back of their heads, very much as it is worn in Europe at the present time. A few brass rings round their waists and arms completed their attire. Strangely enough, the Kanowit women are, as a rule, darker than the men.

They lost their sense of shyness after a time, and at length produced the inevitable siri and penang. At the close of the interview we begged their acceptance of a piece of Bristol bird's-eye each, which they at once put in their mouths and commenced chewing, and we then parted with mutual expressions of goodwill.

We now returned to the Resident and his party. The shouts of laughter proceeding from their [74] corner of the house announced that business was over, and that chaff and fun, so dear to the heart of every Kanowit, was being carried on with great gusto. As we arrived and stood by the group, one of their number (evidently a privileged buffoon) begged to be allowed to speak to the Resident. "You remember that gun, Resident," said he, "you gave me?" (This was an old muzzle-loader for which Mr. H. had had no further use.) "Oh yes," was the reply; "what luck have you had with it?" "Oh, wonderful," said the Kanowit, "I killed fourteen deer with one bullet out of that gun!" "What!" rejoined Mr. H., "fourteen deer with one bullet!—but that is impossible!" "Oh no," replied our friend, "for I cut the bullet out each time!"

Roars of laughter greeted this sally, which had evidently been some time preparing for H.'s benefit; and as we took our departure and crawled down the pole, the scene so forcibly reminded me of "Bones" and "Massa Johnson" at the St. James's Hall that I nearly fell off it from laughing.

As we sat on deck that evening, smoking a cigar in the bright moonlight, we could still hear in the distance the gongs and laughter of the jovial Kanowits celebrating the arrival of the "fire-ship," no common occurrence in these waters.

Footnotes:

[9] A sword (convex and concave) about 2½ feet long, which is made by the Dyaks. The hilt is of ivory or bone, and ornamented with human hair.

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[75]

CHAPTER VI.

Leave Kanowit—Scenery—War Canoes—Arrive at Kapit—Wild Tribes—Kayan Burials—Head Feast—Lat—His Family—Tattooing—The Sumpitan—Kayan and Dyak War Dances—The Kok-goo—The Bock Expedition to Central Borneo—Cannibalism—Return to Kuching.

We enjoyed a good night's rest, for the air was deliciously cool, and the noise made by the stream as it rushed past the sides of the little *Ghita* had a very pleasant and somnolent effect. Mosquito nets were unnecessary, none of these pests existing so far inland; but we were much persecuted during the day by a large red-and-black painted fly, which inflicts a very painful and poisonous bite, and is very numerous on the upper Rejang.

We were up betimes, and at seven o'clock were again under weigh, though making but slow progress against the rapid current. The river, however, widened to nearly a mile in breadth two hours after leaving Kanowit, and we made better way, the mouth of the Katibus stream being passed at mid-day. This, which has evoked the cognomen in Sarawak of the "accursed river," is rightly so called, for it has always been a thorn in the side of the Government, and the tribe [76] (Katibus) living on its banks have given more trouble than any in the country, for although closely allied in manners and customs to the Kanowits, the Katibus are a far braver race, and less easily subdued.

The character of the country around this part of the River Rejang is extremely beautiful, and

presents a pleasing contrast to the flat swampy marshes which line the river below Kanowit. Steep rocky hills here rise abruptly to a great height from the river, the water of which was so clear that the smallest pebble at the bottom could be seen, although we found, on sounding, the water to be nearly forty feet deep. Far away on the horizon we could discern a long range of precipitous, rugged mountains, on the far side of which lay Kapit, our destination.

A large war-canoe was passed a short distance above Katibus, containing forty or fifty men of that tribe. They looked fine hardy fellows, and much broader made than any natives I had yet seen in Borneo, but were of far less pleasing countenance and more ferocious aspect than our friends the Kanowits, scarcely deigning to look at the launch as we passed them, but sweeping along down stream with a scowl on their ill-favoured features.

The bright sunny afternoon wore away rather monotonously, for not a living thing was to be seen, [77]
excepting occasionally a small Dyak habitation, with its small strip of clearing whereon the owners grew their "padi" or rice. At last, as the sun was setting like a ball of fire behind the distant mountains, we heard the faint sound of gongs, which announced that we were approaching Kapit.

The country around us now became wilder, and we entered a gorge, rocky and precipitous, but less wooded than any part of the Rejang we had as yet passed. The river here narrowed considerably, and the navigation became very dangerous, on account of the extreme swiftness of the current, which rushed by at a tremendous pace, carrying large snags, or pieces of timber, with it, a blow from one of which would have sent the little *Ghita* flying. The dreaded "Makun" rapid, in which so many have lost their lives, is not far above Kapit, and greatly increases the dangers of ascending this part of the river.

We now came in sight of a fleet of some 100 huge war canoes, each one containing about forty men, who on our appearance struck up a tremendous row on the gongs and drums, to give the Resident welcome. The sound of these, mingled with the roar of the water as it dashed through the ravine, had a strange and weird effect. These people had been living above Kapit and out of [78]
sight of the Government, eluding taxes, taking heads, and otherwise misbehaving themselves. A Government expedition was formed to remedy this state of affairs, the result being their total defeat, and the order to remove below Kapit—which they had now obeyed.

Having rounded the corner of the next reach, we arrived off the little wooden fort which protects the village of Kapit. The latter, however, can scarcely be called a village, having consisted, till quite recently, of but two large native houses. The tribes around, as I have said, having given great trouble of late years, it was decided to form a Government Station, and to that end a fine wooden fort (which at the time of our visit was but half finished) was commenced.

The country and climate around Kapit are quite different to other parts of Sarawak, the former being mountainous, rocky, and free from jungle, and the latter temperate and cool.

We landed and walked up to the Fort, which is situated in a first-rate position on one of the many hills overlooking the river. Although in a very unfinished state, it contained one room nearly completed, in which we managed to live very comfortably. We had scarcely arrived here half an hour ere our apartment was filled with some of the most extraordinary mortals I have ever [79]
beheld.

A number of tribes exist around Kapit, each of which (with the exception of the wild and homeless Ukit) had its representative here during our visit, for the station being in charge of a Eurasian, or half-caste, the advent of Europeans attracted many to the fort, some of whom had never before seen a white man.

The most powerful and civilised of these tribes are the Kayans, who extend from Rejang far into the dominions of the Sultan of Brunei, and, besides these, the Poonans, Pakatans, and Ukits, but the latter are generally supposed to be the wildest specimens of the human race yet met with in Borneo. This tribe (which is the only one living at the head of Rejang not tattooed) has been occasionally but seldom seen in these regions by Europeans, as they shrink from all intercourse with mankind, and fly at the approach of any but their own race. They are described as being of a much lighter colour than the Poonans, possess no dwellings, and are totally unclothed. The absurd reports of men with tails existing in Borneo may possibly be traced to the fact that these men are frequently likened to monkeys by their more civilised brethren, who look upon them with great contempt, and by whom they are much feared and avoided. [80]

The Kayans, on the other hand, are the finest and most civilised aboriginal race in the island. Their men, who are of a splendid physique and considerably taller than any other tribe in Sarawak, are of a light copper colour. Their dress is nearly identical with the Kanowits, excepting that they wear many more ornaments, but no turbans. Their long, coarse, black hair streamed in some cases far below the waist, and they were not a little proud of this appendage, which was cut square over the forehead. The Kayans were not at all given to joking like the Kanowits, but all wore an appearance of suspicion and distrust on their faces, which even the genial influence of *square face* ("Hollands") failed to banish, but which originated perhaps more from shyness than ill-temper. Their women wore more clothes than any other tribe, being clothed in a long and flowing "sarong," a species of petticoat, reaching from the waist to the feet, and a white linen jacket. They were very ugly, and their teeth stained a jet black.

The mode of burial practised by the Kayans is a curious one, and I here give it in the words of an eye-witness:—

When a man dies, his friends and relatives meet in the "ruai," and take their usual seats. The deceased is then brought up attired in his waistcloth and ornaments, with a straw cigar fixed in his mouth, and, having been placed on the mat in the same manner as when alive, his betel box is set by his side. The friends and relatives then go through the form of conversing with him, and offering the best advice concerning his future proceedings. This palaver over, the corpse is placed in a large wooden box, and kept in the house for several months. At the expiration of this time, the relatives and friends again assemble, and the coffin is taken out and deposited on a high tree. The deceased is repeatedly cautioned during the ceremony to beware that he does not lose his way: "Follow the road," they say, "till it branches off into three directions. Be careful in selecting the centre path, for that to the right will lead you back to Borneo, while the one to the left will take you to the sea." After many similar cautions the assembly breaks up, and the body is left to its fate. [81]

The day after our arrival at Kapit was taken up by the Resident in trying law cases, receiving taxes, &c. L. and I, therefore, secured a canoe, and, accompanied by five Malay sailors from the launch, one of whom was acquainted with the Poonan language, we proceeded up river to a large house occupied by this curious tribe, who inhabit the country between the Rejang and Koti rivers. It may give the reader some idea of the strength of the stream above Kapit when I say that it took our men over two hours to accomplish the distance (three miles) from the Fort to the house. [82]

The landing-place was at length reached, after a tough pull, and at a distance of about 200 yards from it stood the Poonan dwelling. This, which contained about 150 inhabitants, was about 40 yards long, and was built on the same principle as those at Kanowit, excepting that it was on its last legs in point of repair, for many of the posts on which it stood had rotted away and fallen to the ground, a proceeding of which the house appeared likely shortly to follow the example. Noticing an unusually quiet and dejected air about the place, very unusual whenever a visit is paid by a European to a Bornean dwelling, we inquired the reason from our guides, and were informed that a Head Feast had been celebrated there the preceding four days, and that probably the inmates were endeavouring to sleep off the evil effects of their potations, and this we subsequently found to be correct.

These "Head Feasts" are general among the aboriginal tribes throughout the island of Borneo, and are held when a new head has been added to the ghastly trophies of the Dyak's house. They are now, however, rare, as head hunting is punished by death in Sarawak, but on the occasion of an expedition by Government against a hostile tribe, head hunting is permitted to those fighting against the rebels. On the occasion of one of these feasts, the "ruai" is gaily decorated with green boughs, palm leaves, &c., and the heads to be feasted are taken out and hung from one of the posts in the hall. An incessant beating of gongs, drums, &c., is kept up unceasingly for four days and nights, and war-dances performed by the warriors of the tribe. Strong "arrack"[10] is brewed in large quantities from the gornuti palm, and the scene of debauchery that succeeds the first day of the feast is indescribable. Drunken men lie about in all directions, shrieks and yells resound throughout the village, and for four days the whole place is given up to dissipation and riot. A food-offering is made to the heads on the first day, and a piece of rice stuck in their mouths, which gives them a most ghastly appearance, as, when freshly taken, they are smoked over a slow fire until the skin assumes the consistency of leather, and thus preserves to a certain extent the expression, though blackened and disfigured, of the face during lifetime. It was once my fate, in 1873, to be staying at a Dyak house on the Batang Lupar river during one of these entertainments, and I have no wish to repeat the experiment. [83]

This, then, had been the state of affairs at the dwelling we were about to visit. Cautiously clambering up the entrance pole, half the notches in which had rotted away and left but a precarious foothold, we entered the house, the flooring of which stood nearly 30 feet above ground, and within which a sorry spectacle presented itself. Heaps of food, in the shape of rice, pork, &c., lay strewn about the floor, on which also reposed (undisturbed even by the loud barking which the dogs set up on our arrival) the male members of the tribe, some seventy in number. [84]

The overpowering stench arising from stale arrack, &c., was well-nigh sickening, while, to complete the unsavoury *coup a'œil*, a bunch of human heads, their mouths stuffed with rice, grinned at us from the end post of the ruai, whence their owners had not yet sufficiently recovered from their orgies to remove them.

Our Malays succeeded, after some trouble, in waking a young brave who had evidently succumbed to fatigue (and arrack) while performing the war-dance, as he was still in full war costume. He, however, quickly recovered himself, and arousing forty or fifty of his companions, led us off to see the chief or head-man of the tribe. Preceded by these youths, whose unsteady gait and sleepy faces afforded our Malay guides no small amusement, we cautiously crept along the ruai, passing at every ten paces or so enormous holes in the bamboo flooring occasioned by rot, and a fall through which would have precipitated us into the mud and filth thirty feet below. [85]

The chief, rejoicing in the name of "Lat," was a fine-looking old man about sixty, tattooed to the eyes, and with long grey hairs streaming down below his waist. He wore a dirty waistcloth which had once been white, his only adornment being a short red flannel jacket, fastened with three old buttons of the 34th Regiment of the time of George III.; how they ever got there is, and ever has been, a mystery to me.

"Lat" was sitting or rather lying in a three-sided wooden box or alcove, about ten feet square, built upon the centre of the ruai. This is invariably the dwelling-place of a head-man of a house

throughout this tribe, and with the exception of Europeans no one may enter it.

We had evidently called at an inauspicious moment, for Lat seemed rather annoyed at being disturbed from his "siesta," and, to judge from his looks, had been having a high time of it during the feast. Shaking hands with him, an operation which he performed half unconsciously, we took our departure and left this merry old gentleman to his slumbers.

[86] Our guides now showed the way into one of the smaller rooms leading out of the ruai, and occupied by Mrs. Lat and her two fair daughters. We found these (unlike the Kayans) tattooed over the face as well as body, and each wore the short skirt of the Kanowit. These were the fairest natives I ever saw in Borneo, being of a light yellow complexion, not unlike the Chinese. Their jet-black hair was unsecured and allowed to fall in profusion down their backs, while their arms were ornamented with brass rings and bright-coloured beads. From the neck to the waist they wore a succession of brass rings which formed a species of cuirass. These when once put on are never taken off again. Had it not been for the practice of elongating the ear-lobes and staining and filing the teeth, these women would not have been bad-looking. The former operation is performed by introducing at an early age a light metal earring followed by heavier ones as the wearer gets older, until the lobe of the ear touches the shoulder; in fact, I afterwards saw an old Poonan dame who could introduce her hand into the aperture, with the greatest ease, and whose earrings weighed 1 lb. each.

The teeth, as I have said, are stained black, and filed into the shape of a V, in some cases a hole being bored through the front ones and a piece of brass knocked in; this being considered an additional adornment.

[87] The atmosphere of the apartment in which Mrs. Lat resided rapidly became rather oppressive, there being about ten people in the room, which was about fourteen feet square, and we were not sorry, therefore, to take our leave and return to the ruai. The ladies, too, were not in the best of tempers, especially Mrs. L., who was evidently much put out at the goings on of her better half during the past three days.

On re-seating ourselves in the ruai, L. happened to notice the intricate and really beautiful tattooing on the body of one of the younger men. The latter seeing this, asked us through our interpreter if we should care to be operated upon in a similar manner—this being considered a great honour to a guest; and no sooner had we accepted the offer than an old woman made her appearance armed with the necessary implements, and with the aid of a pair of very blunt needles, and a peculiar species of dye obtained from a tree, succeeded, after a good hour's work, in embellishing us—L. with a ring on each shoulder (the sign manual of the tribe), and myself with a bird, whose genus it would puzzle most naturalists to determine, but which was popularly supposed among the Poonans to represent a hornbill, on the arm. Strange to say neither L.'s [88] punctures nor mine showed the slightest signs of inflammation afterwards, and the figures are far more distinct than they would be had Indian ink or gunpowder been employed.

On leaving the house we noticed several blow-pipes, a hollow tube eight feet long called by the Poonans "sumpitan," the chief weapon of this tribe, and in the manufacture of which they greatly excel. The darts used are about five inches long, and are dipped in upas juice. The slightest scratch from one of these, drawing blood, proves fatal in less than half an hour unless at once attended to; the only remedy being to keep the patient awake by walking him up and down, and dosing him with brandy or whiskey. Should he once give way to the feeling of drowsiness he sleeps never to wake again.

We were entertained one evening during our stay at Kapit by a war-dance of Kayans on the terrace outside the fort. A large crowd of some 200 from the canoes down river had assembled to witness the dancing, and the bright moonlight and flaring torches shedding an uncertain light over their dark faces and barbaric dress and ornaments, presented a picture not readily forgotten.

[89] A ring being formed, two of the best dancers of the Kayans tribe stepped into the enclosure, each dressed in full war costume. This consists of a long jacket of leopard skin, which covers alone the back of the wearer, and comes down to his knees. This is secured round the neck by a huge shell, and is covered from top to bottom with the black and white feathers of the rhinoceros hornbill loosely attached to it, and which flapping about with every movement of the wearer, gives him the appearance of some huge bird. In addition to this cloak is worn the waist-cloth, and a tight-fitting skull-cap of monkey skin, with three enormous hornbill feathers stuck upright in it, completes the costume. Armed, in addition to his spear, with Parang ilang and shield (the latter ornamented with tufts of human hair), the Kayan brave is ready for the war-path.

The Kayan war-dance is not danced (as is the Dyak) to a lively measure of gongs and drums, a wind instrument being used constructed out of a gourd and three short pieces of bamboo. This is called a *Kaluri*, and although possessing but five separate notes in a minor key, the tone is not unmusical, though very melancholy. The dance itself has a history, the first part representing two warriors meeting on the war-path. An exciting combat then ensues in which one is killed, and the survivor is indulging in a solitary *pas de joie*, when he suddenly discovers that he has by mistake killed his brother. He is giving way to violent paroxysms of grief, when his relative, who had been [90] only severely wounded, suddenly rises, and a triumphant *pas de deux* brings the pantomime to a close. This performance lasted nearly half an hour, and judging from the exertions of the dancers it must be terribly fatiguing, for although a cool evening the perspiration fairly poured off their bodies, and they fell exhausted on the ground at the close of the performance.

Another dance succeeded this one, performed by two boys, apparently each about thirteen years old, who went through it with surprising grace. Although using full-sized Parangs and shields, they whirled them round their heads with the greatest ease, for dancing, like paddling, deer-snaring, and the use of the Parang ilang, are part of the Kayan education.

A week passed pleasantly at Kapit, for each day brought us fresh objects of interest. For the first two or three nights at the fort, however, our sleep was much disturbed by what we imagined to be a dog barking outside the fort. Thinking that one of the pariahs from the adjoining houses had taken up his quarters there, I sat up for him one night with a gun. At midnight, his usual hour, the noise recommenced, but what was my surprise to find that it proceeded not from under the fort, but from the rafters above, and that the intruder was a large brown lizard about a foot long, which emits a sound quite as loud, and exactly like the barking of a dog. It is called by the [91] Poonans the *Kok-Goo*, and as its advent in any house is considered to be an especial piece of good fortune, we left it to continue its nocturnal barkings in peace.

We left Kapit the end of the week, and nine days after reached Kuching, not sorry to be amongst civilised comforts again.

The Rejang river is at last in a fair way of becoming an important one, and the tribes living along its banks are gradually getting to understand that trade is preferable to head hunting, for, within the last fifteen months, but one case has occurred in the Residency. I chanced on my return to Kuching to come across a number of the *Illustrated London News* containing a letter from a Danish gentleman, Mr. Carl Bock, in which he announced his having been among a race in Borneo called the Poonans, and went on to observe that he was the only European who had ever seen this tribe, or had intercourse with them. This error I hastened to correct, and wrote to the *Illustrated London News*, explaining that the tribe visited by Mr. Bock and ourselves was identical, also venturing to express a doubt as to the existence of cannibalism amongst them, the reports of which Mr. Bock believed in. While at Kapit I made frequent inquiries through an [92] interpreter concerning this practice, but my questions as to its existence were invariably met with an indignant denial.

My letter the *Illustrated* was good enough to take notice of, and it appeared in that journal on September 4th, 1880. I may add that cannibalism, although known to exist in Sumatra, and supposed to be prevalent in New Guinea, has ever been doubted by competent judges to exist in the island of Borneo.

Footnotes:

[10] "Native brandy."

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[93]

CHAPTER VII.

Sport in Borneo—The Orang-Utan—His Habits—Start for Sadong—A Rough Journey—Sadong—The Fort and Village—L. Capsized—The Mines—Our Cook—The Abang—Start for Mias Ground—Our Hunt for Orang—Lost in the Forest—Leave for Sadong—An Uncomfortable Night—Small-Pox—Manangs—A Dyak Don Juan—Return to Kuching.

Sport, in the general acceptance of the term, is scarce indeed in Sarawak, and those persons meditating a voyage to Borneo for the purpose of obtaining it, should think twice ere they venture, for, apart from the scarcity of animals, walking is rendered well-nigh impossible by the swamp and dense undergrowth which exists, with but few exceptions, throughout the island.

None of the larger carnivora—such as lion, tiger, &c.—have as yet been found in Borneo, but wild cattle and a small species of elephant are said to exist on the large grass plains around Brunei in North Borneo, the only part of the island entirely free from jungle. The animal tribe, then, is reduced to the following:—Orang-utan, tiger cat, wild pig, deer, and snipe; the pretty "plandok" [94] or mouse-deer, and honey-bears, being also occasionally met with.

Although the aforesaid animals are known to exist in the island, they are extremely hard to get near, and the discomfort of lying out in the jungle all night, eaten up by mosquitoes and other abominations, is scarcely repaid by the chance of a shot at a deer or a pig, which is even then but seldom obtained. The natives, however, are very clever at deer-snaring, and their sporting expeditions are generally attended with success; but the hardships undergone by them on these excursions would completely knock up a European constitution. A few remarks as to the orang-utan, or wild man of the woods, which, as I have said, is the largest wild beast found in Borneo, may not be here amiss, as this chapter is to be devoted to an expedition made by L. and myself in quest of these strange creatures.

The "orang-utan" (a word derived from the Malay, *orang*, man; and *utan*, woods) is the sole wild animal of any size yet met with in Borneo. He is found only in certain districts of the island, those in Sarawak being Sadong and Lingga (the former of which we were about to visit), it is supposed on account of the enormous quantity of wild fruits produced in these regions. Lingga, in particular, is famed for the "Durian," a sort of bread-fruit, of which he is very fond. The outside of [95] this fruit is covered with thick, sharp spikes, and when hotly pursued the orang will sometimes make use of it as an article of defence, flinging it on to the heads of his pursuers below. The "Durian" is very heavy, and natives have been known to die from the effects of a blow from this fruit.

Unlike his African brother the gorilla, the orang is seldom of a savage disposition, and will always rather avoid than molest the intruder on his privacy. Nevertheless, at close quarters his enormous reach of arm and strength render him a dangerous antagonist, and brave indeed is the Dyak who will attack him single-handed. Did he know his gigantic strength (which, fortunately, he does not), he would make short work of his natural enemy—man.

The "orang-utan" rarely descends to *terra firma*, but moves slowly from tree to tree, the density of the branches rendering this comparatively easy, and is easily kept up with by the hunter, as this strange animal never essays to get away altogether, even when severely wounded. He does not seem to realise the danger of his situation, and were it not for this, it would be quite useless to attempt to follow him, the swamps which have to be traversed rendering anything like rapid progress quite impossible.

Reports as to the size of the orang greatly differ, but the one shot by Mr. Wallace at Sadong [96] (Sarawak) some years since, is generally considered to be the largest specimen yet obtained. This measured four feet two inches high. Stories are told by natives of the orang-utan seizing and carrying away young Dyak girls to their dens in the forests. This was, I believe, authenticated in one instance, the woman returning to her tribe after a lapse of three months.

The orang when wounded utters a cry wonderfully like a child in pain, and indeed all his actions and ways closely resemble those of a human being; so much so indeed that a story is told of a former worthy Bishop of Sarawak, being, while in quest of orangs, so reminded by the features of one of them of a certain old uncle at home, that he had not the heart to fire, but let his prey pursue his way unmolested!

Our preparations were complete about ten days after our return to Kapit, and it was on a raw, drizzling day that we paddled down the Kuching river with the morning tide in a sampan or native boat (pulled by a crew of six natives), that we had hired for the occasion from a Chinaman in the capital. More than half our journey had to be accomplished by sea, which, as it was blowing half a gale, and looking at the capabilities of our cranky old craft (christened *Sri Laut*, or [97] *Beauty of the Sea*, by her proud owner), was not a pleasant prospect. Ere we had been half an hour afloat we were wet through with the rain, which beat through the old palm awning as if it had been note-paper. This state of things, with a journey of over ten hours before us, was not cheering; but, as I have said before, Bornean travel is not all *couleur de rose*, so, covering ourselves with a tarpaulin, and lighting our pipes, we prepared to make the best of it—no easy task in the space allotted to us—a space five feet long by three feet wide, and the rain coming in on us in torrents all the time!

We arrived off the village of Moratabas, at the mouth of the Sarawak river, at mid-day, after a hard paddle. Matters here did not mend, for the wind had risen since we started, and the roar of the breakers on the shore recalled Kuching, and the comforts we had left behind us, most vividly to our minds. After, however, a short consultation with our steersman (who acted as skipper), we determined to push on for Sadong at once, and hoisting the old rag that did duty for a sail we stood out to sea.

Seldom have I experienced such a journey as on that day. Once outside the bar, our troubles recommenced, for while crossing it a heavy sea dashed over our bows, drenching everything on [98] board, and at the same time carrying away our awning. For eight mortal hours did we struggle on, shivering like half-drowned rats, and occasionally taking a turn at the paddles to keep life within us. Cooking was naturally out of the question, and our only food that day consisted of a captain's biscuit, some bottled beer, and a tin of preserved plum pudding! Our progress through the water was not made the more rapid by the fact that two of our crew had to be kept constantly at work baling the water out of the wretched old tub, whose creaks and groans were dismal to hear, and which, as we neared the mouth of the Sadong river, seemed to be coming to pieces altogether.

But the longest lane must have a turning, and by 10 p.m. we were entering the mouth of Sadong, and half an hour afterwards were in smooth water; and heartily thankful we felt, for the *Sri* must have assuredly gone to pieces with another hour of it. Midnight saw us scrambling, stiff and numbed, up the muddy "batang" or pole that formed the landing-place of the fort, and we were not sorry to take off our saturated clothes, and, after a stiff glass of grog apiece, to tumble into the two little camp bedsteads, that, with the exception of a table and two chairs, formed the sole furniture of the fort.

Morning broke bright and sunny, and we were up by six, feeling none the worse, save a slight [99] stiffness, for our exertions of yesterday. While breakfast was preparing I strolled round the pretty little garden, rich in roses and gardenias, that encircled the fort, and whose sweet perfume filled the air, cool and fresh after the heavy rain, for many yards around.

This residency, the smallest in Sarawak, is now in charge of a Eurasian, or half-caste. Up till two years since, however, it was under the supervision of a European resident, and to the latter was due the trim-looking garden with its gravel walks and gardenia hedges—now, alas, fast falling into decay in the care of the half-caste, who, like most of his race, cares but little for anything but filthy lucre. The village of Sadong consists of a Malay population of about 400 souls, and is situated on the banks of the Simunjan, a tributary of the Sadong river, which meets it at this point. Coal is found in large quantities near here, and Government has opened out a small mine for the use of its vessels and those of the Borneo Company. The coal wharf is situated about half a mile up the Simunjan stream, whence a tramway, three miles long, leads up to the shaft from the landing-place. The coal is conveyed to Kuching weekly, in a small sailing vessel.

We visited the mines the day after our arrival, paddling up stream in two small Malay canoes to [100]
the wharf—a paddle that proved disastrous to L., who was capsized when close to the landing-stage. The tide was running strong, and, as L. could not swim, things for a moment looked serious; but help was at hand, in the shape of an old Malay fisherman in a canoe moored mid-stream, who pulled him out, none the worse for his ducking. Our walk through the jungle was very picturesque, the forest being alive with butterflies of every description, including the *Brookeana*, a beautifully-marked green-and-black butterfly, but rarely met with. It was along this tramway that Mr. Wallace shot the orang-utan mentioned in an earlier part of this chapter.

The Sadong mines are superintended by a European overseer, who lives in a small hut on the side of the mountain, and who showed us over the place. He told us that the amount turned out per diem was only ten tons, but the working of the whole place is still in a very primitive state. The tramway was constructed of wooden rails, and the coal cars drawn by an old grey pony. In the hands of a properly organised company the mines would undoubtedly pay, as there is any quantity of coal, and the facilities for shipping are great. Moreover Singapore, which is the coaling station for all vessels bound to and from China, is but two days distant by steamer. [101]

We remained at Sadong for two days, during which time we were principally engaged in getting our guns in order, after the rough usage they had experienced during our sea voyage in the *Sri Laut*; and arranged to leave for the Mias district, 30 miles up stream, the third day after our arrival at Sadong. The half-caste resident gave us the loan of his cook (a Kling), and a most undeniable hand at a curry, to accompany us, and he proved a treasure in his way, though as a *compagnon de voyage* he was hardly a pleasant adjunct to our party, as the reader will presently see.

I should not omit to mention an important character, who was constantly appearing on the scene during our sojourn at Sadong. This was the *Abang* or Malay chief of the village. This worthy constantly dogged our footsteps, and followed us wherever we went, invariably making his appearance at breakfast and dinner time, and squatting himself on the floor by L.'s or my side, gravely watched us throughout the meal. He was a thin, cadaverous-looking old man, about sixty years of age, with a most melancholy cast of features, so much so that we christened him the "Skeleton at the Feast!" As I am but little conversant with high-class Malay, and L. knew none, [102]
our conversation was somewhat limited, and while I fully acted up to the old Turkish proverb that "Silence is golden," he, in his turn, did so to that of "Hurry is the devil's," for he never would leave us till we had finished our last glass of grog, and turned in for the night.

The sun was scarcely up on the morning of the 13th of July when we were up and stirring, and by 6.30 were on board the *Sri*, and, casting off from the shore, paddled away up stream. Our crew now had an addition of two new hands: the cook aforesaid, and a Dyak who accompanied us as guide, and who had the reputation of having killed with his own hand a greater number of orangs than any native in Sarawak.

Four hours above Sadong the stream narrows to about twenty feet in width, and the scenery here is truly beautiful. Tall Nipa palms and a species of bamboo grew out of the water, while above us the long branches of enormous forest trees stretched over us on either side, and formed a kind of natural archway, their branches alive with monkeys of every description, from the hideous proboscis to the pretty wa-wa, whose cry exactly resembles the running of water from a narrow-necked bottle. We emerged from this lovely glade half an hour after entering it, and, the stream again widening, the scenery again became flat and monotonous. We reached the hunting-grounds [103]
at about five p.m., after a hard pull against the stream, and mooring the *Sri* to the bank made all snug for the night.

We landed, or I should rather say left the boat, next morning about eleven a.m., for of dry land, excepting a dismal mangrove swamp extending far away on either side of us, there was none. Our shooting costumes were more light than elegant, consisting as they did of a pair of white duck trowsers, a thin jersey, no socks, a pair of white canvas shoes, and a sun helmet, the latter filled with cartridges. Struggling ashore with some difficulty, we found ourselves without further ado up to our waists in swamp, or rather a substance the colour of but considerably thicker than pea-soup. Bakar (the Dyak hunter) and a Malay boatman preceded us with parangs to clear the way of branches before us, and, all being ready, we set off.

I shall not readily forget the pleasures of that day's walk! For three long hours did we struggle on through the dense jungle, without a sight of living animal, to say nothing of an orang. To make matters worse, the sun was fearfully hot, and beat down on our heads with a force that the dozen or so of cartridges we carried in our "topics," did not tend to alleviate; the smell also of decayed vegetation arising from the ground was well-nigh sickening.

We cried a halt after three hours of this, and discovered from Bakar that we had gone a distance probably of about a mile and a half since we started, which will give the reader some idea of jungle walking in Borneo. Our dismal faces at this species of sport(!) must have excited the compassion of Bakar, for he volunteered the remark that this *was* rather hard walking, even for Borneo, a remark with which we cordially agreed. [104]

Up till now we had seen no vestige of living creature, bird or animal. On my observing this, our guide replied: "Oh, never mind! We've eight hours before sundown. We must get on. Time is precious!"

Mentally registering a vow that I would see Bakar in a considerably hotter climate than the inhabitants even of Borneo are accustomed to, if even two hours of this work more saw me at it, we started off again.

Another hour passed away, and well-nigh done up, I was about to suggest a retreat to the boat when we were brought up all standing by a cry from Bakar of "Moniet, Tuan!" and an injunction to keep perfectly still.

RIVER SCENERY NEAR SADONG.

"Moniet"[11] there might be, but I could discern nothing until, after a few moments of intense excitement as to whether the "moniet" was but a common proboscis or wa-wa, Bakar came splashing back through the dirty water, and, seizing my shoulder, breathlessly exclaimed, "Moniet besar, Tuan! orang-utan!" [105]

Hurrah then! At last we had got near one of these brutes, and our troubles had not all been in vain. But the next thing was to get a sight of him, and this, through the dense undergrowth and brushwood which intervened, was by no means an easy task. For some time did I gaze through the thick network of green leaves, till, at last, following the direction in which our guide was pointing, I dimly made out a square patch of brown against the green leaves, and, trusting to chance, fired. The spot I had aimed at was not the orang, but the report of the rifle had the desired effect of dislodging the brute from his hiding-place, and bringing him full into view. A fine, strapping fellow he seemed as he remained stationary for some seconds, looking down at us with a puzzled expression, as if he scarcely knew whether to greet us as enemies or as strange specimens of his own species. L. now cut short his reflections with a bullet, which this time had more effect, as was evinced by the sharp cry he gave as he sprang into the branches of the adjoining tree, closely observing all our movements as we waded through the stagnant water [106] beneath him, and took up a favourable position for our next shot. This was again successful, breaking his left fore-arm. Moving slowly on after him, for at least three-quarters of an hour, we fired shot after shot with variable success, until a bullet from L.'s rifle caught him full in the neck, and brought him crashing through the branches to our feet.

On measuring him, we found him but a moderate-sized animal, standing three feet seven inches from the top of the skull to the tip of the toes. This seemed a poor return after the amount of labour we had gone through; however, "experientia docet," and we determined that this should be our last attempt at orang shooting, and, hoisting our prize on to the shoulders of the faithful Bakar, we set out to regain the sampan. This, however, proved no easy task. The erratic movements of our guide shortly after leaving the spot where we had shot the Mias had attracted

our attention, and the reason of this was shortly evident—he had lost his way! Here was a pretty predicament to be placed in, and a pleasant ending to our day's sport. All the stories I had ever heard of natives going astray in the forest, and dying of starvation, crowded into my mind with unpleasant clearness, and among all the horrible deaths connected with Eastern travel that had occurred to L. and myself, that of expiring like two amateur babes in the wood had not been included. [107]

I shall never forget the anxieties of that terrible hour, and the blank faces of our guides as they waded backwards and forwards in search of the lost trail, pausing ever and anon to give a sort of melancholy wail, not unlike the Australian "co-o-o-ey," the cry of the Dyak when lost in the forest. L. and I had almost given up all hope, and were preparing to make up our minds to a night at least in the jungle, when a cry from Bakar, who had strayed away to the left of us, attracted our attention. He had struck upon the river! We were now safe, and fortunately so, for it was nearly dark as, turning a bend of the stream, we came in sight of our fires and the lamp of our little craft shining over the water. Having arrived on board, we divested ourselves of our now filthy clothes and plunged into the stream, when, after a good rub with our rough towels, we felt ourselves again, and quite ready to do justice to the very excellent curry that our "cordon bleu" of a Kling had prepared for us.

The task of skinning the orang was next day relegated to Bakar, for which we were thankful, as the smell that proceeded from his carcase even at some distance off was fearful. This operation over, he was stowed away in a barrel of arrack that we had brought for the purpose, and we may dismiss him with the remark that he now adorns the smoking-room of a friend of the writer's in England. [108]

A suggestion of another hunt the following day by Bakar was politely but firmly declined, and we left early the following afternoon at five—our anchorage being in a very feverish locality. The halt for the night was to be at a large Dyak house, fifteen miles down stream, and half way to Sadong.

I would remark, for the benefit of sportsmen in general, that the whole of the two days spent in this interesting locality we were unable to leave the boat, owing to the swampy nature of the ground; and as our only recreation consisted of two of Whyte Melville's works, "The Gladiators" and "Digby Grand" (the latter with half the leaves torn out), the weary hours, as may be imagined, did *not* fly, and we were not sorry to set off the next day for the Dyak Pangkalan,[12] on as wet, dreary, and uncomfortable an afternoon as it has ever been my lot to experience in Borneo or elsewhere.

We sighted lights on the left bank about eleven o'clock the same evening. Rain was still falling in torrents; but the noise of gongs and drums in the distance announced that we had nearly arrived at the end of our journey. To land, however, was easier said than done; for the stream, swollen by the heavy rains, was running at a terrific rate, and carried us right past the landing-stage ere our bowman could hold on and make fast, crashing us into a large war-canoe moored just beyond, the property of the "Orang Kaya," or head-man of the house whither we were bound. We at length succeeded, after a deal of trouble, in securing the sampan to the bank; and, despatching two of our boatmen to announce our arrival to the chief, awaited the invitation which would probably be brought back to stay the night, this being strict etiquette in Bornean travel. During the absence of our two messengers the yells and beating of gongs proceeding from the house, which stood at a distance of about 300 yards from the landing-place, proclaimed that a feast of some sort was being held; and we were debating what substitutes for tobacco and gin (our supply of which we had nearly exhausted) we could present our hosts with, when our men returned. There was no feast, said they. What we heard were the cries of the "manangs," or medicine-men, whose mode this was of driving away the evil spirit of "char-char," or small-pox, which had attacked nearly a third of the inmates of the dwelling. L. and I, on hearing this, promptly deciding that mosquito bites were preferable to small-pox, determined not to land, but to sleep in the boat. Our cook, the Kling, who up till this had maintained a stolid silence, now became quite excited, and joined in the conversation. There was hardly a house on the river, said he, entirely free from this loathsome disease; the Dyaks were flying from it in all directions, and added that he himself was not sorry to be returning to Sadong, as two of his own children were very ill with it, and he ought not by rights to have left them! [109] [110]

This was pleasant, to say the least of it, but it was now too late to mend matters, and wrapping ourselves in our rugs we essayed to sleep. The howling and beating of gongs in the house, however, rendering this quite impossible, the inevitable "square-face" was therefore produced, and, lighting our pipes, we made up our minds for a thoroughly wretched night—and got it; till about six a.m., when the noise ceased, and the M.D.'s, I conclude, retired to that rest which they must have sorely needed, to say nothing of their unfortunate patients!

Small-pox is and has ever been a disease greatly dreaded by the aborigines of Borneo, for living as they do in crowded and ill-ventilated dwellings, this terrible scourge, whenever it breaks out amongst them, commits great ravages. A regular panic ensues on the appearance of the epidemic; those seized being left to their fate, with perhaps a bundle of firewood and gourd of cold water placed within their reach, while their more fortunate companions take their flight up or down the river as the case may be, spreading infection wherever they go. It is not surprising, therefore, that so few recover, although vaccination, which is now compulsory in Sarawak, has greatly decreased the number of those attacked. [111]

The "manangs," or medicine-men aforementioned, are a queer race of creatures. Although of the male sex, they are dressed as women, living in the Sadow and possessing all the privileges of the

other sex. Small-pox is never mentioned by its proper name of "char-char" by the Dyaks, but always spoken of as "he," "she," or "it;" for they imagine the mere mention of its name may attract, and bring it amongst them.

An amusing anecdote is told of an old Dyak living in the house we were moored off that dismal night. This old man (of some 60 years) became enamoured, while on a visit to Kuching, of an English lady's-maid residing there; so much so, that he repeatedly urged her to marry and accompany him to his jungle home. This offer was declined with thanks; but on the morning of the day of the departure of this merry old gentleman for his country residence, the lady missed her chignon, which she had placed on her dressing-table the night before on retiring to rest. Not [112]
being possessed of so much hair as she might have been, this was no inconsiderable loss. Six months later, when the event was nearly forgotten, an officer up the Simunjan, noticing what looked like a scalp on our old friend's girdle, and knowing that the Dyaks never take them, examined the object more closely; and, having heard the story of its abstraction from the lady's apartment by the elderly lover, took it from him and returned with it in triumph to Kuching! Such true love was worthy of a better cause, for the lady was considerably more annoyed than flattered by the incident, chignons not being an article kept in stock by the native *coiffeurs* of Kuching.

We reached Sadong late the following evening, and partook of a frugal meal at the fort, this time not prepared by our native Soyer, one of whose children had died in our absence. The old chief was at our side ere we had eaten our first mouthful, silent as ever; but dinner over, and his cheroot well under way, he became more loquacious than we had yet known him.

"Perhaps," said he, dreamily, "you had better not stay here longer than you can help. Small-pox is raging in the kampong (village); there is scarcely a house free from it, and it would be a sad thing if one or both of the Tuans [13] were to die here."

We were much of the same opinion, and the evening of the next day but one saw us again on [113]
board the little *Sri*, bound for Kuching.

The sun was setting behind the distant Klinkang mountains as we left Sadong, illuminating the landscape around us with its declining rays. Scarcely a breath of wind was stirring, and our little sail flapped lazily to and fro against the slender mast as we drifted slowly down the river. The evening being sultry and oppressive, dense grey mists were already arising from the Simunjan stream, enshrouding the pretty village in their sickly vapours, and the cries of the Malay "Hajis," praying at the setting of the sun for deliverance from the fatal scourge which was rapidly decimating their population, sounded in melancholy cadence over the water, while the booming of gongs from distant Dyak houses lent to their voices a weird and appropriate accompaniment. All around seemed to wear a depressed and melancholy aspect, even to the very palm-trees, which, drooping their fronds in the damp, hot atmosphere, seemed to be mourning the fate of those who had perished in this plague-stricken spot.

We reached Kuching the next day, not greatly impressed with the sport to be obtained in Borneo, nor will, I imagine, be the reader of the foregoing chapter.

Footnotes:

[11] "Moniet," monkey.

[12] Landing-place.

[13] A title by which every European is addressed.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Preparations for Departure—Leave Sarawak—A Squall—A Dutch Dinner—Batavia—Weltereoden—Life in Java—Buitenzorg—Koerapan—Dutch Soldiers—A Review—Modes of Execution in the Archipelago—The World-Wide Circus—Return to Singapore—Leave for Europe—Gibraltar.

Our days were now numbered in Sarawak, and we had but little time before us, as we intended making a journey to Java, the principal Dutch possession in the Eastern Archipelago, ere we returned to England.

Packing up now became the order of the day. The skins of beasts and birds of all kinds strewed the floor of our little bungalow, transforming it into a sort of miniature museum, for we had made a very fair collection considering our short stay in the country, including no less than one hundred different specimens of butterflies, three of the rare and lovely *Brookeana* amongst them.

It may be of use to collectors of the latter to know that the safest and most convenient way of carrying them any distance is not to set them up when freshly caught, but to simply fold the wings back till they lie flat against each other, and place them thus singly in a common envelope. [115] They will then keep for six months, or even more, unimpaired. This is a far simpler method than that of setting-up, which, even though the amateur be experienced in the art, is always open to the danger of the butterflies becoming detached and shaking to pieces in their box.

We left Kuching at midday on the 21st of July, after bidding adieu to all our friends, not without regret at leaving a land where we had passed so many pleasant days. The *Raja Brooke* (a small trading steamer of about 300 tons) was heavily laden, not only with cargo, but also with over 100 deck passengers—Malays going on a "Haji pilgrimage" to Mecca. There was also on board an old Hindoo, the proprietor of a dancing bear, who had been making a good thing of it in the Sarawak capital. The captain, L., and I, were the only inmates of the saloon, and after dinner, it being a fine evening, we sent for our Hindoo friend and his bear to give us a private performance—which had, however, to be suddenly nipped in the bud, the pilgrims insisting on coming aft *en masse* and joining in the fun.

We had a fine passage to Singapore, though half-way across a heavy squall struck us, and the sea, which half an hour before had been as smooth as glass, rose rapidly. The poor bear, [116] especially, had a rough time of it, and narrowly escaped being washed overboard by one of the green seas which we shipped over the bows. The *Raja Brooke*, however, behaved uncommonly well throughout, and by sundown there was nothing left of the turmoil but a long, heavy swell, which, judging from the groans we heard forward, was playing the very deuce with the internal economy of the pilgrims! We reached Singapore in forty-nine hours, notwithstanding the storm and adverse wind—a wonderfully quick run.

We accepted an invitation from the Dutch Consul to dinner the evening before our departure for Batavia, as we were anxious to obtain as much information as possible about Java; and the dinner being given in honour of the officers of a Dutch man-of-war then lying in the roads, we thought this a first-rate opportunity, but were doomed to disappointment. On our arrival "schnapps" before the feast had evidently been too much for them, and ere dinner was over they were all—to use a mild expression—overcome.

We left them at midnight to go on board our steamer, embracing each other and singing "Die Wacht am Rhein" at the top of their voice—a performance hardly appreciated, I should imagine, by the occupants of the adjoining bungalows.

On arrival at the wharf, which our gharry driver had no little difficulty in finding in the darkness, [117] we were much disappointed to find that the Messagéries vessel had broken down, and that a small Dutch steamer, belonging to the Nederland Indische Stoomship Co., was to be her substitute for that voyage, and still more disgusted were we when shown into a stuffy little cabin containing three bunks, in one of which a fat Dutchman had already retired to rest, the other two being L.'s and my resting-place. We made the best of a bad job, however, and turned in, but not for long; certain animals, which shall be nameless, had already taken up their quarters in the berths, and resented our intrusion with such good effect that they drove us out of the little cabin and on deck, where, the weather being fine, we slept on the skylight the three remaining nights we stayed on board.

The days went by very wearily, for there was literally nothing to do on board; the passengers were all Dutch, speaking no English, and very little French; the *cuisine* on board was composed principally of grease, and what smelt like train-oil, add to this that the highest rate of speed ever attained by the *Minister Frausen von der Putte* was seven knots an hour, and I think the reader will agree with me that our journey across was anything but a pleasant one. We were not sorry, [118] therefore, when at daybreak on the 31st of July the long low coast of Java came in sight, and shortly afterwards the lighthouse standing at the entrance of the canal leading up to the old town of Batavia. We anchored in the bay at nine o'clock, and awaited the arrival of the little tug which was to convey us to the custom-house, and which we could now see issuing from the mouth of the canal.

It may not be generally known that the Dutch possess nearly the whole of the Eastern Archipelago, with the exception of north and south-western Borneo. Java is, however, their most important colony, and Batavia they have christened the "Paris of the East," though I must acknowledge I have heard none but Dutchmen call it so.

The tug was alongside by ten o'clock, and we were soon aboard and entering the double sea wall which forms the canal. We passed on our right the large lighthouse which has proved so fatal a residence to Europeans, no less than five died within six months of its completion, and it has been found necessary to place Javanese in charge ever since, so unhealthy is the situation. Arrived at the custom-house we passed our boxes with some little trouble, and selecting a "kahar," or species of carriage like a victoria, drawn by two ponies, we drove off to the Pension Nederlanden, to which hotel we had been recommended by our naval friends at Singapore. [119]

The lower part of the town, or, as it is called, Old Batavia, consists entirely of warehouses, go-downs, and native houses. No Europeans can live here, so unhealthy is it, nor can even one night be passed in this quarter with impunity. The upper town—which is named Weltereoden, "well content"—consists of Government House and the houses of all the officials and merchants in Batavia. Most of these houses are situated around the "Kœnig's Plein," a large grass plain some 1,000 yards in circumference, which in the time of the English occupation was used as a

racecourse. On one side of this stands the governor's palace, a large stone building of modern architecture, while on the other side of the plain is a statue of the Netherland lion. The inscription on this amused me not a little, as it commemorates the victory of the Belgians over the French at Waterloo, the British troops not being mentioned.

There are two ways of reaching Weltereoden from Old Batavia, by railway and tramcar. Where are there not tramcars now? Even the stately streets of Stamboul are not free from them. The street cab of Batavia is a "dos-à-dos" literally so called, as the passenger sits with his back to the driver's, thus forming a mutual support.

Batavia is intersected by canals, the largest or main canal running alongside the road leading [120] from the lower town to Weltereoden. As we drove along we saw hundreds of natives taking their morning dip in the dirty stream; though, as a matter of fact, they have no fixed time for their ablutions, but bathe at all hours of the day and night.

We reached the "Nederlanden" after half an hour's drive. As all European houses in Java are built on the same principle, a description of our hotel may serve for all. The Nederlanden was built entirely on the ground floor, and having long wings which projected back for some 60 or 70 yards. In these wings are the bed-rooms of guests, while the centre building contains the drawing-room, dining-room, and sleeping apartments of the host and hostess. Under the verandah of the front portico stands a large round marble table, surrounded by about a dozen rocking-chairs. Here the men of the house congregate before dinner and breakfast for "Peyt," a villainous compound which is drunk with gin, and is supposed to stimulate the appetite.

The food and cooking in Java may be said to be the worst, as are its hotels the dearest, in the world; and it seems surprising that the mode of living adopted by the Dutch in this trying climate [121] does not injure their constitutions more than it does. The following may be taken as a specimen of the manner in which they live:—

Breakfast, from 6 till 9, consisting of sardines, Bologna sausages, eggs, and cheese(!). 12.30: *Déjeunner a la fourchette*, a truly disgusting meal, its Dutch name being *Ryst tafel*, literally "Rice meal." Rice is here the chief ingredient, accompanied by soup, fried fish, pork, pickled eggs, sardines, and various kinds of sambals—also little seasoned messes, handed round with the boiled rice, which is eaten at the same time and off the same plate as all these condiments; a tough, underdone beefsteak and fried potatoes follow. Dinner is precisely the same, with the addition of sweets and dessert. And this from day to day invariably forms the Dutchman's *menu* in Java.

Smoking is carried on throughout dinner and breakfast, which I was not sorry for, as it counteracted in some degree the smell arising from the abominable *Ryst tafel*.

The voracity of some of the European children during this meal at the Nederlanden was surprising, and I fairly trembled for the safety of one small boy, about eight years old, who appeared to swell visibly during breakfast, and took a short nap between each course. We christened him "The Fat Boy in 'Pickwick.'"

The morning costume of the European lady in Java is apt to take a stranger by surprise. It [122] consists of the Malay "sarong," a loose clinging silk skirt which reaches to the ankles, the upper garment being the "Kabarga," a long embroidered white linen jacket. The hair is worn loose, and the bare feet are thrust into half slippers embroidered with real gold and silver beads. This dress is worn from early morning till five o'clock in the afternoon, the Batavia calling hour. This costume has one great advantage, that of coolness, and would doubtless look becoming on a pretty woman, though as that article is very seldom, if ever, seen in Java, we had no opportunity of judging.

We were leaving for Buitenzorg (the country seat of Government) the day after our arrival at Batavia, and our preparations for the journey thither being complete, we took a stroll the evening of our arrival on the Kœnig's Plein. This, the Hyde Park of Batavia, is where the beauty and fashion of the capital take the air in the cool of the day.

Some of the carriages were not badly turned out, but we only saw *one* man riding (ladies never ride in Batavia), his nether-man encased in long jack-boots, and wearing a sombrero hat, and green hunting-coat! The effect of this get-up was somewhat marred by his mount—a Deli pony so small that it took the rider all his time to keep his feet from dragging along the ground. [123]

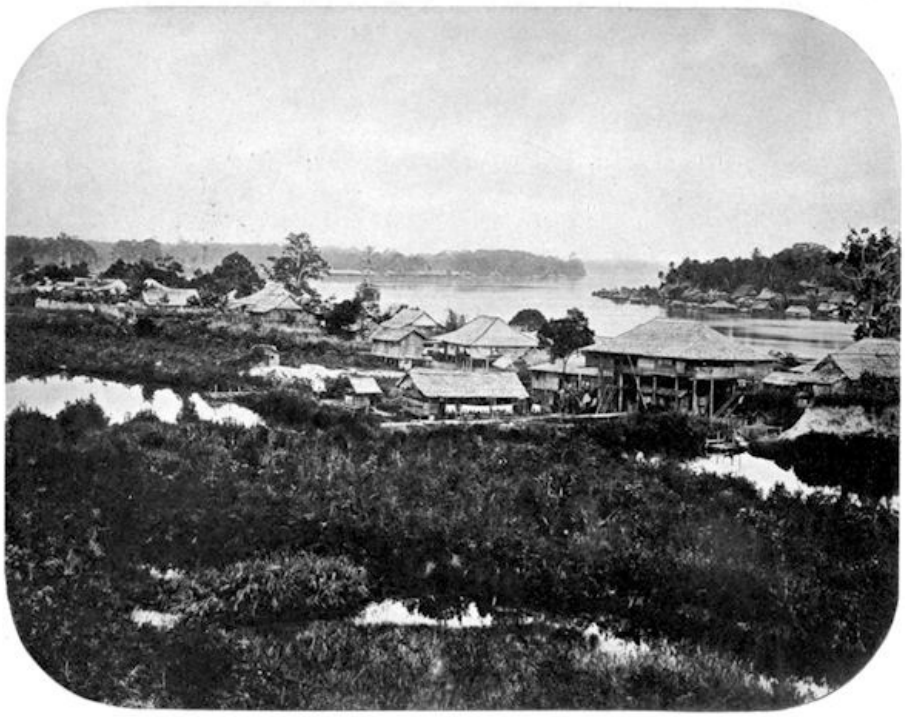
We left the next day at 11.30 a.m., by train, for Buitenzorg. This is thirty-five miles from Batavia, and stands 750 feet higher up in the hills. The Governor's house here is a fine stone building, surrounded by a splendid park and grounds, and many of the merchants in the capital also own villas around. It is not unlike a German watering-place in aspect, and has been named by some "the Simla of the Dutch Indies," though I should say this comparison was rather far-fetched.

The volcanic mountain of Gedéh, and the peak of Pangerango are plainly discernible from Buitenzorg, and a journey to the summit of the former is amply repaid by the splendid view thence obtained of the rich Preanger district. We paid a visit while here to the house of Mr. D., who has resided in Java for thirty years, and who owns a large estate (Koerapan) some eighteen miles out of Buitenzorg. He told us that coffee, tea, and rice were growing on the estate, and he was about to try cinchona (quinine). The latter is the most paying of all, and the soil and climate of Java are peculiarly adapted to its growth.

We made several excursions in addition to this while at Buitenzorg, but none worthy of record. In truth a more uninteresting country than this part of the island I have seldom seen, and, as L. remarked, very few weeks of Buitenzorg would fill Hanwell! [124]

One incident, however, I should not omit to mention: a grand review of the troops was held during our stay here, in the Palace Park, and having obtained cards, we were admitted to view the proceedings. I was not impressed with the Javanese army, for a more wretched, undersized-looking set of men it has seldom been my lot to witness. It is not to be wondered at, after seeing them, that Atchin has held out so long, and unless a great reform takes place in the Dutch colonial army, it will probably continue to do so.

Europeans and natives are alike indiscriminately mixed up in their ranks, and it is no uncommon sight to see a Malay sergeant in command of a European guard. Their uniform did not tend to improve their personal appearance, consisting as it did of a thick blue cloth-tunic, with long skirts, a French kepi, blue trousers, and bare feet. Considering this absurd dress, it is not to be wondered at that sunstroke is frequent among the European privates, most of whom are escaped French communists.



TOWN OF SINTANG.

(DUTCH BORNEO.)

The garrison at Buitenzorg consisted of 800 men, but of these only about 600 were on parade the remainder being in hospital. I afterwards ascertained from the doctor in charge of this building that, thanks to fever, drink, and sunstroke, it was seldom empty, and that the death-rate amongst the European soldiers was exceedingly high. [125]

We watched them going through their (so-called) drill for over an hour, and even in that short time three were carried off the field in a fainting condition.

On our return to the hotel we passed a criminal being taken to the railway station *en route* for Batavia, where he was to be executed on the morrow. Unlike Borneo and other islands of the Archipelago, hanging is had recourse to in Java, and in Java alone, the mode of execution elsewhere being by kris. The following is an account of a Malay execution in the words of an eye-witness:—"The criminal is led to the place of execution, and squats cross-legged on the ground, chewing penang or smoking, as a rule, up till the very last moment. The kris used on such occasions is about sixteen inches long by two broad, and quite straight. Grasping this weapon in both hands, the executioner steps up behind the prisoner, and thrusts it up to the hilt between the left shoulder-blade and neck of the victim. The heart is pierced immediately, and the criminal dies at once painlessly." In Celebes, however, the mode of execution is far more barbarous. It is [126] done in the same manner as the above, with the difference that the executioner takes two hours and sometimes three before he gives the final *coup de grace*. Advancing and returning from his victim, sometimes just drawing blood, until the poor wretch faints from fright, and is brought to with cold water, only to re-undergo fresh sufferings, until at length the heart is reached, and death puts an end to his tortures.

We returned to Batavia in a week, heartily sick of Buitenzorg and all its surroundings. The Nederlanden was in a perfect uproar when we arrived, for Mr. Wilson's World-Wide Circus had just come from India for a stay of two months in Batavia, and nearly every available bed-room

had been taken by them. We succeeded, however, in obtaining a shake-down, and attended the performance (a remarkably good one) on the Kœnig's Plein the same evening, after a very festive dinner at *table d'hote* with the troupe.

I have given but a very slight sketch of Java, as we saw so little of the island, and our stay there was so limited; nor had we the slightest desire to prolong it.

We reached Singapore on the 21st of July, and sailed for Europe on the 24th in the Messageries S.S. *Amazone*—a splendid vessel, nearly the size of the *Sindh*, and quite equal to her in all other respects. [127]

Staying a few days in Egypt, we thence embarked on board the P. and O. S.S. *Australia* for Gibraltar. L. left me at the latter place, returning direct to Southampton, while I arranged to proceed through Spain and *viâ* Paris, home.

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[128]

CHAPTER IX.

Cadiz Custom-House Officers—Spanish Courtship—Marketplace—Leave for Seville—Jerez de la Frontera—Seville—Pilate's House—Las Delicias—Triana—Madrid—Bull Fighting—"Espadas"—A Bull Fight—Frascuelo—Cruelty to Horses—Leave for Paris—A Stormy Passage—Home Again—Adieu.

I left for Cadiz by the small trading steamer *James Haynes* three days after my arrival at Gibraltar. A friend of mine being quartered here, I stayed with him at the barracks, fortunately for myself, as the Gibraltar hotels leave much to be desired in the way of accommodation.

On the approach from seaward Cadiz, with its flat roofs and high towers, presents more the appearance of a Moorish town than a European city, and the afternoon I saw it appeared to fully justify its Spanish appellation of "Pearl of the Sea," white and glittering in the bright afternoon sunshine, in striking contrast to the dark blue colour of the sea surrounding it.

I arrived at four o'clock the afternoon of my departure from Gibraltar, and drove to the Fonda de Cadiz, in the Plaza San Antonio, after considerable annoyance from the custom-house officers, who, although I had nothing contraband about me, seemed determined to make themselves as rude and unpleasant as possible, and appeared to be only second to the Turkish and Egyptian *donaniers*, as far as robbery and extortion are concerned. [129]

I took a stroll after dinner to the Plaza Nina, the favourite lounge of Cadiz in the cool of the evening. The square was crowded with people of all classes; and the beauty of the women throughout Spain, and especially Seville and Cadiz, is very striking, although the picturesque costume with which one is apt to associate the Spanish lady is fast dying out. Black seemed to be the favourite colour, as it always has been in Spain, but the graceful mantilla is gradually but surely giving way to the Parisian bonnet.

The streets of Cadiz are well paved, and the houses substantially built of white stone. I was much struck at first by the heavy iron bars with which the windows of the ground floors in this, as in all other Spanish towns, are guarded. These, I subsequently ascertained, are for the double purpose of excluding thieves and too ardent lovers(!), for it may not be generally known that when a youth in Spain is paying his addresses to a girl, the doors of her parents' house are closed to him; nor is this all, for all intercourse with his *novia*, or intended, is forbidden excepting through these gratings! [130]

A visit to Cadiz cathedral, "La Vieja," is well repaid, and I was lucky enough to hear a mass sung there. The interior of the building is very beautiful, although a high altar erected by Queen Isabella in 1866 greatly mars the effect, being in very florid style and bad taste. There were no seats at all in the building, the congregation kneeling and sitting upon the bare flags.

The market at Cadiz is a novel and picturesque sight, its stalls laden with every imaginable kind of fruit—grapes, pears, peaches, apricots, and even bananas—in abundance and at absurdly cheap prices.

I was much struck, throughout Spain, with the appearance of the Spanish soldiery. They all, with but few exceptions, looked smart and well set up, and their uniforms looked clean, and *fitted* them—an uncommon sight on the Continent.

My bill on leaving for Seville surprised me not a little—a good bed-room, excellent dinner and breakfast, including wine and omnibus to the station—about 8s. 6d. in English money! Would that some hotel-keepers I could mention would act on the same principle!

Railway travelling in Spain is cheap, though very slow, and the carriages exceedingly comfortable. [131]

The intending voyager to Spain would, however, do well to learn the etiquettes of the country

before going there, for they are manifold, and their non-observance may sometimes be taken as an insult by the sensitive Spaniard. The latter have an almost ridiculously keen sense of personal dignity, even to the very beggars, who consider themselves *caballeros* (gentlemen), and expect to be treated as such, as indeed they *are* by their own countrymen. It is also a good rule in Spain, to bear in mind when much pressed for time, that Spaniards hate being hurried, and that the slightest attempt to do so will probably delay you all the longer.

The five hours' journey from Cadiz to Seville is through vast sandy plains, not unlike parts of Roumania, excepting in the neighbourhood of Jeres de la Frontera. Here are large vineyards, in the midst of which stand pretty red-roofed villas, the properties of the owners of the vines, which formed pleasant relief to the eye after the glaring dusty plains left behind us, but to which we return on clearing the outskirts of Jerez.[14] Seville is reached at about eight p.m., and we drive to the Fonda de Cuatro Naciones, in the Plaza Nueva, having been recommended thither by a [132] communicative fellow-passenger.

I stayed two days in Seville, and could willingly have remained longer, had I not been pressed, for it is a truly delightful city. Its houses are built very much in the modern French style, but there are also many old Moorish dwellings, with their open courtyards and fountains. One well worth seeing is the Casa de Pilatos, an exact model of Pilate's house at Jerusalem, and built by Enriquez de Ribiera to commemorate his visit there in 1533. Of public gardens Seville has many, the prettiest of these being Las Delicias, a walk stretching for nearly a mile along the banks of the river Gudalquivir, and planted with orange-trees, pomegranates, palms, roses, and all kinds of rare plants. This is the Champs Elysées of Seville, and when lit up at night, with innumerable coloured lamps, bears no slight resemblance to them. Triana, a transpontine suburb, is worth a visit *in the daytime*, as it is the residence of gipsies, smugglers, lower order of bull-fighters, and thieves. In December, 1876, it was nearly destroyed by the floods, and Seville was under water for five days, the water reaching to the cathedral doors.

I arrived in Madrid on the morning of Sunday, October 3rd, after a wretchedly cold night journey from Seville, and the jumps and bounds taken by the carriage I was in put sleep out of the [133] question. On driving through the streets to the hotel, I noticed that every available wall was placarded with the announcement of a bull-fight to come off on that afternoon, and determined, if possible, to secure a seat. This, after breakfast, I managed to do, though only a second-class one, all "*boletiere de sombra*" or seats in the shade, being already let; the consequence being that at the end of the performance most of the skin had peeled off my face.

Bull-fighting in Spain, at the present time, is very much akin to what racing is in England, the espadas (or matadors) being held very much in the same esteem as our popular jockeys by the public: and the photograph of the champion, at the time of my visit (Frascuelo), was to be seen figuring in most of the photograph shops of Madrid and Seville, the latter town being considered the best academy for the aspiring bullfighter. The Spanish bull-fighters have risen considerably in the social scale during the past century, for they were formerly denied the burial rite. A priest is now, however, in attendance at every fight to give absolution in the event of a fatal accident. The fights are very expensive affairs, costing from £400 to £500 each, and in most towns are only occasionally held, although in Madrid they take place every Sunday throughout the season, which [134] lasts from April to October. Most of the bulls selected are bred at Utrera, in Andalusia, about twenty miles from Seville, and are splendid animals. All are not, however, fit for the ring, the more ferocious ones only being selected. The Plaza is usually under the superintendence of a society of nobles and gentlemen, called Maestanzas, the king being styled "Hermano Major," or elder brother of the Guild.

The bull-fighters themselves are of four grades: the espada or matador, the picadores, chulos, and banderilleros. The first named, who are at the head of the profession, engage in the last single combat with the bull, while the others are employed to annoy and harass him into as wild a state of frenzy as possible.

The fight I attended was graced by the presence of the King and Queen Isabella (not the young Queen, who rarely attends these performances), and the immense building was crowded to excess. It is about two miles out of Seville, comparatively new (the old one having been burnt down in 1875), and built of red and white brick in the Moorish style, with horse-shoe windows, and is capable of accommodating 17,000 persons. The ring is, as in a circus, covered with sand, a wooden barrier about five feet high running round it, separated from the front row of spectators [135] by a narrow passage four feet broad, wherein the chulos or others (except the espada, who must never leave the arena) vault when hard pressed by the bull. The whole of the building is of course open to the sky.

The bills of the performance ran as follows:—

"Plaza de Toros, de Madrid.

"*El Domingo, 3 de Octobre, de 1880.*

"Se lidiaran siete Toros los seis primeros de la Antigua y a creditada ganaderia de Don Manuel Bannelos y Salcedo, vecino de Columiar Viejo, con divisa azul turqui, y'el setimo de la de D. Donato Palonimo vecino de chozas de la Sierra, con diviza amarilla."

Then followed the names of espadas (one of whom was the celebrated Frascuelo), picadores, chulos, &c.

A flourish of trumpets now sounded, and announced the arrival of the king and queen, which was the signal for the immediate clearing of the arena and commencement of the performance by the quadrilla, or procession of bull-fighters. These entering at the end of the building opposite, advanced to the front of the royal box and bowed. The espadas (three in number) looked particularly graceful, and were most gorgeously dressed in green, violet, and light blue satin, covered with gold lace; all wore the national Spanish dress—jacket, short breeches, and silk [136] stockings, their hair being twisted up in a knot behind, and secured in a silk net. At the end of the procession came two picadores, mounted on two sorry steeds, who looked only fit for the knacker, as indeed they were. Their riders wore broad-brimmed grey felt hats and had their legs encased in iron and leather, to withstand the bull's horns. Each was armed with a *garrocha*, or spear, the blade of which, however, is only about an inch long, as the picadores are not allowed to kill the bull, but merely to irritate and goad him. They are subject to narrow squeaks sometimes, and few have a sound rib left, owing to the fearful falls they get, when the bull sometimes tosses both man and horse in the air. As I have said, the horses are fit for little else than the knacker, and as such are the excuse for most unmeasured cruelties, as the reader will see anon. The poor brutes' eyes are bound round with white cloths, or they would probably refuse to face the bull. If merely wounded, the gap is sewn up, and stuffed with tow, and I saw one poor brute who was desperately gored in the first encounter, go through three succeeding fights with blood pouring from wounds in his side, until a more furious charge, and plunge of the bull's horns put an end to his misery. The procession over, there was a breathless pause while the chulos got into position, and this being finished, and everything ready, the doors of his prison were opened, [137] and the bull trotted out. He had evidently been well goaded in his cell before being released, as was evinced by the suppressed roars he gave as he caught sight of the chulos. The first act of the drama now commences, and the chulos pursue him round the arena with their red cloths, showing the while most wonderful grace and activity. The bull invariably charges at the *cloth*, and not the man; sometimes, however, making a frantic rush at both, when the chulos vaults over the barrier, so closely pressed as to give one the idea of his being lifted over by the bull's horns. This was carried on for about five minutes, when another trumpet sounded, and the picadores entered, mounted on the poor brutes (a brown and a grey) already mentioned.

The bandage having slipped off from over the grey horse's eyes, it was hastily readjusted, and only just in time, for the bull, as soon as ever he caught sight of the horses, made straight for the grey. Maddened by the shouts of the people and the cloaks of the "chulos," his charge was not a light one, and he buried his horns deep in the poor brute's flank, the picador meanwhile scooping a large piece of flesh out of his back with his garrocha. Maddened and exasperated, he then made for the brown, this time fortunately missing him, only, however, to reserve the poor beast [138] for a worse fate. Another furious charge now unhorsed the picador, at which the chulos leaped into the ring, and distracted the bull's attention with their red cloths while the fallen picador scrambled over the barrier into safety, a feat which his heavy accoutrements rendered by no means easy.

The trumpets now sounded for the approach of the banderilleros, while the horses were led away out of sight, to be patched up for the succeeding engagement; a quantity of sand was thrown over the blood stains, which were pretty numerous throughout the arena. The banderilleros were three in number, and smart, dapper, little fellows, beautifully dressed in light blue satin and gold. Each was armed with the *banderillo*, small barbed darts, about a foot long, ornamented with coloured paper. Their duty is to go straight up to the bull, facing him, and as soon as he stoops his head to charge them, stick their barbs, one on each side of his neck, and slip aside. This seemed to be the most graceful feat of the day, and one requiring nearly as much nerve as that of the "espada," whose arrival a final flourish of trumpets now announced.

The espada, or man of death, now stands *alone* with his victim, and having bowed to the royal [139] box, he throws his *montero*, or cap, among the audience, and swears to do his duty. In his right hand is the long Toledan blade *la espada*, while in his left he holds the *muleta*, or small red flag about a foot square, which is his weapon of defence, and on the skill of using which his safety depends. The now maddened bull's first tactic was to charge furiously at the red flag, which the espada held at arm's length, and so wonderfully skilled was Frascuelo that he never moved an inch, while the animal rushed by him beneath his arm. Gradually decoying him along the edge of the ring with the *muleta*, Frascuelo paused in front of the royal box with his victim, and played him for a while, preparing in the meantime to give him the *coup de grâce*. This is done when the bull is preparing for the final charge; the espada meeting him with his sword, plunges it hilt deep, just at the back of the head, and severing the dorsal column. The bull is now stationary for a few seconds, hardly knowing what to make of it, the espada holding up his hand to enjoin silence, till at length the brute sways slowly from side to side, and falls down dead, amid the jeers and applause of the populace, while the victorious espada withdraws, and wipes his sword, and walks slowly round the ring, the spectators throwing him cigars, packets of cigarettes, and—this last a great honour—their hats, a compliment he returns by throwing them back again. If, [140] however, the espada is long in despatching the bull, or in the slightest degree "shows the white feather," he is grossly insulted, and empty bottles, orange-peel, cigar stumps, &c. are thrown at him till he leaves the Plaza. Frascuelo's performance was, however, apparently all that could be desired, and a team of fourteen mules, gaily caparisoned with bells and flags, now entered, and dragged away the carcase of the dead bull at full gallop—the fight having occupied a little over twenty minutes.

The arena was now raked over, and put in order, preparatory to the arrival of the second bull, Florido, who evidently did not care about the game at all. Disregarding all the attempts of the

chulos to harass him, he repeatedly charged at the barrier, and endeavoured to clear it and get out of their way. The picadores tried him with no further success, until a waving of handkerchiefs was seen among the audience. This is the sign for the *banderillos del fuego* to be applied. These are barbs made with crackers, which go off with a loud report as soon as they are stuck in the bull's shoulder. But even this last resource failed to rouse Florido, who was ignominiously despatched by a cacheterro, and dragged out of the ring to the strains of "Nicholas" (in derision) by the band! [141]

But if this performance had been a tame one, the succeeding one fully made up for it. Carbonero, the bull who now made his appearance, was evidently not to be trifled with. Galloping into the arena, he made short work of the chulos, who soon decamped to make way for the picadores, mounted on the wretched brown aforementioned and another poor brute in place of the grey already butchered. Carbonero lost no time, and, making his rush suddenly, rolled the brown horse and his rider over and over, repeatedly goring the wretched brute with his long horns (the picador having made his escape over the barrier). In vain did the chulos try to get the bull to leave his prey; in vain did the second picador seek to divert his attention; all was useless, until, at length, with a maddened effort, the wretched horse staggered up and galloped wildly round the ring, *treading on its own entrails*, and closely pursued by the bull! The poor brute was caught at length and despatched by the cacheterro. "Banderilleros" were dispensed with on this occasion, so rabid had the bull become, and Frascuelo, after a ten minutes' encounter, succeeded in killing him, amid shouts that might have been heard at Madrid, two miles off, and applauded by none more vociferously than those occupying the royal box. [142]

There were five more bulls to be killed, but the last performance had sickened me of bull-fighting and everything connected with it, and I left the Plaza wondering that such things are allowed to exist in a civilised country! [15]

I left Madrid the following day for Paris, breaking the journey at Bordeaux, and after two days spent in the gay city, am once more on the Chemin de Fer du Nord, *en route* for Calais. A stormy passage across (which makes us feel considerably queerer than we have in all our travels on sea), and we enter the tidal express, which seems to fairly tear along, after the crawlers we have left abroad. Two hours more, and we are at Charing Cross, scarcely realising that we are really home again until the window is opened and a good gust of "home-made" London fog enters, convincing us that there is no mistake about it.

And here—after a journey of over 20,000 miles, during which I trust the reader has not tired of and forsaken me—I must say, Adieu.

Footnotes:

[14] Pronounced "Herez."

[15] A Bill was brought before the Cortes in 1878 for the abolition of bull-fights in Spain, but nothing has since been heard about it.

Transcriber's Notes:

Inconsistencies in the hyphenation of words preserved. (mid-day, midday; waist-cloth, waistcloth; ear-rings, earrings; sand-flies, sandflies)

Table of Contents, Chapter VIII, "Bintenzorg" changed to "Buitenzorg".

Table of Contents, Chapter VIII, "Roerapan" is presumed to be "Koerapan" as the latter is used in the main text twice. Changed to "Koerapan".

Footnote 7, duplicated word "was" removed. (since this was written)

Pg. 35, figures show the revenue of Sarawak for 1871 and 1877-78 in dollars while the increase during the period is given in pounds sterling. One or other of the units of currency used is incorrect as otherwise (using the exchange rate of 5 dollars to 1 pound given in Footnote 2) the arithmetic would be wrong. The author either intended all the figures in to be in dollars or all to be in pounds but it is unclear which, hence the original text is preserved.

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