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Author: Henriette McDougall

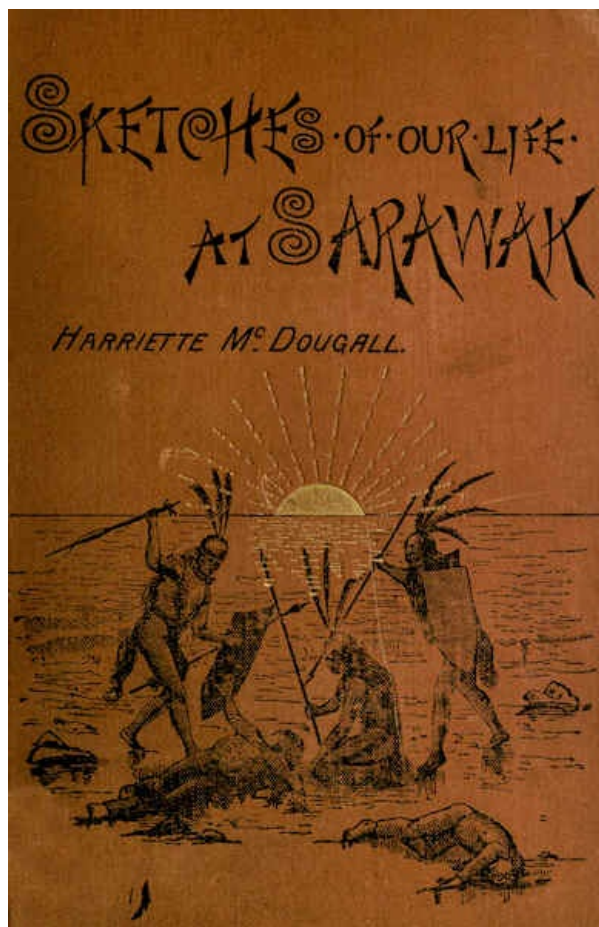
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HAPPILY HE HAD A STOUT WALKING-STICK, AND
AT ONCE FELLED THE REPTILE.

Frontispiece.

Page 26.

SKETCHES
OF
OUR LIFE AT SARAWAK

BY
HARRIETTE McDOUGALL.

WITH MAP.

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CONTENTS.

PART I.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY	7
II. THE COURT-HOUSE	13
III. COLLEGE HILL	21
IV. PIRATES	32
V. THE CHURCH AND THE SCHOOL	45
VI. THE GIRLS	58
VII. THE LUNDUS	68
VIII. A BOAT JOURNEY	82
IX. CONTINUATION OF THE TRIP TO REJANG	92

PART II.

X. RETURN TO SARAWAK	105
XI. CHINESE INSURRECTION	120
XII. CHINESE INSURRECTION (<i>Continued</i>)	139
XIII. EVENTS OF 1857	157
XIV. THE MALAY PLOT	174

PART III.

XV. THE CHILDREN'S CHAPTER	189
XVI. ILLANUN PIRATES	204
XVII. A MALAY WEDDING	215
XVIII. LAST YEARS AT SARAWAK	228
XIX. THE ISLAND OF BORNEO	239



PART I.

[View larger image](#)



London: Published by The Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge.



SKETCHES OF OUR LIFE AT SARAWAK.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Nearly thirty years ago I published a little book of "Letters from Sarawak, addressed to a Child." This book is now out of print, and, on looking it over with a view to republication, I think it will be better to extend the story over the twenty years that Sarawak was our home, which will give some idea of the gradual progress of the mission.

This progress was often unavoidably impeded by the struggles of the infant State; for war drowns the voice of the missionary, and though the Sarawak Government always discouraged the Dyak practice of taking the heads of their enemies, still it could not at once be checked, and every expedition against lawless tribes, however righteous in its object, excited the old superstitions of those wild people. When their warriors returned from an expedition, the women of the tribe met them with dance and song, receiving the heads they brought with ancient ceremonies—"fondling the heads," as it was called; and for months afterwards keeping up, by frequent feasts, in which these heads were the chief attraction, the heathen customs which it was the object of the missionary to discourage. [8]

I dare say, when we first settled at Sarawak, we thought that twenty years would plant Christian communities, and build Christian churches all over the country: but it is as well that we cannot overlook the future; and perhaps, considering the many difficulties which arose from time to time, from the missionaries themselves, and the unsettled country in which they laboured, we ought not to expect more results than have appeared. At any rate we have much to be thankful for, and as every year makes Sarawak a more important State, consolidates its Government, and extends civilization to its subjects, we may look for more success for the missionaries, who can now point to the peace and prosperity of the people, and say, "This is the fruit of Christianity and Christian rulers."

In giving a short account of our life in Borneo, I shall avoid alike all political questions, or, as much as possible, individual histories among the English community. It is already so long ago since we lived in that lovely place, that events, trials, joys, and the usual vicissitudes of life, are wrapt in that mellowing haze of the past, which, while it dims the vividness of feeling, throws a robe of charity over all, and perhaps causes actors and actions to assume a more true proportion to one another than when we walked amongst them. I have, however, not depended on memory alone for the records of twenty years, but have journals and letters to refer to, which my friends in England have been good enough to keep for me. Some parts of "Letters from Sarawak" I shall incorporate into the present little book, for as it treats of the first six years we lived there, and was written at that time, it is sure to be tolerably correct. [9]

In those days, from 1847 to 1853, Sir James Brooke was very popular in England. The story of his first occupation of Sarawak, published in his journals, and the cruizes of her Majesty's ships in those eastern seas—the *Dido* and the *Samarang*—were read with avidity, and furnished the English public with a romance which had all the charm of novelty. However difficult and inconvenient it might be for the English Government to recognize a native State under an English rajah, who was at the same time a subject of the Queen of Great Britain, this question had not then arisen; and all classes, high and low, could applaud a brave and noble man, who had stepped out of the beaten track to spend his fortune and expose his life in the cause of savages. There were many fluctuations of sympathy and opinion in after years towards Sir James Brooke; but, through evil report and good report, through difficulty and danger, Sarawak has still advanced, and is as worthy of the interest of the best and wisest of mankind as it was in 1847. At this time, indeed, it seems to me to furnish a lesson in the management of native races which might be useful in our own colonies. English governors always set out with good intentions towards the natives of savage countries, but how is it that war almost always follows their occupation? Surely it is because the settlers go there, not in the interest of the native race, but their own, and the two interests are sure to clash in the long-run. [10]

It requires great patience and forbearance to educate natives up to a rule of justice and righteous laws; but that it may be done, and carry the co-operation of the people themselves, is evident at Sarawak, where the Malays and Dyaks are associated in the Government, and have always stood by their English rajah, even when it was necessary to punish or exile some of their own chiefs. I am aware that an English colony cannot be governed in this way; nevertheless, the spectacle of wild natives, rising by the influence of a few good Englishmen from lawless misrule to a settled government, where vice is punished without partiality, is very beautiful to philanthropists, and makes one think better of human nature and its capabilities. I wish I could portray the hilly and thorny road by which this has been attained! It would, methinks, create a new interest in Sarawak, if the past and the present could be fairly set before the discerning world; we should again hear of missionaries longing to help in the improvement of people who have shown themselves so open to good influences. I have said that I would not touch upon politics, but Church and State are so naturally bound together in the task of civilization, that it is difficult to relate the history of the mission without mentioning the Government. Of course they do not stand in the same relation to one another in a Mahometan country, where the English Church is but a tolerated sect, as they do in a Christian land; still the Christian Church strengthens the Christian ruler, and he in his turn protects the Church by good government, although he may not favour it except by individual preference. For my own part, I have always thought it an advantage to our Dyak Christians that no favour was shown them on account of their faith; at any rate, it was for [11]

no worldly interest that they became Christians.

Although our life in Sarawak extended over a period of twenty years, it might naturally be divided into three parts—of six, five, and six years respectively, the intervals being spent in visits to England. These visits, although absolutely necessary, were a drawback to the mission work. When the head of a family is absent, the responsibility is apt to fall upon the younger members, and is sometimes too much for them. However, they always did their best, and always welcomed us home most warmly. It was a joyful sight, on our return, to find the missionaries and school-children waiting for us at the wharf below our houses, the children's dear little faces glad with smiles, and a warm welcome for any baby we brought home. The second time, it was our daughter Mab; and in 1862, our last baby, Mildred,—Mab, Edith, and Herbert being left in England, for no English child can thrive in that unchangeable climate after it is six years old.

[12]

The first chapters of this little book will describe the first six years of our stay at Sarawak; but, in speaking of subjects of interest, I shall not stop short at the end of those years, but carry on the subject to the end of our Sarawak experience. It is perhaps necessary to say this to prevent confusion.



[13]

CHAPTER II.

THE COURT-HOUSE.

While Sir James Brooke was in England, in 1847, he asked his friends to help him in his efforts to civilize the Dyaks, by sending a mission to live at Sarawak.

Lord Ellesmere, Admiral Sir H. Keppel, Admiral C. D. Bethune, Canon Ryle Wood, and the Rev. C. Brereton, formed themselves into a committee, with the Rev. I. F. Stocks for their honorary secretary, and soon collected funds for the purpose. The Rev. F. McDougall was chosen as the head of the mission, and with him were associated the Rev. S. Montgomery and the Rev. W. Wright; but Mr. Montgomery died very suddenly, of fever caught when ministering to the poor of his parish, before the time came for us to embark, so the party was reduced to two clergymen and their wives, two babies and two nurses. We sailed from London in the barque *Mary Louisa*, four hundred tons, the end of December; Mr. Parr, a nephew of Mrs. Wright's, being also one of the passengers. I had all my life loved the sea, and longed to take such a voyage as should carry us out of sight of land, and give us all the experiences which wait on those "who go down to the sea in ships;" but I little thought how we should all long for land before we saw it again.

[14]

The barque was a poor sailer; we thought it a good run if she made eight knots an hour, so no wonder we did not reach Singapore till May 23, 1848. It was a long monotonous voyage, but we were well occupied, and I do not remember ever finding it dull. The sea was all I ever fancied by way of a companion, and, like all one's best friends, made me happy or unhappy, but was never stupid. Then we had to learn Malay and its Arabic characters, with the help of Marsden's grammar and dictionary, and the Bible translated into that language by the Dutch. We lived by rule, apportioning the hours to certain duties, and every one knows how fast time passes under those conditions. The two clergymen busied themselves with teaching the sailors, and several of them presented themselves at Holy Communion in consequence, the last Sunday before we landed. The most trying time we passed was on the coast of Java, becalmed under a broiling sun, the very sea dead and slimy with all sorts of creatures creeping over it. As for ourselves, we were gasping with thirst, for we had already been on short rations of water for six weeks, one of the tanks having leaked out. One quart of water a day for each adult, and none for the babies, so of course they had the lion's share of their parents' allowance. Our one cup of tea in the evening was looked forward to for hours; and what a wonderful colour it was, after all!—but that was the iron of the tank.

[15]

On the 23rd of May we landed at Singapore, and had to wait there for four weeks before the schooner *Julia*, then running between that place and Sarawak, came to fetch us. We reached Sarawak June 29th, entering the Morotabas mouth of the river, which is twenty-four miles from the town of Kuching, whither we were bound. The sail up the river, our first sight of the country and the people, was indeed exciting, and filled us with delight. The river winds continually, and every new reach had its interest: a village of palm-leaf houses built close to the water, women and children standing on the steps with their long bamboo jars, or peeping out of the slits of windows at the schooner; boats of all sizes near the houses, fishing-nets hanging up to dry, wicked alligators lying basking on the mud; trees of many varieties—the nibong palm which furnishes the posts of the houses, the nipa which makes their mat walls, and close by the water the light and graceful mangroves, which at night are all alive and glittering with fire-flies. On the boughs of some larger trees hanging over the stream parties of monkeys might be seen eating the fruits, chattering, jumping, flying almost, from bough to bough. We afterwards made nearer acquaintance with these droll creatures.

At last we reached the Fort, a long white building manned by Malays, and with cannon showing at the port-holes. The *Julia* was not challenged, however, but gladly welcomed, as she carried not only the missionaries but the mail, and stores for the bazaar; for at that time there were not many native trading-vessels—the fear of pirates was great, and there was good reason to fear!

[16]

The town of Kuching consisted in those days of a Chinese bazaar and a Kling bazaar, both very small, and where it was scarcely possible to find anything an English man or woman could buy. Beyond was the court of justice, the mosques, and a few native houses. Higher up the river lay the Malay town, divided into Kampongs, or clusters of houses belonging to the different chiefs or principal merchants of the place. Opposite the bazaar, on the other side of the river, stood the rajah's bungalow, as well as two or three others belonging to Europeans, embosomed in trees, cocoa-nuts and betel-nut palms, and other fruit-trees. Behind the rajah's house rose the beautiful mountain of Santubong, wooded to its summit nearly 3000 feet, with a rock cropping out here and there. At this bungalow we landed, and were hospitably entertained for a few days until the upper part of the court-house could be made ready for our party.

Shall I ever forget my first impressions of the rajah's bungalow? A peculiar scent pervaded it. You looked about for the cause till your eyes fell on two saucers, one filled with green blossoms, the other with deep golden ones, much the same shape—the kenanga and the chimpaka, flowering trees, which grew near the house. Their flowers were picked every day for the rooms, as the rajah loved the scent, and so did the Malays. The ladies steeped the blossoms in cocoa-nut oil and anointed themselves, placing them also in their long black hair, with wreaths of jessamine flowers threaded on a string. These perfumes were rather overpowering at first, but I learnt to like them after I had been some time in Sarawak. The large, bare, cool rooms were very refreshing after the little cabins of the *Julia*. And then the library! a treasure indeed in the jungle; books on all sorts of subjects, bound in enticing covers, always inviting you to bodily repose and mental activity or amusement, as you might prefer. This library, so dear to us all because we were all allowed to share it, was burnt in 1857 by the Chinese rebels. It took two days to burn. I watched it from our library over the water, and saw the mass of books glowing dull red like a furnace, long after the flames had consumed the wooden house. It made one's heart ache to see it. An old gentleman of our English society watched it too, and I wondered why his head shook continually as he sat with his eyes fixed on those sad ruins; but I found afterwards that the sight, and doubtless its cause, had palsied him from that day. But I must not linger too long in the rajah's bungalow, though the white pigeons seem to call to me from the verandahs; we must take boat again (for there are no bridges over the Sarawak river), and cross to the court-house.

[17]

[18]

This square wooden house, with latticed verandahs like a big cage, was built by a German missionary, who purposed having a school on the ground floor and living in the upper story; but as soon as he had built his house he was recalled to Germany, and the only trace of him that remained was a box full of torn Bibles and tracts, which, I am sorry to say, had been used as waste paper in the bazaar for tying up parcels since he left, but as the tracts were not in any language the people could understand they were scarcely to blame. Rajah turned the house into a court of justice, and we settled ourselves in the upper rooms, which were divided from one another by mat walls. The river flowed under this house at spring tides, and then nests of ants would swarm into it: the rapidity with which these little creatures would carry all their eggs up the posts and settle the whole family under a box in your bedroom was marvellous; but as they were not pleasant companions there, a kettle of hot water had to put an end to the colony.

These little black ants did not sting, but there was a large red ant, half an inch long, who was most pugnacious; he stood up on his hind legs and fought you with amazing courage, and his jaws were formidable. We made our first acquaintance with white ants while we lived in the court-house. On unpacking a box of books, which had been our solace during the voyage, we found them almost glued together by the secretion of these creatures. The box had been standing on the ground floor of the hotel. The white ants had eaten through and through the books, and picked all the surface off the bindings; they were disgusting to look at and to smell. Some years afterwards, one of our missionaries had a box of clothes sent her from Singapore. It was necessary clothing, for she had lost her effects, like the rest of us, during the Chinese rebellion. I warned Miss Coomes that she must unpack the box directly, on account of the white ants; but she put it off till the next day, and at night these wretches ate through the bottom of the box, and munched up the new linen and stockings. We soon learnt to guard against their attacks by using no wood except balean, or iron-wood, which is too hard for them to bite. English oak seemed like

[19]

a slice of cake to white ants.

No sooner were we settled at the court-house, than we had visits from all the principal Malays, and also some Dyaks who happened to be at Sarawak. My husband opened a dispensary in a little room behind the store-room, and had plenty of patients. I used to hear continual talking and laughing going on there, and by this means Mr. McDougall learnt to talk the Malay language, which he only knew from books when he first arrived. The pure Malay of books is very different from the colloquial *patois* of Kuching. To my sorrow, I learnt this some time after, when I was trying to prepare two women for baptism: they listened to me for some time, and then one said to the other, "She talks like a book," which I fear meant that they only half understood me.

[20]

Soon after this we took four little half-caste children to bring up. They were running about in the bazaar, and their native mothers were willing to part with them; so Mary, Julia, Peter, and Tommy were housed in a cottage close by, under the care of a Portuguese Christian woman, the wife of our cook. Every day I used to spend some hours with them, that we might become friends. The eldest of these children was only six years old, Tommy, the youngest, but two and a half; so they wanted a nurse. They were baptized on Advent Sunday, 1848, and were the beginning of our native school.



[21]

CHAPTER III.

COLLEGE HILL.

We stayed at the court-house a whole year, while our house on the hill was being prepared. The hill, and the ground beyond it, about forty acres in all, was given to the mission by Sir James Brooke. It was then some way out of the town, but as the Chinese population increased, the town grew quite to the foot of the hill—College Hill, as it was then called—and a blacksmith's quarter even invaded the mission land. At first, in order to cultivate the property, nutmegs and spice-trees were planted, but the soil was not good enough for them; when their roots pierced through the pit of earth in which they were planted, and reached the stiff clay of the hill, they died off. It was necessary to do something to keep the land clear of the coarse lalang grass, which grew wherever the jungle was cut down. So after a while a herd of cattle was collected, and they improved the poverty of the land, at the same time furnishing milk and a little butter. I say a *little*, because even when seven cows were in milk, as they only gave two quarts a day each, and there were always plenty of children in and out of the mission to consume it, but little was left for butter-making. Cocoa-nut trees were planted in the low ground, and some few grew up; but wild pigs were great enemies to them, for they liked to eat the cabbage out of the heart of the young tree, which of course killed it. In that seething warmth of Sarawak you could almost see plants grow. If you scattered seeds in the ground, they sprouted above it on the third day. I planted some of those little coral-looking seeds which are to be found in every box of Indian shells, the seed of the satin-wood, and they grew up into beautiful forest trees in twelve years' time. We used to make long strings of these coral seeds, and use them in Christmas decorations.

[22]

By degrees we had a very bright garden about the house. The Gardenia, with its strongly scented blossom and evergreen leaves, made a capital hedge. Great bushes of the Hybiscus, scarlet and buff, glowed in the sun—they were called shoe-flowers, for they were used instead of blacking to polish our shoes. The pink one-hundred-leaved rose grew freely, and blossomed all the year round. Shrubs of the golden Allamander were a great temptation to the cows, if they strayed into the garden. The Plumbago was one of the few pale-blue flowers which liked that blazing heat. Then we had a great variety of creepers—jessamine of many sorts, the scarlet Ipomea, the blue Clitorea, and passion-flowers, from the huge Grenadilla with its excellent fruit, to the little white one set in a calyx of moss. The Moon-flower, a large white convolvulus, tight-shut all day, unfolded itself at six o'clock, and looked lovely in the flower-vases in the evening. The Jessamine

[23]

and Pergolaria odorotissima climbed up the porch, and in the forks of the trees opposite I had air-plants fastened, which flowered every three months, and looked like a flight of white butterflies on the wing. The great mountain of Matang stood in the distance, and when the sun sank behind it, which it always did in that invariable latitude about six o'clock, I sat in the porch to watch the glory of earth and sky. How dear a mountain becomes to you, is only known to those who live in hilly countries. One gets to think of it as a friend. It seems to carry a protest against the little frets of life, and, by its strength and invariableness, to be a visible image of Him who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." But I am running on too fast with the garden before the house is built.

The hill was first cleared of jungle, and flattened at the top, then the foundation was dug, and great sleepers were laid ready for the upright posts. A wooden house is joiner's work, and rather resembles a great bedstead. All the wood is first squared and cut, which takes a long time, because the balean-wood is extremely hard, and consumes a great deal of labour; but once ready, the house rises from the earth like magic, for every beam and post fits into its place. [24]

We had brought a great box of carpenter's tools with us from England, among them valuable moulding-planes; we wished the carpenters to learn, in building the house, how to make the arches and ornamental mouldings for the church.

Happily for us, when the *Mary Louisa* was wrecked in the straits on her way home, the crew were all saved, and the ship-carpenter came over to Sarawak to see if my husband would employ him. As he was a capital joiner, he was set over a gang of workmen at once. All the plans for the house and church were made by Frank (my husband), and I was set to draw patterns of the doors and windows, the verandah railings, and the porch. Stahl was an intelligent German workman, and soon learnt Malay enough to direct the men. The Malays levelled the hill and dug the foundations; the Chinese were employed as carpenters, but they, too, could speak Malay. I remember making great friends with one of them, Johnny Jangot, John of the Beard, so called on account of a few long hairs at the tip of his chin, for the Chinese are a beardless race. Johnny used to eat his breakfast in the court-house to save himself trouble. What a set-out it was! Rice, of course; then three or four little basins with different messes—duck, fish, chicken, and plenty of soy-sauce; more basins with vegetables, all eaten with the help of chop-sticks; and a teapot snugly covered with a cosy. I asked one day to taste the tea, and Johnny poured me out a tiny cup of hot, sweet, spirits and water! Samchoo is a spirit made from rice, and very strong, as our poor English sailors used to find to their cost when her Majesty's ships paid us a visit. The Chinese said that the English drank the samchoo cold and raw, and therefore it poisoned them, whereas they always qualified it with hot water. It did not taste strong, which made it all the more pernicious. Johnny drank real tea all day long, and smoked a good deal of tobacco—it seemed to me he did very little else; but he was not a bad workman, though of course it was not such a day's work as an Englishman can do. [25]

In the East you must accept the customs of the country, and be content with the people: they are not given to change. Stahl made some wheel-barrows for the men to use instead of little baskets in which they carried earth, and which held nothing. But it was no use; they laughed at the wheel-barrows, and said "Eh yaw!" but went on with the baskets.

Every evening we used to walk up the hill to see how the building was getting on, all the children with us; then, as we sat on the timber, I used to draw the letters of the alphabet on the white sand, and the little ones learnt them. We went home through a piece of ground we called our garden. In it grew plenty of pine-apples and sugar-cane, and the gardener always supplied us with pieces of the latter to eat—very refreshing and nice, but the juice ran all over your hands. As for pine-apples, we soon got tired of them; but they made good tarts, and, mixed with plantains and lime-juice, a very pleasant and useful jam. [26]

In clearing the hill our workmen disturbed the haunts of many snakes. We were a good deal visited by cobras for some years. The natives said that the Adam and Eve of all the cobras lived in a cave under our hill.

One day we were having asphalte laid down in the printing-room, to keep away white ants. The room had been emptied to do this, and Stahl went in to inspect the work after the men had gone to their breakfast at eleven o'clock. He saw a large cobra at the end of the room, and hit it with a stick he had in his hand; but the stick broke in two, and the cobra reared itself up with inflated hood. Another minute must have seen Stahl a prey to the monster; but the Bishop, passing by, heard him exclaim when the stick broke, and going quickly in saw Stahl standing, white, fascinated, and motionless, before the cobra. Happily he had a stout walking-stick, and at once felled the reptile; but he took a good deal of killing. It was ten feet long.

This was Adam.

Eve was killed under the verandah of the house almost a year afterwards. She was eight feet long.

One night the Bishop had been reading the Rev. F. Robertson's sermon about St. Paul and the viper. It was late, and being rather sleepy he carried the book in one hand and a candle in the other into his dressing-room, and was just going to set the candle down, when his eye fell on a cobra, coiled up on the chair on which he was about to seat himself. No stick was at hand, but he smote the snake with the book. Struck in the right place, they are not difficult to kill. So "St. Paul and the Viper" put an end to the cobra. That the bite of this snake is not, however, certain death [27]

we had a curious instance.

One of our servants, a very strict Mahometan, believed himself charmed against poisonous reptiles, and used to bring me centipedes and scorpions in his hands, saying they never hurt him. He left our service and was employed by the Borneo Company, about half a mile from our house. One day, while cutting rattans in a shed, a cobra bit his thumb. He thought nothing of it, but, putting away his work as usual, went home, cooked his rice and ate his supper. By this time, however, his arm began to swell and his head to swim. Instead of going to the doctor, who then lived close by, he must needs go to the Bishop to cure him; so just as we were sitting down to dinner, about seven o'clock, he reeled into the house. The Bishop cauterized the wound, although it seemed too late to be any use; he was getting cold and faint. However, by dint of being walked up and down between two men, and having two whole bottles of brandy administered to him, a glass at a time, besides sal volatile, chloroform, and every stimulant we had, he got through the night. The Bishop sat up with him all night, and I could hear him, when at last I went to bed, calling out at intervals, "Oh, Allah! Oh, Lord Bishop!"—so terrible was the pain he suffered in his arm. His wife, who was my baby's ayah, appeared in the morning. "Come," said she, "make no more noise, keeping everybody awake, but take up your bed (mat) and let us go home." He meekly obeyed; but, poor man, he had abscesses under his arm, and fell into weak health afterwards; so it is evidently unwise to despise a cobra.

[28]

There were many other snakes besides cobras, some poisonous, but most of them harmless.

The Marquis Doria and Signor Becarri, two distinguished naturalists, who lived for some months at Sarawak, collecting bird-skins, insects, and plants, told me that the natives often represented a snake to be poisonous which was not so. However, we had the mata hari, sun-snake, black and coral colour, and a metallic green flat-headed creature, *Fortrex trigonocephalus*, which were venomous enough. I once had a little flower-snake for a pet. It was beautifully marked with green and lilac, and used to catch flies climbing about the room; but one day it mounted to the top of a high door, the wind blew the door to, and my pretty snake was thrown to the ground and broke its back.

The boa-constrictor—sawar, as the Malays called it—lived in the jungle and rice-swamps. Sometimes it attained an enormous size. An Englishman told me that he and some Malays were exploring the jungle to find traces of antimony ore, and came to an opening in the wood, across which they saw the body of a sawar as thick as his own—he was not very stout—moving along; but they never saw either the head or tail of that snake, for, after watching its progress for a long time, they were seized with a panic at its enormous length, and fled.

[29]

A Malay whom we knew very well, Abong Hassan by name, and a mighty hunter, told us that once, when he was seeking deer in the forest, towards evening he sat down to rest, and cook his rice, on what he thought was a great fallen tree. While thus occupied, he felt his seat moving from under him, and, starting up, found he had been making use of a huge sawar lying inert and distended with food. He killed it, and found a full-grown deer in its stomach. These snakes must live to a great age, and grow always, to attain such a size.

Some people kept a small boa in their house to kill rats, but we found they were equally fond of chickens, and therefore not desirable inmates; for at Sarawak chickens were the principal animal food to be had, and it was necessary to keep a stock of them.

After some years we built up the lower story of the mission-house with bricks, to make it more substantial and cooler. The ground floor was at first wholly occupied with the school, the dormitory on one side, the matron's and girls' room on the other, and a large schoolroom through the centre of the house. A similar room over it was our dining-room, and was used for divine service until the church was finished. The library and our bedroom were over the boys' dormitory, and bedrooms for missionaries on the other side. There were also three rooms in the roof, which made good bedrooms, but were too hot for use in the daytime. The roof was covered with shingles of balean-wood, which only grows harder and darker coloured from rain and use. They were blown off sometimes in the storms to which we were subject, but were otherwise more lasting than any other kind of roofing. We used to call this house Noah's Ark, from the variety of its occupants. A bell hung in the porch roof, and rung at different hours to call the workmen and regulate the school. The people in the town got so used to it that, when we discontinued it for a time, they sent a petition that it might begin again, for without it they never knew what o'clock it was. When the school outgrew this house we built another for the boys, their master, and the matron, close by; but I always kept the girls with us until Julia married, when they were sent to the Quop, in charge of the missionary's wife there.

[30]

Long before we left the court-house, Mr. and Mrs. Wright decided to give up the Sarawak mission, and went to Singapore, where Mr. Wright became master to the Raffles Institution for the education of boys. We were therefore quite alone until February, 1851, when the Bishop of Calcutta paid us a visit to consecrate the church, and brought with him Mr. Fox from Bishop's College, to be catechist, with a view to his future ordination. Very soon after him came the Rev. Walter Chambers from England, and about the same time Mr. Nicholls also arrived from Bishop's College; but, as he only wished to stay for two years in the country, he had scarcely time to learn the language before he returned to Calcutta.

[31]



[32]

CHAPTER IV.

PIRATES.

When we first lived at Sarawak, the coasts and the seas from Singapore to China were infested with pirates. "It is in the Malay's nature," says a Dutch writer, "to rove the seas in his prahu, as it is in the Arab to wander with his steed on the sands of the desert." Before the English and Dutch Governments exerted themselves to put down piracy in the Eastern seas, there were communities of these Malays settled in various parts of the coast of Borneo, who made it the business of their lives to rob and destroy all the vessels they could meet with, either killing the crews or reducing them to slavery. For this purpose they went out in fleets of from ten to thirty war-boats or prahus. These boats were about ninety feet long; they carried a large gun in the bow and three or four lelahs, small brass guns, in each broadside, besides twenty or thirty muskets. Each prahu was rowed by sixty or eighty oars in two tiers, and carried from eighty to a hundred men. Over the rowers, and extending the whole length of the vessel, was a light flat roof, made of split bamboo, and covered with mats. This protected the ammunition and provisions from rain, and served as a platform on which they mounted to fight, from which they fired their muskets and hurled their spears. These formidable boats skulked about in the sheltered bays of the coast, at the season of the year when they knew that merchant-vessels would be passing with rich cargoes for the ports of Singapore, Penang, or to and from China. A scout-boat, with but few men in it, which would not excite suspicion, went out to spy for sails. They did not generally attack large or armed ships, although many a good-sized Dutch or English craft, which had been becalmed or enticed by them into dangerous or shallow water, was overpowered by their numbers. But it was usually the small unarmed vessels they fell upon, with fearful yells, binding those they did not kill, and burning the vessel after robbing it, to avoid detection. While the south-west monsoon lasted, the pirates lurked about in uninhabited creeks and bays until the trading season was over. But when the north-east monsoon set in, they returned to their settlements, often rich in booty, and with blood on their hands, only to rejoice over the past, and prepare for next year's expedition. There are still some nests of pirates in the north of Borneo, although of late the Spaniards have done much to exterminate them. But when Sir James Brooke first visited Sarawak, the nobles there, and their sultan at Bruni, used to permit, nay, encourage, piratical raids against their own subjects at a little distance, provided they shared in the profits of the expedition, thus impoverishing the country they ruled, and putting a stop to all native trade—a short-sighted and wicked policy. It took a good many years of stern resistance on Sir James Brooke's part before the Bruni nobles could be cured of their connivance of pirates, whether Malay or Dyak.

[33]

[34]

The Dyaks of Sarebas and Sakarran, a brave and noble people, were taught piracy by the Malays who dwelt among them. These Dyaks were always head-hunters, and used to pull the oars in the Malay prahus for the sake of the heads of the slain, which they alone cared for. But, in course of time, the Dyaks became expert seamen. They built boats which they called bangkongs, and went out with the Malays, devastating the coast and killing Malays, Chinese, Dyaks, whoever they met with. The Dyak bangkong draws very little water, and is both lighter and faster than the Malay prahu; it is a hundred feet long, and nine or ten broad. Sixty or eighty men with paddles make her skim through the water as swiftly as a London race-boat. She moves without noise, and surprises her victims with showers of spears at dead of night; neither can any vessel, except a steamer, catch a Dyak bangkong, if the crew deem it necessary to fly. These boats can be easily taken to pieces; for the planks, which extend the whole length of the boat, are not fastened with nails, but lashed together with rattans, and calked with bark, which swells when wet; so that, if they wish to hide their retreat into the jungle, they can quickly unlace their boats, carry them on their shoulders into the woods, and put them together again when they want them. When we first lived at Sarawak no merchant-boat dared go out of the river alone and unarmed. We were constantly shocked with dreadful accounts of villages on the coast, or boats at the entrance, being surprised, and men, women, and children barbarously murdered by these wretches. I remember once a boat being found with only three fingers of a man in it, and a bloody mark at the side, where the heads of those in the boat had been cut off. Sometimes the pirates would wait

[35]

until they knew the men of a village were away at their paddy farms, then they would fall suddenly upon the defenceless old men, women, and children, kill some, make slaves of the young ones, and rob the houses.

Sometimes, having destroyed a village and its inhabitants, they would dress themselves in the clothes of the slain, and, proceeding to another place, would call out to the women, "The Sarebas are coming, but, if you bring down your valuables to us, we will defend you and your property." And many fell into the snare, and were carried off. If they attacked a house when the men were at home, it was by night. They pulled stealthily up the river in their boats, and landing under cover of their shields, crept under the long house where many families lived together. These houses stand on high poles. The pirates then set fire to dry wood and a quantity of chillies which they carried with them for the purpose. This made a suffocating smoke, which hindered the inmates from coming out to defend themselves. Then they cut down the posts of the house, which fell, with all it contained, into their ruthless hands.

[36]

In the year 1849, the atrocities of the piratical Dyaks were so frequent, that the rajah applied to the English Admiral in the straits for some men-of-war to assist him in destroying them. Remonstrances and threats had been tried again and again. The pirates would always promise good behaviour for the future to avert a present danger; but they never kept these promises when an opportunity offered for breaking them with impunity. In consequence of Sir James Brooke's application, H.M.S. *Albatross*, commanded by Captain Farquhar; H.M.'s sloop *Royalist*, commander, Lieutenant Everest; and H.E.I.C.'s steamer *Nemesis*, commander, Captain Wallage, were sent by Admiral Collyer to Sarawak. Then the rajah had all his war-boats got ready to join the English force. There was the *Lion King*, the *Royal Eagle*, the *Tiger*, the *Big Snake*, the *Little Snake*, the *Frog*, the *Alligator*, and many others belonging to the Datus, who, on occasions like these, are bound to call on their servants, and a certain number of able-bodied men living in their kampongs, to man and fight in their boats. This is their service to the Government. The rajah supplies the whole force with rice for the expedition, and a certain number of muskets. The English ships were left, the *Albatross* at Sarawak, and the *Royalist* to guard the entrance of the Batang Lupar River, into which the Sakarran and Sarebas Rivers *débouche*; but their boats, and nearly all the officers, accompanied the fleet, and the steamer *Nemesis* went also. On the 24th of July they left us, as many as eighteen Malay prahus, manned by from twenty to seventy men in each, and decorated with flags and streamers innumerable, of the brightest colours,—the Sarawak flag, a red and black cross on a yellow ground, always at the stern. For the *Tiger* I made a flag, as it was Mr. Brereton's boat, with a tiger's head painted on it, looking wonderfully ferocious. It was an exciting time, with gongs and drums, Malay yells and English hurrahs; and our fervent prayers for their safety and success accompanied them that night, as they dropped down the river in gay procession. They were afterwards joined by bangkongs of friendly Dyaks, three hundred men from Lundu, eight hundred from Linga, some from Samarahan, Sadong, and various places which had suffered from the pirates, and were anxious to assist in giving them a lesson. We heard nothing of the fleet until the 2nd of August, when I received a little note from the rajah, written in pencil, on a scrap of paper, on the night of the 31st of July, and giving an account of how they fell in with a great balla (war fleet) of Sarebas and Sakarran pirates, consisting of one hundred and fifty bangkongs, returning to their homes with plunder and captives in their boats. The pirates found all the entrances of the river occupied by their enemies, the English, Malay, and Dyak forces being placed in three detachments, and the *Nemesis* all ready to help whenever the attack began. The *Lion King* sent up a rocket when she espied the pirate fleet, to apprise the rest. Then there was a dead silence, broken only by three strokes of a gong, which called the pirates to a council of war. A few minutes afterwards a fearful yell gave notice of their advance, and the fleet approached in two divisions. But when they sighted the steamer they became aware of the odds against them, and again called a council by beat of gong. After another pause, a second yell of defiance showed they had decided on giving battle. Then, in the dead of the night, ensued a fearful scene. The pirates fought bravely, but could not withstand the superior forces of their enemies. Their boats were upset by the paddles of the steamer; they were hemmed in on every side, and five hundred men were killed, sword in hand; while two thousand five hundred escaped to the jungle. The boats were broken to pieces, or deserted on the beach by their crews; and the morning light showed a sad spectacle of ruin and defeat. Upwards of eighty prahus and bangkongs were captured, many from sixty to eighty feet long, with nine or ten feet beam.

[37]

[38]

[39]

The English officers on that night offered prizes to all who should bring in captives alive: but the pirates would take no quarter; in the water they still fought without surrender, for they could not understand a mercy they never accorded to their enemies. Consequently the prisoners were very few, and the darkness of the night favoured escape.

The peninsula to which they fled could easily have been so surrounded by the Dyak and Malay forces that not one man of that pirate fleet could have left it alive. This blockade the Malays entreated the rajah to make; but he refused, saying that he hoped they had already received a sufficient lesson, and would return to their homes humbled and corrected. He therefore ordered his fleet to proceed up the river, and the pirates went back to Sarebas and Sakarran. This severe punishment cured the Dyaks of those rivers once and for all of piracy, and was the greatest blessing which could have been conferred on those fine tribes. They allowed forts to be built on their rivers, and submitted to English residents, who ruled them with the counsel of their own chiefs. In 1857, when the Chinese rebelled and burnt the town of Kuching, these Dyaks sent their warriors to assist the Sarawak Government; in doing so they joined other tribes whose hereditary enemies they had been for many generations. Some of us felt anxious when we saw the fleet of

Sakarrans and Balows lying side by side at the Linga Fort; but they all kept their good faith, and in fighting a common enemy became friends for evermore.

[40]

In 1852 Sir James Brooke placed Mr. Brereton in a fort at Sakarran, built at the entrance of the river. He threw himself heartily into the work of improving the people, and gained a good influence over many. One of the most important chiefs, Gassim, attached himself to him, and even gave up the practice of head-taking to please him.

There were certain paddy farms in the country which by ancient custom could only be cultivated by heroes who had taken many heads. One of Gassim's people, however, who had never taken a single head, presumed to clear and plant some of this ground; whereupon the other chiefs complained, and one sent a message to Gassim, that if he did not put a stop to this breach of law, he would fight him. Gassim answered that he was ready to fight with swords if necessary, but first he begged a conference with all the other chiefs to discuss the matter. To this they agreed, and by the force of his eloquence and the justice of his cause, Gassim proved to them that the old custom was bad and ought to be repealed. About that time Brereton brought Gassim and a number of his people to visit Kuching, and the chief breakfasted with us. When all the school-children came in to prayers—for the church was not yet finished—and Gassim heard them repeat the responses and say the Lord's Prayer, he was delighted, and said that he and his people would also like to be Christians.

[41]

We used to like the Sakarrans much better than their neighbours, the Sarebas, in those days. They were fine, tall, handsome men, with straight noses and pleasant manners. The Sarebas were coarser-looking people, who disfigured themselves by wearing brass rings all along the lobes of their ears: the one at the bottom was as large as a curtain-ring in circumference, though of slender make; it lay on the chest, and by its weight dragged a great hole in the ear. These rings were inserted when the children were quite young, and pulled their little faces out of shape, giving an uncomfortable expression. Sarawak Malays always said, "A Sakarran Dyak may be trusted, but a Sarebas is deceitful." It is a curious fact, however, that the Sakarrans, with all their fair words and sleek prepossessing looks, did not embrace the gospel as the Sarebas did. The Rev. Walter Chambers lived at Sakarran for some time, but gathered no converts. He then settled himself among the Balows of the Batang Lupar and Linga, and when there was a community of Christians from these rivers, at Banting, where Mr. Chambers had built his church and house, a Sarebas chief, Buda by name, the son of a notorious old pirate, happened to meet some of these Christian Dyaks, and came himself to be taught. He brought his wife, sister, and child. They walked upwards of eighty miles, partly through the mud of the sea-shore, carrying their mats and cooking-pots with them, and established themselves in the mission-house, where they were kindly welcomed, and stayed six weeks, during which time they were so diligent that they learnt to read and made some progress in writing. This was in the rainy season, when all farming operations are in abeyance. The next year they returned at the same time, but, meanwhile, they had not been idle, but had taught all they knew to their countrymen. Shortly afterwards Buda was made a catechist, and he excited so much interest, that in 1867 Mr. Chambers baptized one hundred and eighty of these people, who were once the most dangerous enemies of the English and the most notorious pirates of Borneo. Then Buda proceeded to the village of Seruai, and Mr. Chambers had soon to visit there, for the people were so earnest they would scarcely let him sleep, nor seemed to require any sleep themselves, but day and night learnt the hymns and catechism, which they must know by heart to be baptized. Nearly two hundred were baptized on the Kryan River. A catechist had been placed there, called Belabut. He married Buda's sister, who walked to Banting for instruction. She had much influence over the women of the tribe, and Mr. Chambers said it was delightful to hear her read "her beloved gospel" with the correct pronunciation of an English lady.

[42]

The Christians of the Kryan did not keep the good news to themselves, but proceeded to teach the next village of Sinambo. In these villages there are now school-chapels, built by the Dyaks themselves. In 1873, Mr. Chambers, who was then bishop, wrote: "These Sea Dyaks have made the greatest advances in civilization and Christianity. Looking back even five years, there is a great difference. They have abandoned superstitious habits." "They no longer listen to the voices of birds to tell them when to sow their seeds, undertake a journey, or build a house; they never consult a manang [1] in sickness or difficulty; above all, they set no store by the blackened skulls which used to hang from their roofs, but which they have either buried or given away to any people from a distance who cared for them, assuring them at the same time that they 'were no use.'"

[43]

Thus we see what a just punishment and a fostering Government, added to the sweet influences of Christianity, have done for these people; but it took years of patience and faith to effect so great a change.

After the pirate fight of 1849, the evil disposed and turbulent, both of the Sakarrans and Sarebas, found a leader in Rentab, a Sarebas chief. He braved the Government for years. In 1852 his war-boats appeared above the Sakarran Fort, and the two young Englishmen there, Mr. Brereton and Mr. Lee, too confident in their strength, attacked the boats with a small force. In this engagement Mr. Lee was killed, and Mr. Brereton escaped with difficulty. Several expeditions were taken into the interior against Rentab; but he was so clever, that even when Captain Brooke battered his stronghold to pieces by having guns dragged up the steep hill on which his fort was built, Rentab managed to escape, and was never taken. His followers, however, fell away from him by degrees, and there are now no pirates in those rivers.

[44]

Footnotes:

[1] Heathen doctor.



[45]

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH AND THE SCHOOL.

As soon as we removed to College Hill, the building of the church began. On the 28th August, 1850, a few days after the return of the expedition against the pirates, the summit of a rising ground about two hundred yards from the house having been cleared and levelled, a large shed was built over the ground, which the sailors of H.M.S. *Albatross*, and our workmen, adorned with gay flags and green boughs.

A little procession left our house, the rajah walking first, dressed in full uniform as Governor of Labuan, and Suboo, the Malay executioner, holding a large yellow satin umbrella over his head, as is the custom on all state occasions, for yellow is the royal colour in Borneo; then my husband, in surplice and hood, the English residents, naval officers, and, last, a crowd of Malays and Chinese followed, to witness the ceremony of laying the first great block of wood in the foundation of St. Thomas's Church. After prayers had been read, the rajah lowered the great sleeper into its place, and we all returned home. From that day the church began to rise out of the earth with the same seeming magic as the house had done. It was entirely built of wood—all the beams, rafters, and posts of the hard balean-wood, and the roof covered with balean shingles, like the house. The planking was a cedar-coloured wood, and all the arches and mouldings were finished like cabinet-work, so that it was both handsome and durable. The ornamental pillars were first made of polished nibong palms; but in a few years these had to be cut away, as they were full of white ants, and hard wood substituted. The building of this little church was most interesting to us. When my husband was at Singapore for a short time in 1849, he had the pulpit, reading-desk, a carved wooden eagle, and the chairs made there; also a coloured glass east window was contrived, with the Sarawak flag for a centre light. This pleased the Malays; indeed, they admired the house and church immensely, and always assured us that they knew we could not have built either, unless inspired by good antoos (spirits).

[46]

The baptismal font was a huge clam-shell, large enough to dip an infant in, if desired; and this natural font was adopted in all the churches afterwards built at Dyak stations—at Lundu, at Banting, Quop River.

The church bell was a difficult matter. Nothing larger than a ship bell could be found in the straits. At last, a Javanese at Sarawak said he could cast a bell large enough if he had the metal; so Frank bought a hundredweight of broken gongs—there is a great deal of silver in gong metal—and with these the bell was cast. Then an inscription had to be put round the rim—"Gloria in excelsis Deo," in large letters; and the date, Sir James Brooke's name on one side, and F. T. McDougall on the other. It was a great success, and was safe in the little belfry before the church was consecrated, in February, 1851. I do not know whether this bell is now cracked, but it has worked very hard from that day—two services every week-day, and four on Sunday, to say nothing of extra occasions. Before long, we found a gilder who could adorn the reredos. There were seven compartments at the east end: in the centre one was a gilt cross, and in the others, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, in English, Malay, and Chinese. The gilder was a Chinese catechumen, and was very anxious to do it well; but he knew nothing of English letters, so each letter had to be cut in paper, and he traced it on the wooden panel. It was necessary to watch him narrowly, or he put the letters upside down! Such are the difficulties of making churches in the jungle. All this took some time to complete. I had a very severe illness in November, 1850;

[47]

and when, about Christmas, I was able to sit in the verandah, the progress of the church was my great amusement, for it was quite near enough to watch from the house.

In August, 1850, a great influx of Chinese came to Sarawak. There was a war at Sambas, the principal Dutch settlement in Borneo, between the Chinese, who were friendly to the Dutch, and who were living at Pernankat, and the Montrado Chinese, who, with the Dyaks of the country, rebelled against the Dutch. The Montrados beat the Pernankat Chinese, and they fled from the place, carrying with them their wives and children, and as much property as they could cram into their boats. The boats were overladen, and many of them perished at sea, but some reached Tangong Datu. On the 26th of August, four hundred of these poor creatures arrived at Sarawak, saying there were three thousand more starving on the sands at Datu, who would follow as fast as they could; and, in course of time, most of them did find their way up the river, although those in charge of the Government (the rajah was at Labuan) tried to persuade them to make a town for themselves at Santubong (one of the mouths of the river). A few of them did settle at Santubong, but every day brought boats full of Chinamen into the place. The rajah fed these poor people for months with rice, and gave them tools that they might clear the ground and make gardens in the jungle. At first, before they could build themselves houses, the whole place seemed upset by them. Many lived in their boats on the river; every shed and workshop in the town was full. One night Frank walked into the church, to see no one was stealing planks from the unfinished building. All was quiet, but by a stray moonbeam he perceived that one end of the church, already boarded, was full of mosquito curtains, and they as full of sleeping Chinamen. Such a thing could not be allowed—nails knocked into the polished walls to tie up the curtains, tobacco perfuming the place, to say nothing of sparks to light the pipes, and a considerable allowance of bugs which Chinese people always carry about with them. Frank jumped straight into the middle of the muslin curtains, with a shout; and amidst a hubbub of tongues, "yaw-yaw" and laughter, bundled them all out into the workmen's shed close by, where they might sleep in peace. It occurred to my husband that some of these Chinese would be glad to have their children brought up with the seven little orphans we had already, so he went to Aboo, the Chinese magistrate, and offered to take ten children into our house to be brought up as Christians, baptized, and educated for ten years. The Chinese value education, and were very glad to give them to us. I shall never forget sitting in the porch one morning to receive my new family. Neither parents nor children could speak Malay. They walked up the stairs, bringing a little boy or girl, nodded and smiled and put the child's hand into mine, as much as to say, "There, take it." One of our Chinese servants then explained to them what we could do for the child, and that it must remain with us until grown up. That day we took Salion, Sunfoon, Chinzu, Queyfat, Assin, Umque, Achin, boys; Achong, Moukmoy, Poingzu, girls. The English nurse we had brought with us to Sarawak had married Stahl, the carpenter, of whom I spoke before, and Mrs. Stahl became the matron of the school when we moved to College Hill, and had these ten Chinese children as well as the orphans to care for. We were very busy sewing for them, with a Chinese tailor to help. Blue jackets and trousers for week-days, and black trousers and white jackets for Sundays, had to be made at once. The girls wore trousers as well as the boys, only wider, and their jackets reached to the knee.

At the end of a week they were all clean and neat. Their heads were shaved every Saturday, and their long tails freshly plaited up with skeins of black or red strong silk, made on purpose. At first a barber came to do this, but soon the elder boys learnt to do it, and it was a regular Saturday business. These ten children soon learnt to speak Malay. Then we took five more, and after that one or two as circumstances threw them in our way. The school at last numbered forty-five, but there was not room in the mission-house for so many; we did not get beyond thirty the first year of the school.

I scarcely think thirty English children could have been so easily reduced to order as these little Chinese. School must have been paradise to them after the hardships they had undergone, and that perhaps made it easier to please them; besides, the Chinese readily submit to rule and method. The day was laid out for them. They rose at half-past five when the day dawned; after a bath in a pond in the grounds, they had a slice of rice-pudding with treacle on it, and then went to church for morning prayers. By seven o'clock they were all at lessons in the big room—such a buzzing and curious singsong of Chinese words—until nine, when the breakfast took place; rice, of course, and a sort of curry of vegetables, also a great dish of fish, either salt or fresh; a little tea for the elder children, no milk or sugar, and water for the rest. They soon learnt to sing their grace before and after meals.

The same kind of meal was repeated at five o'clock, but on Sunday they had pork curried instead of fish, and on festivals chickens. I taught these children to sing from the first. The Chinese are not musical generally, and some of them found the sounds of *do*, *re*, *mi*, very difficult to master, but we had very nice singing in church in time; and when a schoolmaster came who knew plenty of songs, glees, and rounds, the children learnt them quickly, and were often sent for to sing to the rajah and other guests when they came to dinner.

It used to startle strangers to hear "The Hardy Norseman," "The Cuckoo," and such-like songs from the lips of little Chinese boys. Every Saturday evening they came to the house to practise the hymns and chants for Sunday; I had an harmonium in the dining-room. On these occasions they all had a cup of tea and slice of cake, and used to look at the picture newspapers which had come from England the last mail. They were very intelligent boys. It was necessary they should learn Malay and English as well as Chinese, and of course arithmetic, geography, and the usual rudiments of learning. I have often watched the Chinese writing-lesson: it seemed the most

difficult branch of their education—one complicated character, something like a five-barred gate, representing a variety of sounds as well as meanings; but our little fellows learnt it all. They had a Chinese master as well as an English, and they soon spoke English as well as we could desire. My husband took the greatest interest in this school. When the children first came he taught them games and made them playthings, and they were always about him. Whenever we went anywhere by boat a crew of boys was added to the rowers. They soon learnt to use their paddles well, and at the public boat-races, on New Year's Day, pulled their own boat in the race and sometimes won it. When my husband became Bishop of Labuan and Sarawak, he always took some of the schoolboys with him in his visits to the different stations. They helped the church services by their singing, and had their especial chums among the Dyak Christian boys in the different tribes. So many boys passed through the school during the twenty years we took an interest in it, that I cannot even remember all of them. Some are now catechists among the Dyak tribes; many entered the service of the Government or the Merchant Company as clerks; some went to Singapore and found employment there. I know of only one who has as yet been ordained, but perhaps that time has scarcely yet arrived in Sarawak. It is difficult for Malays or Dyaks to look up to a Chinaman sufficiently to make him their minister: they are less clever than the Chinese, but look down upon them nevertheless—the Malays, because the Chinese are the workers, and they the gentlemen; the Dyaks, I suppose, because they gave them such a thrashing in 1857. One good consequence of the Chinese school was, that it attracted the attention of the parents towards Christianity, and they presented themselves as catechumens. There were many difficulties with the languages, for the Chinese at Sarawak were not all of the same tribe, and could not understand one another. However, after a while a Chinese professor arrived at Sarawak, bringing his wife and family with him. In those days the women were forbidden to emigrate with their husbands, but Sing Sing put his wife into a large chest with air-holes at the top, and brought her safely from China. The Bishop employed this man, who was well educated, to make translations, and to interpret what he said to the Chinese, so there were soon Bible classes at our house every Wednesday evening. Sing Sing became an inquirer himself while translating the gospel to others. He was soon able to hold cottage lectures in the town, and after some years the Bishop had the happiness to ordain him as minister to his people. There was a large congregation of Chinese at the Sunday services before we left, and it was a good proof of the sincerity of these converts, that while all their heathen countrymen worked at their trades on Sunday as well as other days, our Christians spent their Sunday in worship and rest, which no doubt was an advantage to their health as well as their growth in grace.

[53]

[54]

At Christmas they always shared in our feasting. We killed an ox, and all the Christians had beef for their dinner, as well as all the queer things they delight in.

In January, 1851, the Church of St. Thomas at Kuching was consecrated by Bishop Wilson, of Calcutta. On the afternoon of the 18th, I was returning from church, and mounting the flight of steps which led to the porch of the house, I saw a large steamer turn the corner of the Pedungen Reach and anchor above the fort. It was the *Semiramis* bringing the Bishop, Archdeacon Pratt and Mrs. Pratt, the Rev. H. Moule from Singapore, Dr. Beale, the Bishop's physician, and Mr. Fox from Bishop's College. This party, escorted by Frank, who rushed home to dress himself in black (his usual attire being grey flannels and a white muslin cassock), very soon marched into the house, exclaiming with pleasure at the wreaths of white jessamine growing over the stairs, and the fresh air of the hill. We had so lately settled in the house that it was not half furnished, but we gave up our rooms to our guests and stowed ourselves in an empty corner. I remember the satisfaction with which Mrs. Stahl produced the remains of the Christmas plum-pudding, and the comfort it was to have a joint of venison in the house. Dinner was soon on the table, and immediately afterwards the Bishop read prayers and retired to his room. We all went into the library, where we had tea and talk. It was very refreshing to have an English lady to speak to, and Mrs. Pratt was so tall and fair that everybody admired her, especially the Malays, who used to say that it was sufficient pleasure to look at her throat only.

[55]

The natives used to flock into the house every evening to see the Tuan Padre besar (the great priest), and all the new-comers. At half-past five a.m. the Bishop's bell used to ring for his servants to dress him, and bring his tea. The whole house was astir then. The Indian servants of the party slept in the verandahs, and seemed to me to talk all night.

The next day was Sunday, but the church was not cleared out for consecration, and most of the fittings had come from Singapore in the *Semiramis*, and could not be got out on Saturday night. So morning and evening prayers were as usual in the dining-room, and what with the officers of the *Semiramis*, the English of the place, the school and our home party, the room was very full. The children sang with all their might, and were much interested with the visitors. The Bishop and Archdeacon Pratt preached morning and afternoon. On Wednesday the church was ready. Mrs. Stahl and I were up before dawn, covering hassocks with Turkey red cotton. The church was tiled, but platforms of wood, covered with mats, which were a present from Mr. and Mrs. Stahl, were placed on the tiles, and the chairs just arrived by *Semiramis* stood on them. We afterwards had to clear the platforms away—they became full of white ants; but they looked very well at first.

[56]

When all was ready, Captain Brooke and all the principal English inhabitants met the Bishop at the church door, and presented a petition that he would consecrate the building. He then entered, and walked up and down the church repeating psalms, etc. Then came morning service; afterwards, the Bishop preached, and as he was very energetic and struck the desk with his hand, our gentle Datu Bandar thought he was angry, and slipped quickly out of church. There

was a confirmation of a Chinese teacher and my little maid Susan after the celebration of Holy Communion, and then, after three hours and a half service, we returned home. The next morning, early, the Bishop consecrated the burial-ground. He was carried round it in a chair, for he was unable to walk much; and though he was a hale old man of seventy-two, his many years' residence at Calcutta had, I imagine, spoilt his walking powers.

He was very kind and friendly to us all, and admired the church very much. His visit was a boon to the mission. It impressed the native mind with the importance Christians attach to their churches and to public worship. When our church bell called us to prayers twice every day, the Mahometans revived the daily muezzin at the mosque; and the sight of the public practice of religion amongst us quickened the Malays in the performance of their own religious rites, and from that time there were many more pilgrims to Mecca from Sarawak.

[57]



[58]

CHAPTER VI.

THE GIRLS.

Having said so much about the schoolboys, it would be unfair not to mention the girls. Mary, Julia, and Phoebe, the half-caste children, grew up beside us, and so did Polly, who was a Dyak baby brought to me after the pirate expedition of 1849. Her mother fled, and dropped her baby in the long grass, where it was found by an English sailor, who carried it to the boats and gave it to one of the women captives to bring to me—a poor little, skinny thing, with long yellow hair, like a fairy changeling. I got a wet nurse for her and fed her with baby food, but she got thinner and more elfish-looking. One day her nurse was standing by while the other children were eating their dinner, and Polly stretched out her arms to the rice and salt fish, and began to cry. "Oh," said I, "perhaps she can eat;" and from that day the little one ate her rice and discarded the nurse, growing fat and merry like the rest.

Polly had a great talent for languages. Of course she learnt English and Malay at once, hearing both languages from her earliest years. But how she learnt Chinese as well used to surprise me. In 1866 I took Polly to Hongkong. She was then nurse to our youngest child. The lady of the house where we were staying accosted Polly in the pigeon English of the place—a jargon mysterious to unaccustomed ears. It must be allowed that Polly was not unlike a Chinese in appearance. She stared at the lady, and then at me, upon hearing directions she could not understand. I laughed. "Speak to Polly in English," I said, "and she will understand what you mean." "Impossible," answered Mrs. M—; "my servants tell me she must be Chinese, for she can talk in two dialects."

[59]

Polly married a Christian Chinaman afterwards, so her taste lay in that direction. When I last heard of her, she was teaching in the day-schools at Sarawak.

Mary married the schoolmaster, Mr. Owen. We brought Julia home with us in 1869, and put her into a training-school for teachers in Dublin, where she was much beloved. When we returned to Sarawak, in 1861, she became the schoolmistress to the girls I then had in the house, and others who came as day-scholars. She was a thoroughly good girl, and a great comfort to me, but of course she married, a young man employed as mate in the *Rainbow*, a Government vessel running between Sarawak and Singapore. Some years afterwards Forrest died, and Julia married again, an older man very well off. I have no doubt she is bringing up her family in the fear of God, but I have not heard of her lately. I had many trials with the girls, more than I like to recount. All the first little family of Chinese girls we received in 1850 belonged to the tribe who rebelled in 1857, and their relations carried them off when we were driven from the mission-house. They were taken to Bau where their relations lived, but what became of them in the terrible flight to the Dutch country, when many were killed, and still more died of the privations of the jungle, we

[60]

never could hear.

Sarah and Fanny came to us in 1856. They were little orphans, half Chinese, half Dyak, whom, with two more girls and four boys, the Government had redeemed from slavery and gave to the mission. Some of these children stayed at Lundu with Mr. Gomez and his family; some came to me—Sarah, Fanny, and Betsy, a baby whom I gave out to nurse. Poor little Sarah had a very scarred face from a burn, but she was a bright, clever child. Fanny was better-looking, but more heavy and less impressible. These two girls married native catechists in course of time. I trust they are doing some good among their own people.

In the year 1862 some little captives fell into the hands of Captain Brooke, then ruling at Sarawak. They came from Sarebas, and one of them had been wounded by a spear, though he was only a tiny boy of four years old. Captain Brooke wrote to me to know if I would take this family of children into the school—two girls, Limo and Ambat, and two boys, Esau and Nigo. If I could not take them, he said, they must be sent back to their own country immediately, as there was a boat departing the next day. The Bishop was away from Sarawak, so I had to decide; nor would there have been any doubt in my mind about it, but Esau the eldest boy was covered with kurap, from head to foot. This is a skin disease to which Dyaks are subject, and which suggests the leprosy of the Old Testament, for the outer skin peels off in flakes, and gives almost a "white as snow" appearance to the surface. I doubted whether I ought to take a pupil so afflicted, for it is decidedly catching. I found that Ambat and Nigo had both patches of it here and there from contact with Esau, whereas Limo, who was older, more clothed, and who slept apart, was quite free.

[61]

Still, the alternative was nothing less than sending these four children to their heathen relations, and to a place at that time beyond the reach of Christ's gospel—a terrible idea which could not be entertained for a moment. So at last I sent for them, resolving to keep them in our house, and not allow them to go down to the school until the Bishop returned. Shortly afterwards a Chinese doctor came to the Bishop, and said, "If you will give me fifteen dollars I will cure that boy of kurap. I have a wonderful medicine for it, made at the Natunas Islands." So he had the money on condition of the cure. The medicine was an ointment as black as pitch—indeed, I believe there was a good portion of tar in it. With this the doctor smeared Esau all over. He was to wear no clothes, and not to be washed or touched. I used to see him, poor child, skipping about exactly like the little black imps depicted in *Punch*.

[62]

The ointment did not hurt him, but every third day the doctor came and washed it all off with hot water: this was rather a painful operation, but it was worth while undergoing some discomfort, for at the end of a month the disease had vanished, and "his skin came again like the flesh of a child." Esau grew up to be a good man and catechist to his own countrymen, so it was well I ventured to keep him at Sarawak. The other children soon got well when separated from him. Kurap arises, I believe, from poor food and exposure to weather. A Dyak wears no clothes except a long sash wound round him and the ends hanging down before and behind; and when we consider the hot sun and frequent rains which beat upon him, for he lives mostly out of doors, it is no wonder his skin suffers. Limo and Ambat were clever children. In a letter, written about a year after they came to us, I find this passage: "I have only four girls who can read English and understand it. My two little Dyaks, Limo and Ambat, are very fond of learning English hymns, and say them in such a plaintive, touching voice, pronouncing each syllable so clearly, but they don't understand it until it has been explained to them in Malay. Limo's brother and uncle came this week from Sarebas—two fine, tall men, with only chawats^[2] and earrings by way of clothes. Limo was delighted; she would have gone away with them in their great boat if I had allowed her. No doubt they told her how much they would do for her at Sarebas. However, I drew a little picture of the women setting her to draw large bamboos full of water, and to beat out the paddy with a long pole—very hard work, and always done by the young girls,—a more truthful and less delightful view of things; so Limo said she would stay with me until she was grown up. I gave her a pair of trousers for each of the men, a present generally much esteemed. But these two were very wild folk; they laughed very much at the trousers, and carried them away over their shoulders."

[63]

I must not forget to tell the story of my dear child Nietfong, although it is a very sad one. She was the daughter of the Chinese baker who lived in the lane which led from our garden to the town. I used to befriend her mother, a delicate little woman, very roughly treated by her husband. She twice ran to me for shelter when her husband beat her, and though of course I always had to give her up to him when he came begging for her the next day, he knew what I thought of him, and had a sort of respect for me in consequence. This poor woman died young, and left one little girl about four years old. Nietfong used to come up to day-school when she was old enough, and in 1858, when I was so happy as to have an English governess for my Mab, I took the little Chinese girl to live with us and join Mab in her lessons. She was quite a little lady, so gentle, teachable, and well-mannered. In 1860 we took our children to England: Mab was six years old, and could not with any safety remain longer in a hot climate. Little Nietfong went home, for her father would not allow her to go to the school in my absence. We returned in 1861, leaving three children in England, and brought a baby girl out with us. As I walked up the lane to the mission-house, Nietfong stood watching for me at the gate. "Take me home with you; oh, I am so glad you are come back!" So I took her home, and Nietfong told me that her father had married again, and that her step-mother was unkind to her, and beat her when she said the prayers I had taught her night and morning; "but," said the child, "I always prayed, nevertheless." She lived with us till she was about thirteen, perhaps not so much; then her father came to the Bishop and said he had

[64]

sold Nietfong for a good sum of money to a man in China, and must send her there to stay with her grandmother.

In vain I entreated Acheck not to be so wicked. "Tell me how much you would get for your daughter," I said, "and we will give you the money." He laughed, and said I could not afford it, mentioning a large sum, but I do not remember what it was; so I had to break the sad news to Nietfong. We wept and prayed together that she might remain steadfast in her Christian faith. As she then knew English very well, I gave her an English Prayer-book, which she promised to use. Soon after, Acheck himself took her to China; and when he came back, he would only say, "Oh yes, of course she is happy—she is married and well off." I have always felt sure that this dear girl was kept by God's grace from sin and evil, for I believe she truly loved and desired to serve God. There was something especially pure about her. Nietfong was never wilfully naughty; she was one of those blameless ones who seem untouched by the evil around them. We shall not know the sequel of her history until by God's mercy we meet her in the heavenly home.

[65]

As I have spoken about the Dyak kurap, I may as well here mention the real leprosy of the East, which was a terrible but not frequent scourge among the Chinese. The Rajah had a small house built out of the town for any men who were so afflicted, and they were fed by Government. The Bishop or his chaplain used to go and teach these poor creatures, but there were not more than three or four of them at a time. We knew one Chinese woman who had leprosy. She became a Christian, and liked to have a cottage lecture at her house. I often went to see her. Her toes gradually dropped off, and her fingers. I never heard her complain. One day I went to see her and found her very ill, constantly sick. She said she had been poisoned; and it seemed probable, for no medicine gave her any relief, and in a few hours she died. The natives have such a horror of leprosy that they do not like to touch the body of any one who has died of it, so the Bishop and Owen, the schoolmaster, laid poor Acheen in her coffin; and this charitable act they performed for any unfortunate who died of this terrible disease.

[66]

Acheen had adopted a little boy, Sifok by name. She must have been very kind to the child, for he seemed wild with grief when she died, and was very anxious that whoever had poisoned his mother, as he called her, should be punished. But the case was not clear, and no one was punished. We took Sifok into the school, and I taught him to play the harmonium, which at last he accomplished very fairly.

Amongst our schoolboys was one particularly steady and religious. Tung Fa was so good a Malay and Chinese scholar that he could interpret at the Chinese Bible class, and also the sermon at the Chinese service at church on Sunday. I think he knew his Bible almost by heart. He was never very strong in health; then his feet began to swell, and leprosy declared itself. For a long time he was carried to and from the church in a chair, but at last he was so diseased that he was removed from the school-house, and a little hut was built for him close to us. The boys brought him his food, and of course he had anything he fancied from our kitchen. I think the servants were very kind to him, and he exhibited a beautiful example of patience and resignation until the disease affected his brain; even then he was quite gentle, only he was always begging to be baptized over again that he might die free from sin. This mistake arose entirely from his illness. We were quite thankful when one morning he was found dead in his bed. What a blissful waking, after so much suffering!

[67]

Footnotes:

[2] A chawat is a long strip of cotton or bark cloth wound round the body.



[68]

CHAPTER VII.

THE LUNDUS.

The beginning of the year 1851 brought us much sorrow. After my illness in November, 1850, we were persuaded by Sir James Brooke to accompany him to Penang Hill, where the Government bungalow had been placed at his disposal; consequently, after Christmas, we sailed in H.M.S. *Amazon*, through the kindness of Captain Troubridge, for Singapore, for Sarawak, taking our child Harry with us. We had to wait some weeks at Singapore for the Rajah, and soon after our arrival our little boy died of diphtheria, leaving us childless, for we had already lost two infants at Sarawak. This grief threw a veil of sadness over the remaining years of our first sojourn in the East. Perhaps it urged us to a deeper interest in the native people than we might have felt had there been any little ones of our own to care for; but those six years "the flowers all died along our way," one infant after another being laid in God's acre.

We stayed six weeks amid the lovely scenery and in the cooler air of Penang Hill, and returned to Sarawak in May, Admiral Austin giving us a passage in H.M.S. *Fury*. The admiral gave me his cabin to sleep in, all the gentlemen sleeping in the cuddy. I woke in the night, hearing a rushing sound in the air, then, patter, patter, all over the bed. I jumped up, and called Frank to bring a light and see what was the matter. "Oh," said a voice from the cuddy, "better not: it is only cockroaches, and if you saw them you would not go to sleep again." This swarm of cockroaches came out several times before daylight. The next night I put up a mosquito-net to protect my face and hands from these disgusting creatures. When a steamer has been nearly three years in these hot latitudes it becomes horribly full of rats and cockroaches. My husband, taking a trip in H.M.S. *Contest*, in 1858, woke one morning unable to open one eye. Presently he felt a sharp prick, and found a large cockroach sitting on his eyelid and biting the corner of his eye. They also bite all round the nails of your fingers and toes, unless they are closely covered. It must be said that insects are a great discomfort at Sarawak. Mosquitoes, and sand-flies, and stinging flies which turn your hands into the likeness of boxing-gloves, infest the banks of the rivers, and the sea-shore. Flying bugs sometimes scent the air unpleasantly, and there are hornets in the woods whose sting is dangerous. When we look back upon the happy days we spent in that lovely country, these drawbacks are forgotten; the past is always beautiful, and shadows, even of sorrow and sickness, only enhance the interest of the picture. Sin alone, in ourselves and those about us, can make the past hateful, and the great charm of the future is that it is untouched by sin. Happy, then, are those who are able to look back on the past with smiles of thankfulness, while they stretch out their arms hopefully to the future.

Sarawak looked very peaceful on our return; and now began the interest of the Dyak missions. From our first arrival at Kuching my husband had taken every opportunity of visiting the Dyak tribes, and sometimes a chief would come to the town with a number of his people, to pay their rice tax, or purchase clothes, tobacco, gongs, gunpowder, whatever the bazaar possessed which they valued. They brought with them beeswax, damar, honey, or rattans to exchange for those things. On these occasions the whole party came up to the mission-house to hear the harmonium, see the magic-lantern, and beg presents. At first they would ask for arrack, but finding nothing but claret to be had with us, soon left off that request. Plates and cups were always valued, and they used to say we had *so many* more than we could possibly want in the pantry, that of course we would give them some. To their honour be it said, they never stole one, and were invariably refused, for we had not any more than we wanted. The Dyaks hung their plates in loops of rattan very ingeniously against the walls of their houses; but a plantain-leaf folded up is more often used by them in lieu of plates, and they could not have a better substitute. I never enjoyed a meal so much as some cold rice and sardines eaten off a plantain-leaf in the jungle at Lundu, after a long walk to the waterfall. The servant with the provision basket had lost his way, and as we sat hungry under the great trees at the foot of the fall, a Dyak friend produced a box of sardines and a parcel of cold rice, and divided it amongst us. When at last the basket of cold chickens arrived we handed them over to the Dyaks, feeling quite superior to such civilized food.

The Lundu Dyak chief was a great friend and admirer of Sir James Brooke from his first arrival in the country. He and his tribe were the determined enemies of the pirates, and with the Balows of the Batang Lupar braved the Sarebas and Sakarrans, even when they were most powerful. At the pirate fight of 1849 the Lundu chief lost two of his sons: they were killed by an ambush set by Lingi the Sarebas chief. Only one son, Callon, remained, and he was not his father's favourite. Poor old Orang Kaya! it was a terrible trial, and nearly brought him to his grave. Some time afterwards, he and Callon were at Sarawak to pay their tax. Lingi, who had then submitted to the Rajah, had been in Sarawak for some days, professedly to trade, but really to see if he could not take Sir James Brooke's head. This was prevented by the watchfulness of the Malays, who, suspecting Lingi, never let him get near the Rajah when they sat talking after dinner, as was the custom in those days. So Lingi went away foiled, and the day they dropped down the river the Lundus heard of it. Revenge seemed ready at hand: they had a fast boat, were a large party, and brave to a man. They entreated the Rajah to let them follow Lingi and take his head—never again would they take a head, only Lingi's, the Rajah's enemy and their own. Of course they were refused, and it must have been a terrible strain on their affection and fealty to the Rajah, not in this instance to follow the traditions of their ancestors, and gratify their personal revenge by killing a traitor. But they obeyed, and Lingi got safely back to Sarebas, little knowing how

narrowly he escaped. The old Lundu chief was a Christian before he died. He always professed a desire to be of the same religion and brother to the white man, but when, after due instruction, his son and grandson came to Kuching to be baptized, he was not well enough to accompany them, Mr. Gomes promised to baptize him on their return; but when that event took place Orang Kaya was dead, gone where, no doubt, the will was taken for the deed, as he was a Christian at heart. Mr. Gomes was from Bishop's College, Calcutta. Soon after he came to us, in 1852, he went to Lundu and remained there until 1867, when his children requiring more education than he could give them at a Dyak station, he went to Singapore, and accepted the post of missionary priest there.

Mr. Grant was Government resident at Lundu, and the ruler and missionary devoted themselves to the improvement of the people. In 1855, when we returned to our home after our first visit to England, we received a delightful visit from Mr. Gomes and twelve Dyaks, whom he brought to be baptized at St. Thomas's Church. Callon's son Langi, and half a dozen other boys, lived with Mr. Gomes, and ran after him all day—nice little fellows, who fraternized with our boys at the school-house. There were also five men, the chief of whom was Bulan (Moon), one of the manangs, or witch-doctors, of the tribe. These manangs, being as it were the priests of Dyak superstitions, and getting their living by pretended cures, interpretations of omens and the voices of birds, were of course the natural enemies of truth and enlightenment. Bulan, however, had tried to be an honest manang, and finding it impossible had turned with all his heart to Christianity. His brother Bugai, also a Christian, was a very intelligent person, and became catechist at Lundu. [73]

There was also a very rich old man, Simoulin by name, who was baptized at this time. His wife had opposed his conversion with all her might; indeed, she declared she would leave him and carry half the property with her. Simoulin said quietly, "If she will she must: she is only a woman, and her judgment in the matter is not likely to be good." Christianity had strong opponents in the women of all the Dyak tribes. They held important parts in all the feasts, incantations, and superstitions, which could not be called religion, but were based on the dread of evil spirits and a desire to propitiate them. The women encouraged head-taking by preferring to marry the man who had some of those ghastly tokens of his prowess. When Sir James Brooke forbade head-taking among the tribes in his dominions, it was the women who would row their lovers out of the rivers in their boats, and set them down on the sea-coast to find the head of a stranger. When heads were brought in, it was the women who took possession of them, decked them with flowers, put food into their mouths, sang to them, mocked them, and instituted feasts in honour of the slayers. The young Dyak woman works hard; she helps in all the labours of sowing, planting out, weeding, and reaping the paddy. She beats out the rice in a wooden trough, with a long pole, or pestle. She grows the cotton for clothing, dyes and weaves it. She carries heavy burdens, and paddles her boat on the river. All these are her duties, and in performing them she quickly loses her smooth skin, bright eyes, and slender figure. It is only the young girls who can boast of any beauty, but the old women are very important personages at a seed-time or harvest festival. They dress themselves in long garments embroidered with tiny white shells, representing lizards and crocodiles. With long wands in their hands, they dance, singing wild incantations. They have already prepared the food for the feast—chickens roasted in their feathers; cakes of rice, spun like vermicelli and fried in cocoa-nut oil; curries, and salads of bitter and acid leaves; sticks of small bamboo filled with pulut rice and boiled, when it turns to a jelly and is agreeably flavoured with the young bamboo. It is the women also who serve out the tuak, a spirit prepared from rice and spiced with various ingredients, tobacco being one. The men must drink at these feasts; they are very temperate generally, but on this occasion they are rather proud of being drunk and boasting the next day of a bad headache! The women urge them to drink, but do not join in the orgies, and disappear when the intoxicating stage begins. I trust that this description belongs only to the past; at any rate, we know that in those places where the missionaries have long taught, their people follow a more excellent way of rejoicing in the joy of harvest, and, after their thanksgiving service in church, pour out their offerings of rice before the altar to maintain the services, and minister to the sick and needy. [74] [75]



A DYAK GIRL.

Page 74.

For many years, however, the women were opposed to a religion which cleared away the superstitious customs which were the delight of their lives, their chief amusement and dissipation, and a means of influencing the men. It was not until the year 1864 that Mr. Gomes asked us to visit Lundu and welcome a little party of women, the first converts to the faith which their fathers and husbands had long professed. This is a long digression from the history of the Lundus' visit to Kuching in 1855, which was at the time a great event. I find the following passage in my journal: "Every evening, before late dinner, the Lundus go up to Mr. Gomes's room to say their prayers, and sing, or rather chant, their hymns. There is something very affecting in this little service—the Dyak voices singing of Christ's second coming with His holy angels, and rejoicing that He came once before for their salvation; then praying for holy, gentle hearts to receive Him. I always feel on these occasions as if I heard these precious truths afresh when they are spoken in a tongue till lately ignorant of them. Indeed, there can scarcely be a more joyful excitement than such passages in the life of a missionary; they are worth any sacrifice. After English morning service, Mr. Gomes has prayers in church for his Dyaks. He then instructs them in the baptismal service. This makes five daily services in church, two English, two Chinese, and one Dyak. We clothed all the candidates in a new suit of cotton garments with a bright-coloured handkerchief for their heads. It would be considered very irreverent for Easterns to uncover their heads in church. I taught the school-children to sing 'Veni, Creator Spiritus' at this baptism, while the clergy were arranging the candidates and sponsors round the font. The font was wreathed with flowers by my children. There was quite a full church, for the Chinese Christians all came to see the Dyaks baptized, and all the English of the place were present. Mr. Gomes baptized, and my husband signed them with the cross. They all spoke up bravely in answering to their vows: may God give them grace to keep them."

[76]

[77]

This baptism took place on Whit Sunday. On Thursday of that week, Mr. Gomes, his Dyaks, and Frank, went off to Linga for a week to visit Mr. Chambers, and Mr. Horsburgh at Banting, that the converts of both tribes might become friends. The Balows and Lundus had always been united in their efforts against the pirate tribes, and in their fealty to the Rajah's Government. On this account they had a right to the services of the first missionaries who came from England to teach Dyaks. The visit to Banting had another object besides the mutual friendship of the converts. A controversy had arisen in the mission about the right word to be used in translations for *Jesus*. *Isa* is the name the Malays use, and the Dutch translations of the Bible employ this name; but there happened to be a bad Malay man owning the name of *Isa*, well known to the Balows, and Mr. Chambers feared some confusion would arise in the minds of converts in applying the same name to our Lord. It was therefore necessary to have a meeting of the clergy to decide this and many other religious terms to be used in hymns, catechisms, and in general teaching, that there might be unity in the mission: it would not do to have any divisions in the camp on such a subject. There are fifty miles of sea to cross from the Sarawak River to the Batang Lupar, then a long pull from the fort at Linga up to Banting. The journey took three nights

[78]

and two days.

The mission-house at Banting is most romantically placed on the crest of a hill overhanging the river about three hundred feet, and stands in a grove of beautiful fruit-trees. The view from it is enchanting. The river branches at the foot of the hill, and each branch seems to vie with the other in the tortuousness of its course through the bright green paddy-fields. About a mile off rises Mount Lesong^[3] with a graceful slope, about three thousand feet, and then terminates abruptly in a rugged top. The four clergymen who met at Banting looked almost as wild as their people—wide shady hats, long staffs, long beards, not a shirt among the party, and but one pair of shoes, belonging to my husband, who never could walk barefooted. They spent several days together, and had much consultation about religious terms. The most intelligent of the Dyak Christians were present, as it was necessary, not only to choose words they could understand, but such as they could easily pronounce. On Trinity Sunday there were several services in the large room of the house, for the church was not yet built. The Lingas sang their hymns with great energy to one of their own wild strains, but when they heard the Lundus' melodious chant they were ashamed to sing after them, and begged them to teach them. The Dyaks love music and verse. Mr. Gomes and Mr. Chambers wrote them hymns, and the Creed in verse, which they readily commit to memory and understand better than prose. Pictures are also used in their instruction: a parable or miracle is read, then a picture of it produced and explained, the Dyaks repeating each sentence after the teacher, to keep their attention.

[79]

The baptized alone join in the Litany and Holy Communion. The afternoon was spent in visiting the sick and giving medicine. Several women came to the house for instruction, and seemed to take great interest in Mr. Chambers, teaching; but it was not until Mr. Chambers was married that any women were baptized. At breakfast the next morning came an old chief, called Tongkat Langit—the Staff of Heaven. His son Lingire was one of the most pleasing converts, and Tongkat was wavering—had not leisure at present! The necessity of forswearing the practise of head-taking deters the old men from becoming Christians: they fear to lose influence with their tribe. The little party then fixed upon the spot where the church should be built, a permanent bilian chancel to which a nave could be added when the additional room was required. Twenty-five pounds from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was all the money then in hand to begin with; but very soon more was collected, and when I visited Banting in 1857 there was a lovely little church standing on the hill overlooking the village, and surrounded by beautiful trees. The walk to it from the mission-house was just like a gentleman's park, the green sward and groups of trees with lovely peeps of hill and valleys and winding streams between. Again in 1864 we went to Banting, that the Bishop might consecrate the church. The nave was then built. Every stick in the church was bilian. The white ants walked in as soon as the workmen left. In one night they carried their covered ways all over the inside of the roof, the walls, the beams, and rafters; and finding nothing they could bite, they walked out again, leaving their traces plainly marked. Since then a coloured-glass window, representing our Lord's Resurrection, has been added at the east end of the church; and, what is better far, the church is full of Dyak Christians every Sunday, and from this living Church many branches have been planted, so that the Banting Mission now includes seven stations, where there are school-churches built by the natives themselves, and many hundreds of Christian worshippers.

[80]

In 1854, six years having passed away since a little band of Sir James Brooke's friends founded the Borneo Church Mission, the funds of the Society came to an end; and the mission would have collapsed also, had not the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts consented to become responsible for it. As the missionaries and catechists increased in number, and fresh stations were added to the church, they opened their arms wider to receive them, until they set apart £3000 a year for Borneo. Under their fostering care the mission flourished, as it could not have done under the management of any private society.

[81]

Footnotes:

[3] *Lesong*, mortar, being mortar-shaped.



[82]

CHAPTER VIII.

A BOAT JOURNEY.

Throughout the year 1852 and part of '53 my husband was much tried with rheumatism in his knee, which made him quite lame, though he would hobble to church on crutches, and to hospital to look after his poor patients. Meanwhile he taught the young missionaries something of the art of healing, dressing wounds and broken bones, and physicking the ailments to which natives are most subject—fever, dysentery, etc. It was quite necessary they should know something of these subjects before they could be any use in the jungle. The first question the Dyaks asked, if told a new missionary was coming, would always be, "Is he clever at physic?" Medicines and simple remedies were always furnished to every mission-station, and the Rajah supplied all the stores that were needed for Kuching or elsewhere. We had taken a good stock with us at first, and all sorts of surgical instruments, but the Government kept it replenished.

The hospital was set up when the great influx of Chinese brought numbers of sick people to the place. A long shed was built, and twenty beds immediately filled; but the next day, one of the patients having died, all the others who could move ran away. They have so great a horror of a dead body that they never suffered any one to die in their houses if they could help it, but built a little shed for the sick man, and visited him twice a day with food and opium while life lasted. A separate room was therefore added for the dead. This hospital furnished good instruction to the missionaries. It was also their duty to teach the sick every day, and the result was that several Chinese were baptized on their recovery. This shed was afterwards exchanged for a long room above the fort, which was both more airy and substantial. A dispensary was attached to it.

[83]

When Mr. Chambers came from England and was able to undertake the duties at Kuching, my husband accompanied Captain Brooke and some of the Government officers in a tour up the Batang Lupar and Rejang Rivers. He was very lame at the time, but had no walking to do, only now and then to get out of his large boat and scramble up into a Dyak house. How he managed it under the circumstances I never could imagine, for the staircase from the water to a high Dyak house is only the trunk of a tree with a few notches in it, and, at low tide, a case of slippery mud; this, placed at a steep angle, without any rail, is not easy climbing for any one, but a stiff knee made it still more difficult.

[84]

The object of the expedition was to make peace between certain Dyak tribes who had long been enemies, and to build a fort on the Rejang River, similar to Mr. Brereton's fort at Sakarran, and for the same purpose. An Englishman named Steele was to occupy the fort with some Malays. Captain Brooke took the *Jolly Bachelor* gunboat, and Frank moved into it to cross the sea from the mouth of the Sarawak to the Linga River, for the waves were high and wetted the smaller boats. When they reached the Linga River, he was sitting one Sunday night on the boom of the *Jolly*, enjoying the moonlight, and watching the swift rush of the tide, which is very rapid in that river. Suddenly, the piece of wood he was trusting to broke, and he was precipitated over the stern. Had he fallen into the water he must have been dragged under the vessel by the tide and drowned, but, through God's mercy, the ship's boat (*Dingy*), which only a few minutes before was the whole length of its painter away from the *Jolly*, swept up to it from the swing of the vessel, and, as he fell, he caught hold of the boat and pulled himself into it, escaping with only a bruise, when a watery bed, or the jaws of an alligator or shark, might have received him. A shark had been swimming round the gun-boat during Divine service that day, and an alligator had taken a man only the day before from a boat close by. My dear husband's comment on this narrow escape is, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness."

[85]

The fleet waited for some days in the Linga River, while the Balow Dyaks fetched the jars which they were to exchange with the Sakarrans as a pledge of peace. These jars, of which every Dyak tribe possessed some, are of unknown antiquity. There is nothing very particular in their appearance. They are brown in colour, have handles at the sides, and sometimes figures of dragons on them. They vary in value, but though the Chinese have tried to imitate them, hoping to sell them to the Dyaks, they have never deceived them: they detect a difference where no European or Chinese eye can, and at once pronounce the Chinese jars of no value. Yet they will not sell their own rusas or tajows for any money, and they fancy that some of them have the property of keeping water always sweet. If a Dyak tribe offends the law, Government fines them so many jars, which are brought to Kuching and kept, or returned on their good behaviour. This reminds me of the story of a little Dyak boy who was taken prisoner in 1849. His father was killed, and the boy, about eight years old, was brought to the Rajah. For some days the child seemed quite happy, then he begged to speak to "Tuan Rajah," and told him confidentially that he knew a place in the jungle where some valuable tajows were secreted, and if he would land him with some Malays on the bank of the river, he would point out the place. The Rajah believed the child, and the jars were found, and taken on board the boat. Then the little boy went again to the Rajah, and bursting into tears, said, "I have given you the riches of my tribe; in return give me my liberty. Set me down in the jungle path, give me some food, and in two days I shall reach my home and my mother." So the child was laden with all he took a fancy to—a china cup, a glass tumbler, and a gay sarong (waist-cloth), and as much food as he could carry—and we heard afterwards that he rejoined his friends in safety.

[86]

I must now return to my husband's journal. He says: "While at breakfast this morning, one of the men told us he had seen the people with tails, of whom we have often heard. [4] They live fifteen days up a river, in the interior of the Bruni country. It is a large river, but in some places runs through caverns, where they can only pass on small rafts. He was sent there by Pangeran Mumeim to get goats, as these tailed gentry keep a great many of them. He says their tails are as long as the two joints of the middle finger, fleshy and stiff. They must be very inconvenient, for

they are obliged to sit on logs of wood made on purpose, or to make a hole in the earth, to accommodate their tails before they can sit down. These people do not eat rice, but sago made into cakes and baked in a pot. In their country, he said, was a great stone fort, with nine large iron guns, of which the people can give no account, not knowing when or by whom it was built.

[87]

"After dinner, when the men sit round me and smoke my cigars, they soon enter into conversation. We spoke a good deal to-day on the subject of religion, the difference between Christianity and Mahometanism, and, above all, the absurdity of their repeating the Koran, like so many parrots, without understanding one word of what they say; and the irreverence of addressing God in words they do not understand, so that their hearts can take no part in their prayers. They agreed that it would be better to learn God's law, instead of trusting merely to their hadjis, who are often as ignorant as themselves. A respectable old Bruni man, speaking of different races of men of various colours, said he had visited a tribe of white people, who lived on a high hill in the interior of the country; they were very white, and the women beautiful, with light hair. The men dress like Dyaks, but the women wear a long black robe, tight at the waist, and puffed out on the shoulders. The tradition of their origin, he said, was as follows: A long, long time ago, an old man who lived on this mountain lost himself in the jungle at its foot, and at night, being tired, and afraid of snakes and the evil spirits of the wood, he climbed into a tree and fell asleep. He was woke by a noise of ravishing music, the sweetest gongs and chanangs mingling with voices over his head. The music came nearer and nearer to the place where he was, until he heard the sweet voices under the tree, and, looking down, beheld a large clear fountain opened, and seven beautiful females bathing. They were all of different sizes, like the fingers on a man's hand, and they sung as they sported in the water. The old man watched them for some time, and thought how much he should like one of them as a wife for his only son; but as he was afraid of descending among them, he made a noose with a long piece of rattan, lowered it gently, and slipping it over one of them, drew her up into the tree. She cried out, and they all disappeared with a whirring noise. The girl he caught was very young, and she cried sadly because she had no clothes on; so he rolled her in a chawat (long sash), and immediately heard the gongs at his own house, which he had thought was a long way off. He took the child home, and she was brought up by his wife, until she was old enough to marry their son. She was very good and sweet-tempered, and everybody loved her. In course of time she had a son, as white as herself. One day her husband was in a violent rage and beat her. She implored him not to make her cry, or she should be taken away from him and her child. But he did not heed, and at last pulled her jacket off to beat her. Immediately another jacket was dropped with a great noise from the sky, upon the house. She put it on, and vanished upwards, leaving her son, who was the ancestor of the present tribe."

[88]

Who would have thought of a Dyak Undine?

While the Malay was telling this story, the boat was waiting in a sheltered nook of the Sakarran River for the bore to pass, before the crew dare venture up to the fort. The bore is a great wave, twelve feet high, which rushes up with the tide, and is succeeded by two smaller waves. It is very dangerous to boats; but happily the natives know where to hide while it sweeps past.

[89]

When they reached Sakarran Fort it took several days to hear all the claims the Lingas and Sakarrans had against each other. Six years before, the Rajah had persuaded them to make peace, but they had broken it the same day, and laid the blame upon one another. At last matters were arranged, and a platform being made under a wide-spreading banyan-tree, the chiefs sat round; and Captain Brooke made them a speech, describing the evils of piracy and war, and the determination of the Rajah that his subjects should live at peace with one another.

"He then presented each chief with a jar, a spear, and a Sarawak flag, and desired them to use the flag in their boats for the purposes of trade. Nothing could be more picturesque than the scene. The surface of the water was dotted over with the long serpent-like bangkongs, gaily painted and adorned with flags and streamers of many colours, which looked all the brighter against the solemn jungle background. Then Gassim and Gila Brani (madly brave), on the part of the Sakarrans, and Tongkat Langit (Staff of Heaven), the Linga chief, joined hands; and each tribe killed a pig with great ceremony, and inspected the entrails to see if the peace was good. Then they feasted and rejoiced together. This ended, they proceeded up the Rejang River in the boats, and paddled for four days, from twenty-five to thirty miles a day, until they came to the Kenowit, on the banks of which the fort was to be built."

[90]

The Rejang is a glorious river. It is not visited by a bore, and eighty miles from the sea it is half a mile broad, and deep to the banks. The flowers and fruits which grow there are a continual surprise and pleasure—but how shall I describe the flowers of those great woods?—not only up the Rejang, but everywhere in the old jungle. They seldom grow on the ground, though you may sometimes come upon a huge bed of ground orchids, but mostly climb up the trees, and hang in festoons from the branches. One plant, the *Ixora*, for instance, propagating itself undisturbed, will become a garden itself, trailing its red or orange blossoms from bough to bough till the forest glows with colour.

The *Rhododendron*, growing in the forks of the great branches, takes possession of the tall trees, making them blush all over with delicate pinks and lilacs, or deepest rose clusters. Then the orchideous plants fix themselves in the branches, and send out long sprays of blossom of many colours and sweetest perfume. Here the voice of the Burong boya (crocodile-bird) may be heard, singing like an English thrush. He shakes his wings as he sings, and the Malays say that from time immemorial he has owed a large sum of money to the crocodile, who comes every year to

[91]

ask payment; then the bird, perched on a high bough out of reach of the monster, sings, "How can I pay? I have nothing but my feathers, nothing but my feathers!" So the crocodile goes away till next year. There are not many singing birds in Borneo besides this thrush. The soft voices of many doves and pigeons may always be heard, and often the curious creaking noise made by the wings of rhinoceros hornbills as they fly past. More musical is the voice of the Wawa monkey, a bubbling like water running out of a narrow-necked bottle, always to be heard at early dawn, and the sweetest of alarms. A dead stillness reigns in the jungle by day, but at sunset every leaf almost becomes instinct with life. You might almost fancy yourself beset by Gideon's army, when all the lamps in the pitchers rattled and broke, and every man blew his trumpet into your ear. It is an astounding noise certainly, and difficult to believe that so many pipes and rattles, whirring machines and trumpets, belong to good-sized beetles or flies, singing their evening song to the setting sun. As the light dies away all becomes still again, unless any marshy ground shelters frogs. But to hear all this you must go to the old jungle, where the tall trees stand near together and shut out the light of day, and almost the air, for there is a painful sense of suffocation in the dense wood.

Footnotes:

[4] This legend, though commonly reported, has never been proved.



[92]

CHAPTER IX.

CONTINUATION OF THE TRIP TO REJANG.

After two days' paddling from the mouth of the Rejang, the boats arrived at Sibou, where there is a manufactory for nepa salt. The nepa palm grows down to the edge of the banks, which are washed by a salt tide, and furnishes the Dyak with many necessaries.

The leaves make the thatch to cover the roofs of the houses, or shelter over their boats. Neatly fastened together with split rattans, they form the walls of the house. From the juice of the tree they make a fermented drink something like sweet beer, also brown sugar. The young shoots are eaten in curries and salads. The fruit is salted or pickled. When they have got all these good things out of it, they burn the stem of the palm with some of the leaves, and wash the burnt ashes in water. This water is then boiled until it is evaporated, and some black salt remains at the bottom of the pot. It tastes bitter as well as salt; but the Dyaks prefer it to common salt, and if you ask why, they say, "It is a fat salt." I must now return to my husband's journal. "Arrived at Kenowit. A tribe of Milanows have been induced to settle here lately by the Rajah. Within the last few weeks they have built two long and substantial houses, raised thirty feet from the ground on trunks of trees, some two feet in diameter. There are in all sixty doors, or families. The tribe furnishes three hundred fighting men, and numbers from fifteen hundred to two thousand.

[93]

"The bachelors, as with the Dyaks, have a separate dwelling.

"Tanee's tribe, who are returning to Sibou on the Rajah's promise to build a fort at Kenowit, are of the same tribe, and number about three hundred men. They speak the Milanow language, and have the same customs of burial. The men and some of the women are tattooed in the most grotesque patterns. When you look at them closely the invention displayed is truly remarkable; but at a distance they give a dingy, dusky appearance to the men, as if they were daubed with an inky sponge. Nature having denied them beards, they tattoo curly locks along their faces, always bordered by a vandyke fringe, which must task their utmost ingenuity. Tanee, who has followed us with some of his warriors, is the very exquisite of a Kenowit. He is made like a Hercules, and is proud of showing his strength and agility. He piques himself upon having the best sword, of fine Kayan make and native metal, and the strongest arm in his tribe. He sits most of the day sharpening one or another of these swords, feeling and looking along its edge to see that the weapon is in perfect order: then, to prove it, he seeks for a suitable block of wood, as thick as his arm, severs it at a blow, gives a yell, and with a grin of delight returns the weapon to its sheath. His jacket is of scarlet satin; his long hair is confined by a gold-embroidered handkerchief; his chawat is of fine white cloth, very long, and richly embroidered—the ends hang down to his knees, he wears behind an apron of panther's skin, trimmed with red cloth and alligator's teeth, and other charms; this hangs from his loins to his knees, and always affords him a dry seat.

[94]

Tanee's boat is long, made out of one tree, like our river canoes, but much lighter and faster. His cabin is a raised platform in the centre of the boat, covered with a mat, and hung all round with weapons and trophies of war—Kyan fighting-coats of bear and buffalo hides, having head-pieces adorned with beads or shells, shields and spears all gaily decked with Argus' feathers, or human hair dyed red.

"On Sunday we moved from the boats into Palabun's house, and settled ourselves in part of the verandah. After breakfast I doctored the sick, and then we had the morning service, much to the surprise of the natives, who, however, did not disturb us. They sit round us all day, hearing and asking us questions.... Meanwhile the seven hundred men who came in the flotilla of twenty boats, were busy building the fort. First they pulled down a temporary fort already set up by the Kenowits, and then cut wood to erect a substantial building. Four guns were mounted on the parapet, and there was a house inside for the Malay commandant, and a powder magazine. All the chiefs near Kenowit were assembled when the fort was finished, and had the same kind of address made them as at Sakarran, praising the benefits of peaceful trade instead of the miseries of wasteful war. They all listened with respect. That same afternoon, dismal howlings issued from Palabun's house. His brother, who had left him two years ago with a party of fourteen, to visit a friendly tribe at a distance, had been treacherously murdered. He and his party had been kindly received by their friends, and they had all gone out together on the war-path to seek heads. It is supposed that when they met no one, the hosts had turned on their visitors and taken their heads, rather than return home without any. Palabun vowed vengeance, and the whole tribe go into mourning for three months." (Bishop's Journal.)

[95]

A Dyak mourning is not a becoming black costume, made "cheerful," as the dressmakers say, by jet ornaments and bugle trimmings. It consists in the abandonment of all ornament and their usual clothing, and the substitution of a kind of a brown cloth made of the inside bark of trees, which must be as rough and uncomfortable as it is ugly. These people, being Milanows, have peculiar burial customs. They lay the dead in a boat, with all his property and belongings, and send it out to sea; for they imagine that in some way a man's possessions may be of use to him in another world, if no one claims them on earth.

[96]

"In this case there was no corpse to bury. The clothes were so disposed on the bier as to represent a figure, and laid beside it were handsome gold cloths and ornaments, gold buttons, crises,^[5] and breastplates, and weapons of Javanese manufacture, representing some hundreds of dollars. There were also gongs and two brass guns. Of course the fate of such boat-loads, sent adrift in a tidal river, is generally to be capsized and lost in the water. But if Malays encounter them they do not hesitate to appropriate the effects. Palabun knew this, so he did not send his brother's boat away until our fleet had departed." (Bishop's Journal.)

I remember our once meeting one of these boats. It had been caught by branches from the bank, and swayed idly to and fro in the stream. We could only see a heap of coloured clothes inside it, but there was a weird, ghastly look about the boat which made us shudder. An unburied corpse, left to the winds and waves, without a prayer or a blessing! how could it be otherwise? Even if we could delude ourselves into fancying the Dyaks happy during their lives without Christianity, there can be no doubt of their being miserable when death comes. They all believe dimly in a future state, but their dread of spirits is so great that they can have no ideas of happiness unconnected with their bodies. "Having no hope, and without God in the world," describes the mental state of a heathen Dyak. In 1856, we were living for a few weeks on a hill called Peninjauh, some miles from Kuching, where the Rajah had built a cottage as a sanitarium after illness. The cool freshness of the mountain air, and the glorious view from See-afar Cottage, were indeed conducive to health. On the hillsides lived several villages of Land Dyaks, and I had a woman as nurse to my baby who belonged to one of these villages. The cholera was in the country at that time, and three men had died of the Sebumban Dyaks. Every night the most mournful wailing arose above the trees—a sad sound indeed, rising and falling on the wind as the friends of the dead walked all through the jungle paths near their homes, now near to our cottage, now far off. One night I found my little ayah seated in the nursery when she ought to have been in the cook-house getting her supper. "What is the matter, Nina? Are you ill, that you are eating no supper?" "No, I am not ill, but I dare not go to the cook-house to-night." "Why?" "I fear to meet the spirits who are abroad to-night in the jungle." "The spirits of the dead men?" "No, the spirits who come to fetch them." After three days the bodies of these Dyaks were burnt, for this was the custom of the Sebumbans. The dead man is laid on a pile of wood, and they all sit round watching. Nina said, that when the fire has burnt some time the dead man sits up for a moment, whereupon they all burst into renewed waitings of sorrow and farewell. I am told that the heat swelling the sinews of the dead body may cause this curious phenomenon; but could there be a more mournful, hopeless story of death?

[97]

[98]

It is a relief to return to the party on the Rejang River. They were much entertained one day with a war-dance between two warriors, which was a graphic pantomime of their customs. "The two men appeared fully armed, and were supposed to be each alone on the war-path, looking out for a head. They moved to the beat of native drums, and seemed to be going through all the motions of looking out for an enemy, pulling out the ranjows (sharp pieces of cane stuck in the earth, point upwards, to lame an enemy). At length they descried one another, danced defiance, and, flourishing swords and shields, commenced the attack. The nimbleness with which they parried every stroke of the sword, and covered their bodies with their shields, was remarkable. In real combat, to strike the shield is certain death, because the sword sticks in the wood and cannot be withdrawn in time to prevent the other man from using his sword. After a time, one of the

combatants fell wounded, and covered his body with his shield. The other danced round him triumphantly, and with one blow pretended to cut off his head; then, head in hand, he capered with the wildest gestures, expressive of the very ecstasy of savage delight. But, on looking at his trophy closely, he recognized the features of a friend, and, smitten with remorse, he replaced the head with much solicitude. Then, moving with a slow, measured tread, he wept, and with many sighs of grief adjusted the head with much care, caught rain in his shield and poured it over the body; then rubbed and shook the limbs, which by degrees became alive by his mesmeric-like passings and chafings from the feet upwards. Each limb as it revived beat time to the music, first faintly, then with more vigour, till it came to the head; and when that nodded satisfactorily, and the whole body of his friend was in motion, he gave him a few extra shakes, lifted him on his legs, and the scene concluded by their dancing merrily together." (Bishop's Journal.)

[99]

Captain Brooke and my husband were a month away on this expedition. They would have liked to pay a visit to Kum Nepa, a Kyan chief, who lived much farther up the river,—six days in a fast Kyan boat, said the Dyaks, ten days in the boats our friends had with them. But Kum Nepa had just lost two children from small-pox, and, according to their custom, he and all his tribe had left their houses and taken to the jungle. The Dyaks dread small-pox to such a degree that, when it appears, they neglect all their usual occupation. The seed is left unsown, the paddy unreaped; they leave the sick to die untended, and support themselves in the jungle upon wild fruits and roots, until the scourge has passed away.

[100]

From the time we lived at Sarawak a continual effort was made to introduce vaccination. It was difficult to get lymph in good order at so distant a place; the sea voyage often rendered it useless. The other difficulty was made by the Malays, who inoculated for small-pox; and, as they charged the Dyaks a rupee a head for inoculating them, made it answer pecuniarily. Some who were adepts in the art went about the country inoculating until they caused quite an epidemic of small-pox. Now, I believe, the Dyaks have learnt from experience the superior advantages of vaccination, and, by a late *Sarawak Gazette*, I gather that it is one of the duties of a Resident among the tribes up country to vaccinate his people as well as to judge them wisely.

When the guns were mounted at the fort, and a garrison of seventy men, under Abong Duraup, settled there to guard it, the fleet left the Rejang to return to Sarawak. Captain Brooke had persuaded Palabun to give up his ideas of retaliation for his brother's death, on condition that the Kapuas people who killed him should give satisfaction. The last afternoon was devoted to doctoring the sick and giving them a stock of remedies. One poor man had nearly recovered his eyesight during the week he had been under treatment. So the Sarawak flag was hoisted at the fort and saluted, and after some good advice and renewed promises from the Sakarrans and Kenowits, the boats pulled away to the *Jolly Bachelor*, which had been left at the Serikei River; and a few days afterwards we heard gongs and boat music on the river, and my servant Quangho running into my room called out, "Our Tuan is coming," so we all went down to the stone wharf and welcomed them home. The lameness which had so long hindered my husband from moving about, did not yield to any remedies we applied, and at last we went to Singapore for medical advice. The doctors there sent their patient to China for a cold season, and he spent six weeks at Hongkong with the Bishop of Victoria, and at Canton with other friends, to the advantage of his knee. Afterwards we went together to Malacca, where there was a hot spring bubbling up in a field. Into this spring we put a large tub; and there, in the early morning, Frank used to sit, with no neighbours but the snipe feeding in the field, and, as he had his gun by his side, he occasionally shot some game for breakfast.

[101]

In 1853 we went home. My health was very much broken, and my husband was called to England by the necessary transfer of the mission from the Borneo Mission Society, whose funds came to an end, to the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who kindly adopted us. We arrived at Southampton one grey November day. I wondered to see the sky so near the earth, and the trees almost like shrubs in height compared to our Eastern forests. But it was sweet to hear the children speaking English in the streets, and their fair rosy faces were refreshing indeed. I never thought our school-children plain when we were at Sarawak, but the contrast was certainly very great when we looked about us in England.

[102]

Footnotes:

- [5] A kris is a Malay dagger.





CHAPTER X.

RETURN TO SARAWAK.

In 1854, after eighteen months' stay in England, during which time my husband worked as deputation for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, we returned to Sarawak, *via* Calcutta, in one of Green's sailing vessels, for we were too large a party to afford the overland route.

Besides ourselves and our baby, we had two young ladies who wished to try and teach the Malay women in their homes, and to help with the day-scholars at the mission-house. Only one of these ladies reached Sarawak; the other left us at Calcutta, and married there eventually. The Rev. J. Grayling and Mr. Owen, a schoolmaster, also went with us, and a young friend who was put under my charge, and lived with us for some years on account of his health.

For nurse I had an old Malay woman who had taken some children to England from Singapore, and wanted to return. She was a capital sailor, and always able to carry Mab about however rough the sea was. Nothing could exceed her devotion to the child, but she had contracted a bad habit of always sharing the sailor's grog by day, and requiring a tumbler of hot gin and water before she went to bed. This was a great trouble to me, but I never saw her tipsy till we were staying at the Bishop's palace at Calcutta. Ayah, having been in the bazaar buying presents for her children, was brought back lying senseless in a palanquin. The Bishop, who was in the hall when the bearers set the palanquin down, exclaimed, "Oh! that woman has cholera! take her away."

[106]

However, she was kindly cared for by the servants, and appeared the next day without any shame, bringing "a toy for missy." All my lecture was quite thrown away—she "had only taken a glass of grog in the bazaar, and they had put bang into it, so of course it made her insensible; but it was no fault of hers." This curious old woman was a Mahometan, therefore her tipsiness was inexcusable. She practised the habit of alms-giving, however, not only with her own money but mine. She used to say I did nothing in that way for the salvation of my soul, and, as she loved me, she must do it for me. I remember seeing a beggar-woman with twin babies, who used to sit in the streets of Kensington with Mab's bonnets on the babies' heads. Ayah gave them for my sake. Indeed, she was notorious in Kensington, because she could not resist treating boys to ginger-beer, and I sometimes had the mortification of seeing Ayah with a small crowd at her heels, and my baby kissing her little hands to them as Ayah desired her.

[107]

We only spent a week in Calcutta. The object of our going there was that the Bishop, in conjunction with Bishop Dealtry of Madras, and Bishop Smith of Victoria, should consecrate my husband Bishop of Labuan; but the Bishops had not reached Calcutta, and their arrival was uncertain. We were anxious to get to Sarawak, and could not wait for them; so it was decided that Frank should return by himself in the autumn, and we should proceed as quickly as we could. Sad news reached us from Kuching. Our dear friend Willie Brereton, who had done so much for the Sakarran Dyaks, was dead of dysentery. There was no medical man when my husband was away.

Our Rajah had been very dangerously ill of small-pox, and had only a Malay doctor, who was devoted but ignorant. Happily Mr. Horsburgh, with medical books to aid him, came to the rescue in time, but the return of the physician of soul and body was much desired. I see, by my journal, that after a weary passage of twenty-four days in a sailing vessel from Singapore, we reached Sarawak on the 25th of April. Mr. Horsburgh came to fetch us from the mouth of the river in the Siam boat, a long boat with a house in it, which the Rajah brought with him from Siam after his embassy to that country. Mr. Horsburgh told us that all the chief Government officers were away, looking for Lanun pirates on the coast; but we had plenty of kind greetings from the Christian Chinese, who came about us in the bazaar, and all the school-children came running down the hill with Mrs. Stahl, who almost screamed for joy at our return. The house looked nicer than ever, for the trees had grown up about it, and I felt most vividly that this was our chosen home, endeared to us by many sorrows, but the place where we had received much blessing from God, and where our work lay, and perhaps some day its reward, in the Church gathered from the heathen into Christ's fold. We were not long alone; the next day Mr. Chambers arrived from Banting with a party of seven baptized Dyaks.

[108]

We had brought all sorts of beautiful things from England for the Church. A carpet to lay before the altar, a new altar-cloth, also painted shields for the roof. Our friends in England had furnished us with a box of clothes for the Dyaks, cotton trousers and jackets, and gay handkerchiefs for their heads. We always dressed the Christians for baptism—it was a sign of the new life they professed at the font; but we did not expect them to wear clothes generally, except their own chawats, nor was it to be desired until they knew how to wash them. We had also brought a beautiful magic lantern with a dissolving-view apparatus for our people's amusement and instruction, for some of the slides were painted by Miss Rigaud to illustrate the life of our Lord, and there were many astronomical slides also. All these treasures brought us numerous visitors. The Chinese Christians were all invited to a feast at our house, after which the magic lantern was exhibited, and we were glad to find that our school-children could explain all the Scripture slides quite correctly.

[109]

Mr. Horsburgh accompanied Mr. Chambers to Banting that day, to assist him in his work for the Balow Dyaks; and soon after, Mr. Gomes arrived from Lundu with a large party of men and boys; but I have already described their visit. My dear husband went off to Calcutta again in September, and was consecrated Bishop of Labuan on St. Luke's Day, October 18, 1855. Sir James Brooke added Sarawak to his diocese and title on his return; indeed, the small island of Labuan, no larger than the Isle of Wight, was only the English title to a bishopric which was then almost entirely a missionary one. The Straits Settlements, including Singapore, Penang, and Malacca, were then under the Government of India, and Labuan was the only spot of land under the immediate control of the Colonial Office. The Bishop of Calcutta would, from the first, have been glad to part with so distant a portion of his then unwieldy diocese, but it could not at that time be effected. As soon as the Straits Settlements were passed over to the Queen's Government, the Bishop of Labuan became virtually the Bishop of the Straits, and, even long before that, performed all episcopal functions in those settlements; but the title has only lately been altered.

[110]

As I was not present at my husband's consecration, I cannot do better than transcribe good Bishop Wilson's letter to the venerable society (S.P.G.), describing the ceremony.

Calcutta, Bishop's Palace, October 22, 1855.

Thank God, the consecration took place with complete success on Thursday, October 18th, St. Luke's Day. The Bishop elect arrived some days before, the Bishop of Victoria on the 16th, and Bishop Dealtry (of Madras) on the 17th. The crowded cathedral marked the interest which was excited. We sent out two hundred printed invitations to gentry, besides requesting the clergy to attend in their robes. There were more than eight hundred jammed into the cathedral, and hundreds could not gain admittance. The clergy were thirty. After morning prayer the assistant bishops conducted the elect Bishop to the vestry, where, having attired himself in his rochet, he was presented to me when seated near the Communion table. Her Majesty's mandate was then read, and the commission of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. The several oaths were next duly administered by the registrar of the diocese. The Litany was devoutly read by the Bishop of Madras, and afterwards the examination of the candidate took place. I should have said that the sermon followed the Nicene Creed. It was by the Bishop of Madras, the text being taken from 2 Tim. i. 6, 7:

[111]

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

The Bishop has consented at my request to print the discourse, which I shall have the pleasure of sending copies of for the Archbishop and yourself, I was gratified at observing that the text is taken from the solemn words used at the very act itself of consecration. After the examination, the Bishop returned to the vestry to put on the rest of the episcopal dress; and as the vestry in the cathedral is at the west end of the building, he had to pass down the one hundred and twenty feet conducting to it, with the eyes and hearts of the congregation fixed upon him with wonder and pleasure. On his return, the "Veni, Creator Spiritus" was sung, each alternate line being answered by the Bishops and clergy, with the accompaniment of our fine organ. After the appointed prayers, which are directed to follow this hymn, the imposition of hands took place, and the words of the consecration pronounced by myself as presiding metropolitan. The Bible was next placed in his hands, with the admirable exhortation prescribed—an exhortation which I think incomparable and almost inspired, as indeed the whole service is. The collection at the offertory was made for the Sarawak Mission, and above five hundred C. rupees collected. The whole service concluded with the Holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ.

[112]

The new Bishop preached at St. Thomas's Church on Sunday, the 21st, for his mission; and a single gentleman contributed one thousand C. rupees. He will preach at the cathedral on the 28th, when something more will be gathered. The Bishop of Madras has presented the four hundred rupees of his voyage expenses, from Madras to Calcutta and back, to the same blessed cause. I have had three breakfast parties (for I don't give dinners) to meet the Bishop, of about forty each, on the day after the consecration, and on Saturday, and this morning, and the addresses made by Bishops Dealtry and Smith were most warmly received. Thus has this great occasion passed off—the first consecration, I believe, that has ever taken place out of England since the glorious Reformation, and perhaps the first missionary Bishop sent out by our Church; unless the Bishop of Mauritius may be considered as having preceded him.

It was, indeed, a singular event that four Protestant Bishops should meet in the heart of heathen India, amidst one hundred and fifty millions of idolaters and worshippers of the false Prophet.

I must add to this graphic letter a note which the venerable Bishop wrote to my husband, November 6th of the same year. [113]

Tennasarim, Bishop's Cabin.

MY BELOVED REV. BISHOP OF LABUAN,

Whether to write to you by the pilot or not I can hardly tell. However, I am so anxious for your beginning well at Singapore and Sarawak, and so responsible also from having consecrated you to the Lord, that I must write. I have taken the liberty with you which Mr. Cecil took with me in 1801, to caution you, now you are a chief pastor and a father in God, against excessive hilarity of spirits. There is a mild gravity, with occasional tokens of delight and pleasure, becoming your sacred character, not noisy mirth.

I met with a letter of a minister, now with God, to a brother minister, who was about to take his duty for a time, which I think will give you pleasure. "Take heed to *thyself*; your own soul is your first and greatest concern. You know that a sound body alone can work with power; much more a healthy soul. Keep a clear conscience through the blood of the Lamb. Keep up close communion with God. Study likeness to Him in all things. Read the Bible for your own growth first, then for your people. Expound much; it is through the truth that souls are to be sanctified, not through essays upon the truth. You will not find many companions; be the more with God. Be of good courage, there remaineth much land to be possessed. Be not dismayed, for Christ shall be with you to deliver you. I am often sore cast down; but the Eternal God is my refuge. Now farewell; the Lord make you a faithful steward." If we do not meet again in the flesh, may we meet, never to part, before the throne of the Great Redeemer! [114]

I am your affectionate

D. CALCUTTA.

After my husband's consecration, he undertook a confirmation tour for Bishop Wilson, at the mission stations around Calcutta. He also consecrated a church at Midnapore in South Bengal. In December, after four month's absence, he returned to Sarawak.

Our party in the mission-house during his absence consisted of a chaplain, a missionary lady learning Malay and teaching the girls' school, our young friend Mr. Grant, myself, and baby Mab. The days ran along a smooth groove, although we had all plenty to do. Up early in the morning, then a walk, and service in church at seven. After prayers some hours' teaching and learning before midday bath and breakfast. The afternoon was a more lazy time, though the hum of school went on continuously, while we did our sewing and reading in the coolest corners we could find. The new school-house, in which all the boys, the Stahls, and Mr. Owen, the schoolmaster, lived, was near enough to the mission-house for us to know the hour of the day by the lesson going on at the time; for all the younger boys repeated their multiplication tables in a loud voice together (in Malay), also their Chinese reading; then came the singing, rounds and part-songs, the most popular lesson of all. At four o'clock the school broke up. The children amused themselves as English boys do. There was a season for marbles, for hop-sotch, for tops, and for kites. Above all, do Chinese children love kites, and are most ingenious in making them. They cut thin paper into the shapes of birds, fish, or butterflies, and stretch it over thin slips of the spine of the cocoa-nut leaf, then they ornament it with bits of red or blue paper, and fasten it together with a pinch of boiled rice. The string is the most expensive part, and two pennyworth lasts many kites, for they are very frail affairs, and in that land of trees do not long escape being caught, though they fly beautifully. Miss J— had a cockatoo which amused her and the little girls during sewing-class. He was a beautiful bird with a rosy crest, but extremely mischievous. To sharpen his beak he notched all the Venetian shutters in the verandahs; and if he spied a looking-glass, flew at it in a rage and broke it: fortunately there were no large mirrors in the house. These birds look very pretty perching in the trees, and this one became tame enough to be trusted out of doors, but they are bad inmates. [115]

We had also a chicken-yard for Alan's amusement, and great were our difficulties in preserving the nests from rats, who ate the eggs. If we placed the nests on a high shelf, these creatures managed to shove the eggs out of the nests so that they fell broken on the floor all ready for their supper. At last we circumvented them by slinging the nests by long rattans from the roof. [116]

At five o'clock another short service took place in church. In the evening we read aloud to one another, while the rest sewed or drew.

This tranquil, even monotonous life was very much to my taste in my husband's absence, but after a few weeks it was disturbed by sad trials. First, the chaplain had a sunstroke, and fell out with the climate, the place, and some members of our little society; so he went to Singapore, and from thence to England. When we were recovering from this blow, and had again settled down into our usual ways, a worse trial befell me.

One morning Miss J— did not appear at early breakfast, and little Mary, who waited upon her in her room, said she was sound asleep and did not wake when she opened the shutters. I thought nothing of it at first, for Miss J— sometimes sat up late at night; but an hour afterwards, I went

into her room and looked at her. Her breathing was so laboured I thought she was in a fit; and first I tried to put leeches on her temples, but they would not bite, and we resolved to carry her into the fresh breeze in the verandah, for the air of the room seemed laden with something close and stifling. When I threw back the covering of the bed, I perceived that the veins of both arms had been cut, and a few drops of blood stained her night-dress; also there was a small empty bottle in the bed with "Laudanum" on its label. The terrible truth was evident—she had taken poison and tried to bleed herself to death! Probably the action of the laudanum prevented any flow of blood, yet the few drops may have relieved the brain. The horror of this discovery nearly deprived me of my senses; but there was no time for lamentation—she was not dead, thank God, and all our efforts must be used to restore her to life. We were very ignorant, but we did all we could think of. There was no doctor to apply to, only the chemist who served the dispensary. He gave medicine which was certainly very strong, and we put mustard plasters on her legs. By the evening she was sensible enough to take some food, but for a week there was serious illness, and it was a long time before I could ask my poor friend why she had done this thing. She had left me a letter to read in the event of her death, but of course I never read it. We were very much together, but I had not thought her unhappy; indeed the only reason she ever gave me for so hating her life was, that she could not learn Malay, and did not think she should be any use as a missionary. This despondency was known to me, but I had no idea it cut so deep. Miss J— had a great deal of quiet fun—she often amused us by her clever and somewhat caustic remarks. But Sarawak was too monotonous a life for her. When, some weeks afterwards, she had quite regained the balance of her mind, she went to Singapore, and became a very useful member of society for many years before she died. I never felt that I could judge her, for I had so much more to occupy my mind and interest my heart than my companion. There was baby in the first place, and the responsibilities of the school and mission naturally fell to my share. No doubt it requires an even temperament to live contentedly without society, and with only such excitement as daily duties and the beauties of nature afford. Yet these are full of infinite happiness, and we were not without friends, although we had no company: the little party at Government House, as it was then called, were very agreeable and uniformly kind. It is, however, a common mistake to imagine that the life of a missionary is an exciting one. On the contrary, its trial lies in its monotony. The uneventful day, mapped out into hours of teaching and study, sleep, exercise, and religious duties; the constant society of natives whose minds are like those of children, and who do not sympathize with your English ideas; the sameness of the climate, which even precludes discourse about the weather,—all this, added to the distance from relations and friends at home, combined with the enervating effects of a hot climate, causes heaviness of spirits and despondency to single men and women. Married people have not the same excuse; for besides duty and nature, they have "one friend who loves them best," and that ought to be enough for the most exacting temperament. I say nothing about the comforts of religion—they are the portion of all, married or single; still some spirits become so sensitive in solitude that they are not able to take the cheerful side, even of their relation to their Heavenly Father, and these are generally the most reserved to their companions. I am glad to find that missionaries are now seldom sent alone to any station, and women are more often associated in sisterhoods for mission work under our colonial Bishops, so that they have the society and sympathy of English ladies after the toils of the day. I felt much discouraged after Miss J— left me, and afraid of urging any one to follow in her place; but at last a cousin of my husband's came out to us, and as she enjoyed the climate, and delighted in the place and people, declaring that she had never been more happy in her life than with us, I consoled myself that it was not all the fault of Sarawak and the mission-house that poor Miss J— could not live there.

[117]

[118]

[119]



[120]

CHAPTER XI.

CHINESE INSURRECTION.

"Mortal! if life smile on thee, and thou find
All to thy mind,
Think, Who did once to earth from heaven descend
Thee to befriend;
So shalt thou dare forego, at His dear call,
Thy life, thine all."

These lines were most applicable to us during the year 1856. It was such rest and peace when our Bishop returned from Calcutta and soothed all the griefs and heartburnings we had suffered the four months he was away. Then ensued the performance of his new episcopal duties. Mr. Gomes was ordained priest in March. Confirmations took place, of our elder school-children, who

were all baptized when they first came to us; also many Chinese Christians too, who had long attended the Bible classes at the mission-house and stood firm to their baptismal vows. In April we had another baby girl; and soon after, the Bishop went to Labuan, to arrange about a church being built there. Unfortunately he caught fever at Labuan; which declared itself at Singapore on his return. We were both very ill, and glad of doctors' advice at Singapore; but Labuan fever returns again and again, though in a slighter form after a while, and was for years a constant trial to the Bishop's strength. When we returned to Sarawak in October, our party was increased. Mr. and Mrs. Crookshank had come out from England—she a bride, and quite a new element of youth and beauty for Sarawak. A lady friend and her child and nurse also came on a long visit to us, the air of Sarawak being considered quite a tonic compared to the sea-breeze at Singapore, which was at times visited by a hot wind from Java. Very pleasant days followed our return home. Mrs. Harvey and I, with our children, went for a month to "See-afar" Cottage on the hill of Serambo. I have already mentioned this little house, built by Sir James Brooke as a sanitarium after his attack of small-pox. The only objection to it was, that it was built in the region of clouds: had the hill been five hundred feet higher we should have had the clouds below us, as they are on Penang Hill. The path up the mountain—if path it can be called—is almost a staircase of tumbled rocks, and requires both strength and agility to climb. It was quite beyond me; but I was carried on a man's back, sitting on a bit of plank, with a strip of cloth fastened round my waist and across the man's forehead, my back to his back. The Dyaks are famous mountaineers, their bare feet cling to the stones, or notched trunks of trees thrown from one rock to another. I never felt unsafe on my Dyak friend's back, and he used to laugh when I proposed his setting me down and taking a rest, and say, "You are not as heavy as a basket of durian fruit." These Dyaks have beautiful groves of fruit-trees, and make a good purse in the fruit season by bringing down durians, mangosteen and lansat fruit to sell at Kuching. They also carry all their harvest of paddy up the mountain to their rice-stores in the villages, so they are used to heavy weights.

[121]

[122]

We took a stock of provisions up with us, fowls and ducks, a goat and her kid, etc., and all the bedding we wanted, for of course there was not much furniture in the cottage. Our first night was unfortunate. We had settled ourselves in the rooms, had our supper, and were about to go to bed, when the servants ran out of the cook-house, which was a stone's-throw from the cottage, crying out, "Fire!" and in a few minutes we saw it wrapped in flames. Of course a house built of sticks and leaves does not take long to burn down to the ground, but we were distressed to hear the bleatings of the little kid which could not be got out in time. The ducks, too, were still in the long basket coop in which they were carried up, and were literally roasted in their feathers before anybody remembered them. A large party of Dyaks were on the spot directly they saw the flames, and they did good service by throwing water on the roof of the cottage, and watching lest the thatch should catch. In the morning they discovered the burnt ducks, and ate them up with much relish, for a Dyak likes the flavour of burnt feathers. The next day the cook-house was rebuilt. These native huts look so clean and fresh when first put up, the straw-coloured attap walls and green leaf roofs are so agreeable to the eye. They quickly turn hay colour and then get discoloured by the wood smoke. Except that we were at times rather short of food, we enjoyed our mountain retreat very much. The bath was a remarkable feature—a natural stone basin, under the shadow of a great rock, fed by the clearest streamlet and sheltered from view by a heavy bit of curtain, was our bathing-place. We carried a little leaf bucket and our towels in our hands, and while we poured the fresh water over our heads we could now and then stop to look at the great expanse of plain and forest, with silver rivers winding amidst them, and blue smoke stealing up here and there to mark a Dyak village. There was, however, a particular rock on the spur of the mountain from whence we always watched the sun set; there was a much wider view from thence. The sea lay on the horizon, and the pointed mountain of Santubong stood on the plain, with other ranges of hills far away. I fear we did little else but watch the glories of earth and sky at that time, and look after our children, who could not be trusted alone a minute on those steep paths.

[123]

Meanwhile the Bishop was paying a visit to Lundu in his new life-boat, a boat of about twenty-eight feet, with a little covered house in it, and water-tight compartments in the bow and stern to keep her afloat. She was well named, for even in this first voyage she saved the lives of her passengers. From the coast at Santubong you see blue hills far away to the west, which lie in the Lundu country. The sea runs very high, in the north-cast monsoon, between the mouths of these two rivers, the Sarawak and Lundu; and on this occasion the waves on their return from Lundu were fearful. Seven great waves like green hills advanced one after another. The Malay crew prayed aloud with terror. Stahl and the Bishop steered the boat and held their breaths. It looked like rushing into the jaws of death, but the life-boat mounted the big waves one after another, sometimes shuddering with the strain, but buoyant and stiff. The danger past, the crew praised Allah and the good boat; and they, as well as Stahl who had behaved so well at the time of danger, fell into a fit of ague from the nervous shock. We knew on the top of the hill that a fearful storm was raging, but we did not see the white boat flying like a bird over the seven great rollers, or there would have been no sleep for us that night. The crew never forgot it, nor the calm pluck of their steersman the Bishop. I must confess that an attack of fever was the result of all this exertion when he joined us on the hill.

[124]

The rest of the year 1856 passed away quietly. We were all looking forward to an event which was to improve the English society of the place very much. The Rajah's nephew, Captain Brooke, was bringing out a bride; and her brother, Mr. Charles Grant, another. These four young people were expected in the early spring of 1857, and the Rajah was refurnishing his bungalow to receive these additions to his family. A new piano had arrived, and all sorts of pretty things, to brighten up the cool dark rooms of Government House. Mr. and Mrs. Crookshank were preparing

[125]

a house for themselves also; and all their boxes, which had remained unopened while they lived with the Rajah, were moved up to their bungalow. Little did we think that all these treasures would be burnt before they were even unpacked!

The Chinese gold-workers of Bau and Seniawan had long given more or less trouble to the Sarawak Government. They were governed by their own self-elected kungsi (magistrates), and recognized their fealty to Sarawak only by the payment of a small tax on the gold they washed from the soil. They sent the gold away to China, and habitually cheated as to the quantity obtained. They also smuggled opium from the Dutch settlement of Sambas, thus defrauding Government of revenue. Worse than all this, they introduced secret societies, or hui, among themselves, and threatened to rebel if any of their kungsi were punished for breaking the laws of the country. At Christmas, 1856, they boasted they could demolish Kuching in one night, if they chose; and that a new Joss House they were building there should furnish them with a pretext to gather by hundreds to set the Joss in his temple, and possess themselves of the place and the Europeans who lived there. These uncomfortable rumours seemed to have some foundation when a new road was discovered which the Chinese had made between Bau and Seniawan, another settlement nearer to Kuching. Mr. Crookshank, who was in charge of the Government, sent word to Mr. Johnson, who immediately came from Sakarran with a fleet of Dyaks, delighted to have a chance of fighting the Chinese, and carrying plenty of heads back to their homes. At the same time a gun-boat was stationed on the river to prevent any communication between Bau and Kuching. Upon this the kungsi came very humbly and begged pardon, declared the whole story was a fabrication, and that they never intended mischief. We only half believed them, but the Dyaks were dismissed, and unfortunately the gun-boat no longer kept watch on the river. Our Christian Chinese teacher "Sing-Song," was of the Kay tribe, the same as the Bau people, and once a month he went there to teach his countrymen. There were a few Christians among them. One, a goldsmith, did his best to let us know that danger was impending, but the kungsi suspected him, and put him in prison; we were therefore quite unprepared for what took place. On the 17th of February, three Chinese kungsi were flogged by order of the court at Kuching, for taking the law into their own hands, and seizing a runaway prisoner, as well as the captain of the boat in which she absconded, although he was not guilty of hiding her. This seems to have put the finishing touch to the factious state of feeling at Bau. The Rajah and the Bishop had determined to take a trip together on the 15th, in the life-boat, to Sadong, and from thence to Linga and Sakarran. The Rajah had been ailing for some time, and we hoped this little voyage would do him good. We prepared all the provisions for this trip: bread and rusks were made, salt meat was cooked, and everything was ready packed in the provision baskets (this was of great importance to us afterwards). That evening we all met out walking, on the only riding-road there was in those days. Rajah spoke to the school-children, and we all amused ourselves with the little Middletons, boys of four and five, strutting along with turbaned hats and long walking-sticks. It was a dull evening, and we all felt unaccountably gloomy. We fancied it was because Rajah was not well enough to come and dine with us, as he had purposed in the morning; but during dinner I remembered afterwards that the Bishop said, "If any sudden alarm were to take place to-night it would rouse him and make him all right."

[126]

[127]

We certainly went to bed without expecting anything to happen, but, about twelve o'clock, we were roused by shouts and screams, and the firing of guns. We got up and looked out. The Rajah's bungalow was in flames across the river. On our side the Middletons' house was burning, and Mr. Crookshank's new house, a little way up the road, was soon after on fire. The most horrid noises filled the air, there was evidently fighting going on at the two forts at either end of the town by the river's side. We knew there were very few defenders at either of these two forts, and that they would soon be taken; for by this time we were sure it must be the Chinese miners who had fulfilled their threat to take the town. We thought, "When the forts are taken they will come to us." Presently the brothers, William and John Channon, who lived near us, came to our house, bringing their wives and children for shelter. They brought news that the fort near their houses was taken and burnt, and they dare not stay in their own cottages, as they were Government servants, and would be obnoxious to the rebels.

[128]

We took our children out of bed and dressed them, and then we all went down to the school-house, from whence we could see the burning houses and hear what was going on in the town. A Chinaman came up from the bazaar, begging us not to go to them for shelter, for they had been warned by the kungsi not to harbour any English people, and they dared not take us in. Poor creatures, they were in terror for themselves, as they were not of the same tribe of Chinese as the Bau people. What should we do?



**WE ALL WENT DOWN TO THE SCHOOL-HOUSE,
FROM WHENCE WE COULD SEE THE BURNING
HOUSES.**

Page [128](#).

We were so large a party, and had so many children amongst us, that we did not venture to hide in the jungle: the night was quite dark and we might lose one another. Then the Bishop said, "We cannot make any resistance: we will hide away the guns we have in the house, and unite in prayer to God." So we all knelt round him while he commended us to the mercy of our Heavenly Father, and prayed for all our dear friends who were exposed to the fury of the Chinese. Then we sat and waited. Miss Woolley, who had only been three months in Sarawak, read aloud a psalm from time to time to comfort us; but the hours seemed very long. At five o'clock in the morning the kungsi, having possessed themselves of the Chinese town, sent us word that they did not mean to harm us—"the Bishop was a good man and cared for the Chinese," but he must go down to the hospital and attend to their wounded. Then came the welcome news that the Rajah had escaped, and Mr. Crookshank and Middleton—the three people whom the Chinese most desired to kill, for the one was chief constable and the other police magistrate, who carried out the Rajah's sentence on the kungsi. A price was set on their heads, but the Malays' love of their English Rajah made that only an idle threat. We were told that Mrs. Crookshank was dead, and the little Middletons, as well as Mr. Wellington, who lodged in their house, and Mr. Nicholetts, who was staying at the Rajah's house. Mrs. Crookshank, however, was not dead, but lying wounded in a ditch near the ashes of her house. When the Bishop knew this he demanded her of the kungsi. They said no, at first, for they were angry that her husband had escaped; but Bishop refused to attend to the wounded unless they gave her up, so at last they gave leave to have her carried to our house.

[129]

[130]

It was about ten o'clock when she was brought in—a pitiful sight, her dress covered with blood, her hair matted with grass and dust, her fingers bleeding. It did not seem possible she could live after remaining all night in this dreadful state. She told us that she and her husband did not awake until the house was full of men. They had only time to jump up and run down their bath-room stairs, he catching up a spear for their defence. Opening the bath-room door it creaked, and a man came running round the house shouting, "Assie Moy," the name of the woman-prisoner they had seized. He struck down Mrs. Crookshank with a sword he had in his hand, and Mr. Crookshank attacked him with the spear. They struggled together till the Chinaman cut his right arm to the bone, and the spear fell from his hand; then, seeing his wife lying dead, as he thought, in the grass, he managed to get away to the edge of the jungle, and sitting down, faint with loss of blood, saw his house burn to the ground. As morning dawned he found his way to the Datu Bandar's house, where the Rajah had already arrived, and Middleton. Meanwhile the Chinese, chasing the fowls from the burning fowl-house, came upon Mrs. Crookshank lying on her face, and one of them, seizing her by her hair, desired her to follow him. She could not walk a step, so he carried her in his arms; but when she groaned with the pain, he laid her in a ditch near the road. Many Chinese came and stood by her: they covered her with their jackets, one held an

[131]

umbrella over her head, another offered her some tobacco, but they would not let any of our people touch her until an order came from the kungsi. We had sent our eldest school-boy to reassure her, and he stood beside her until our servants could bring her away safely. As soon as the Bishop had dressed the wounded in the town, he came home for some breakfast. When I saw him I called out, for his pith hat was covered with blood. "It is only fowl's blood," said he, "don't be frightened: they killed a chicken over my head as a sign of friend ship." The Middletons' servants came to us early in the morning, and said that they did not know what had become of their mistress, but the two little boys were killed by the Chinese, their heads cut off, and their bodies thrown into the burning. Later on, we heard that Mrs. Middleton, after seeing Mr. Wellington killed in trying to defend her, had escaped into the bath-room and hidden herself in one of the big water-jars; but, the door being open, she had seen her children murdered, and then had got out of the jar and run into the jungle, where she concealed herself in a little pool of water, much hidden by overhanging boughs. There this poor mother remained for some hours, until a Chinaman from the town came to the spring, carrying a drawn sword in his hand. "Oh, sir, pray don't kill me!" she called out. "Oh no!" answered the man, "I am a friend of Mr. Peter" (her husband), "and will take care of you." So he took her to his house, and dressed her in Chinese clothes. It was almost a wonder to me that this poor young woman lived through that dreadful time. As the day wore on, Mr. Ruppell, the banker of the place, and a great friend of the Chinese, came and took up his abode with us. Then he, the Bishop, and Mr. Helms, the manager of the English Merchant Company, were ordered to meet the kungsi at the court-house; also the Datu Bandar, the chief Malay magistrate. There a very trying scene took place. The kungsi sat in the seats of the magistrates, smoking, their principal in the Rajah's own chair. They stated that they did not wish to make war with the English, or the Malays, only with the Rajah's government, and they desired those present to assist them in the government of the country. This they had drawn up in writing, and desired the English and Datu Bandar to sign. The Bishop pointed out to them that the best thing they could do would be to return to Bau and defend their town; that the Dyaks would certainly come in fleets of boats directly they heard of what had happened at Kuching, and they would as certainly be killed if they remained in the place. This was true enough, but they were afraid of the Malays attacking them on the water. The Chinese are bad boatmen. They could not therefore make up their minds to go, and much fierce discussion arose. The thieves and rogues of the place, being under no restraint, robbed all the houses, on this afternoon, whose inmates had taken refuge at the mission-house. The Christian Chinese, being afraid of their countrymen, rushed into our house, carrying all sorts of goods and chattels, and caused me much distress on Mrs. Crookshank's account, who was very sensitive to fresh alarms. However, we settled our Chinese friends in some of the lower rooms. The Channons and their babies were in the attics. Night came at last, and a dead silence fell upon the town and the crowded mission-house. Not even the usual sounds in the bazaar or on the river were heard; only an occasional gun broke the stillness of the night. Friends and foes were alike weary. We did not venture to undress, but lay down all ready for flight if necessary, with our hats and little bundles beside us. The Bishop and Mr. Ruppell watched all night in the porch. Friday morning the Chinese, continually urged by the Bishop, determined to return to Bau. Later on they heard a rumour that the Malays would attack them on the river; then they made the Datu Bandar sign a promise not to follow them. Still they felt no confidence that he would not, so they said they would take Mr. Helms with them as a hostage for the Datu's good faith. Poor Mr. Helms did not like this idea at all, and having a fast boat lying in the creek near his house, he slipped away early in the afternoon, down the river, and hid himself in the jungle. No one in Sarawak could imagine what had become of him.

[132]

[133]

[134]

About midday the Bishop told me he wished me, Miss Woolley, and the children, including Alan Grant, to go to Singapore in a trading schooner which Mr. Ruppell had detained at the mouth of the river in case of emergency.

Mrs. Stahl and Miss Coomes were to remain and nurse Mrs. Crookshank, but it would be a great relief to him to think of us in safety. The Chinese kungsi also wished us to go, "that the people at Singapore might see that they did not desire our death." It seemed very hard to me to leave my husband in such danger, for that morning the kungsi had flourished swords in his face and threatened him, knowing very well that he wished to bring the Rajah back. Still I knew he could more easily provide for the safety of those left behind if we were already out of the way. So I packed up some clothes and provisions for the voyage. While I was doing this a Chinaman came from the *Good Luck* schooner to say I must only take one box for our party, as the schooner was very full of Chinese passengers, fleeing for fear of the kungsi. With this we had to be content. At three o'clock we went to the shop of Amoo, the Chinese owner of the *Good Luck*. There I found my husband writing to Mr. Johnson at Linga, to tell him what had happened. Then Datu Bandar came in to say that the kungsi had gone up the river, and had taken some of the fort guns with them; that they were very crowded in the boats, and that he should follow after them with a Malay force at night. They did nothing, however, when the time came; for until the Malays had got their families safe out of the place they were not willing to fight. They were brave enough when the women and children were moved to Samarahan on Saturday. There were many Chinese women collected at Amoo's, belonging to the shopkeepers in the bazaar. The wife of the court scribe, whom I knew, told me in a whisper that she managed to get some bread to the Rajah and his party, and had told Mr. Crookshank that his wife was alive and with us. At last the life-boat was ready. Stahl went with us to steer, and said there were plenty of Chinese to row the boat. When we got down to it, we found it not only fully manned by Chinese, but full of their women, children, and boxes, so that we could scarcely find room to squeeze ourselves into the stern, and we were so heavily laden that we made very slow progress. It was no use protesting, however: we

[135]

were only English folk, and the Chinese had it all their own way in those days. About eight o'clock we got down to the mouth of the Morotabas, where the schooner lay. Pitch dark and very wet it was, but it was a relief when all the Chinese passengers climbed up the schooner ladder, and the men hauled the boxes up one after another, last of all a very heavy one which it took six men to lift, full of dollars,—so no wonder we were overladen. Last of all I climbed into the *Good Luck*, leaving the children still in the boat with Stahl and Kimchack, one of our school-boys whose family were moving away in the schooner. I found the deck covered with Chinese, and when I said to the little Portuguese captain, "Where is the little cabin Mr. Ruppell promised me I should have?" he answered, "Oh, ma'am, pray go back to your boat. I have neither water nor fuel for the people who are already on board. The cabin is filled with the family and friends of the Chinese owner of the schooner, and I cannot give you even room to sit down anywhere." It was indeed true. My friend, the court scribe's wife, said, "Come and sit by me on the deck." "But the children, they cannot be exposed day and night on deck." "Oh well, there is no other place for them." So I jumped into the life-boat again, and reclaimed my treasures. "Rather," said Miss Woolley and I, "die on shore than in that horrid boat." Indeed we felt quite cheerful now we had the boat to ourselves; and Kimchack said he had already been two nights on board the *Good Luck* and had had no room to lie down. There we were, however, in the middle of the river, with no one to row the boat. Stahl could not move it by himself. At this moment a small boat pulled alongside, and Mr. Helms' face appeared in the darkness. How glad we were to see him! and he, faint and exhausted with wandering all day in the jungle, was glad of a glass of wine, which was soon got out of the provision basket. Then we opened a tin of soup, and fed our tired and hungry children, who behaved all through those terrible days as if it was a picnic excursion got up for their amusement. They enjoyed everything, and were no trouble at all, either Alan or Mab. Edith was a baby, and suffered very much from want of proper food—but that was later on. Mr. Helms and his crew rowed our boat into Jernang Creek, where there were some Malay houses. In one of these he and Alan went to sleep, but he advised us to remain in the boat until the morning. We laid Mab and Edith on one of the seats; Miss Woolley lay on the other; and I sat at the bottom of the boat to prevent the children from falling off. The mosquitoes were numerous on that mud bank, and I was very glad when the morning dawned. At six o'clock Mr. Helms came to say we could have an empty Malay house on shore for a few days, so we gladly mounted up the landing-place and found a kind and hospitable reception from our Malay friends. They had put up some mat partitions in a large room, that we might sleep in private, and presented us with a nice curry for breakfast. We then unpacked our box and dried the clothes in it, which were wet through from the overlading of the life-boat. About midday two Englishmen arrived from the Quop River, nearer to Kuching, where they had been with the Rajah. They only stayed a short time, but told us that the Kungsi Chinese had really gone to Bau, and that the Bishop was with the Rajah at Quop. Late at night I had a note from my husband, saying he thought we might return to Sarawak, for all was quiet, and he hoped the Rajah would come back early on Sunday morning. The next morning, therefore, we prepared to set off again in the life-boat, but first I went to pay a visit to Inchi Bouyang the Malay writer, who lived in one of the houses near, and who was too stout to venture out of his own house into a less strongly built one. This seems absurd enough, but the Malay houses were certainly very slight; they seemed to sway in the mud of the creek, and the floors of the rooms were made of very open strips of nibong palm, so that you had to walk turning your feet well out in order not to slip through the lantiles. I found many Malays gathered in the writer's house, all to entreat me not to go to Kuching, because it was "not a lucky day." "If the Malays fight the Chinese to-day," they said, "they will be beaten." "What reason have you for saying so?" "No reason exactly, but the day is unlucky; it is like Friday to the English, they never go to sea on that day." "Oh," said I, "that was long ago: they often go to sea on Friday now they know better, and no sensible person thinks anything of lucky or unlucky days." "Well, we have told you what we think. If you must go, some of us will go with you, and we shall tell the Tuan Padre it was not our fault that you would not wait until to-morrow." So Lulut, a servant of the Rajah's, and another Malay got into the boat with us, and we set off up the river.

[136]

[137]

[138]

Footnotes:

[6] Palm leaf.



[139]

CHAPTER XII.

CHINESE INSURRECTION (*Continued*).

As we proceeded up the river we agreed we would ask news of any boat we met. Presently we noticed smoke rising above the trees. "The Malays are burning the Chinese town," said the men; but as we drew nearer it was evidently the Malay town which was burning. At last we met a boat. "Yes; the Chinese had returned, and had set fire to the Malay town; they were also firing at the Sarawak Chinese in the bazaar." On Saturday the Bishop and the Channons and Stahl had unspiked two of the guns left in the fort, and had hoisted the Sarawak flag again on the flag-staff. The Bishop then went to the Rajah's war boat at the Quop, and told him that the Malays had sent away their women, and were ready to fight should the Chinese return; and he begged him to come to our house early the next morning, where breakfast should be ready for him, and take the command. But the Chinese heard of this, and returned in the morning, some by river, some by road. As soon as the Malays saw their boats rounding the corner near the Malay town, they attacked them bravely, drove them ashore, and though suffering much loss from their superior fire, captured ten of their boats, and secured them to a Malay prahu in the river. While this struggle was going on, a large party of Chinese, who walked from Seniawan, were ransacking the town. Enraged with the Bishop for trying to bring the Rajah back, they rushed into our house to find him; but he, having sent off all our belongings, English and native, ran down the back stairs while the Chinese rushed up into the porch in front, and escaped to the Chinese town, where shots were flying about in plenty, but did not hit him. He got into a little boat passing by, with two Malays in it, and they paddled him to the Rajah's war boat, then retreating down the river. When they reached the Quop he found a little boat, which brought him quickly to Jernang.

[140]

We lay off the town in the life-boat, and saw one boat after another rowing fast towards us. In one, Mr. Koch, the missionary, with a number of school-boys; in another, Mrs. Crookshank, laid on a mattress, Mrs. Stahl, and Miss Coomes, and the school-girls; then the Channons' families and some Chinese; then the Sing-Song's family, and more boys. "Where is the Bishop?" I shouted. "In the Rajah's war boat. We had the greatest difficulty in getting boats enough for us; the Chinese were running up to the house when he sent us off, and firing had already begun in the streets when Mrs. Crookshank was got into the boat."

[141]

This was an anxious moment; but before long our servant James appeared with a message to me from my husband, to return to Jernang, and stay there until he appeared. Our Malay friends here left us, to join their families anchored in boats by the banks, and I filled the life-boat with the school-children to lighten the other boats. Then we pulled slowly back against the tide to Jernang. The little landing-place was crowded when we arrived, for the smaller boats had got there first. I had the greatest difficulty in persuading the Malays to give shelter to the Chinese Christians and children. I answered for their good behaviour; but all Chinese, whether rebels or no, were in sufficiently bad odour in those days. At last I got them part of a house to themselves. No sooner was all arranged than the Bishop arrived in his little boat; it was like receiving him from the dead.

Presently appeared the Rajah's war boat, he standing at the stern. We all ran down to meet him and Mr. Crookshank, and take them to Bertha, who had been carried into a house. While we were all standing on the little wharf, built on tall piles into the water, the Malays cried out that it was giving way, and we must all go into the houses. The Bishop then decided what to do with his large party. Mr. Helms had a schooner close by, in which he was going to Sambas, to seek assistance from the Dutch, our nearest neighbours. He kindly offered to take Miss Woolley, Miss Coomes, and two of our eldest school-boys with him. The rest of us could go to Linga, where there was a fort, as a little pinnacle belonging to Mr. Steele lay handy at the mouth of the river. The Chinese, however, implored to go with us; and indeed it would have been cruel to leave them a prey to the Malays, or the bad Chinese, or the Dyaks. When we were lodged in the pinnacle, therefore, the Bishop went back to Jernang, and packed all our Chinese into the life-boat, which was attached by a rope to the pinnacle; so we were all together. It was nearly dark when we weighed anchor, and left the mouth of the river. There was a tiny cabin, just large enough to hold Bertha on her mattress; a fowl-house, into which our native children crept; an open hold, where we women sat down on our bundles, with our children in our arms; and there was a place for cargo forward, where the men settled themselves. The Rajah in his war boat also proceeded to Linga, and we expected him to arrive long before our slow boat; he would meet Mr. Johnson, his nephew, there, and organize a force of Dyaks from the great rivers, Sakarran and Batang Lupar, to drive away the Chinese rebels. We never had any doubt of their doing this eventually, though we feared the remedy might be almost as bad as the disease, if the Dyaks proved unmanageable and quarrelled with one another. The night was very dark and wet, and the deck leaked upon us, so that we and our bags and bundles were soon wet through. But we neither heeded the rain nor felt the cold. We had eaten nothing since early morning, but were not hungry; and although for several nights we could scarcely be said to have slept, we were not sleepy. A deep thankfulness took possession of my soul; all our dear ones were spared to us. My children were in my arms, my husband paced the deck over my head. I seemed to have no cares, and to be able to trust to God for the future, who had been so merciful to us hitherto. I remember, too, when Mrs. Stahl opened the provision basket, and gave us each a slice of bread and meat, how very good it was, although we had not thought about wanting it. We lit a little fire, and made some hot tea, but soon had a message from the Rajah's boat to put out the fire lest we should be seen. The only thing that troubled me was a nasty faint smell, for which I could not account; but next morning we found a Chinaman's head in a basket close by my corner, which was reason enough! We had taken a fine young man on board to help pull the sweeps, a Dyak, and this ghastly possession was his. He said he was at Kuching, looking about for a *head*, and went into the court-house. Hearing some one in a little side room, he peeped in, and saw a Chinaman gazing at himself in a bit of looking-glass, which was stuck against the wall. He drew his sword, and in one moment, stepping close behind

[142]

[143]

him, cut off his head: and having obtained this prize, was naturally desirous of getting away from the place; so he came off as boatman in one of the flying boats, bringing the head in a basket, which he stowed in the side of the boat. It entirely spoilt my hand-bag, which lay near it; I had to throw it away, and everything in it which could not be washed in hot water.

[144]

Towards morning the sea made us all sick, added to the wet, and cold of dawn; yet, when the day cleared a little, and we got a fire on deck, and some hot tea and biscuits, and the children seemed none the worse for their bad night and the swarms of mosquitoes which had feasted upon them, we could not repine. In the evening we passed the island of Burong, at the mouth of the Batang Lupar River, and Mr. Crookshank tried to stimulate the men pulling the sweeps to reach a Sebuyan village farther on, before the tide left us and it grew dark. By dint of hard pulling we made the village, and its little fort, standing close beside the water and washed by its strong tide. A little boat came off from the fort, with some Malays, of whom we inquired for the Rajah, thinking his boat was far ahead of us, but they said they had seen nothing of him. Mr. Crookshank then begged them to bring a boat in which he could take Bertha up to Linga Fort that evening, instead of her remaining another night in the pinnace. We went on as long as the tide lasted, and then anchored in the Batang Lupar. Again we made a fire on deck, and after taking some food, settled ourselves for the night. At eleven o'clock the promised boat came for Bertha and Mr. Crookshank, and Mrs. Stahl went with them as nurse; they thought nothing could be worse than spending another night on board the pinnace, but I fear the little boat journey was still more painful. When they reached Linga, they found only Malays in the fort, and the dwelling-house shut up, for Mr. Johnson was at Sakarran. They had to carry Mrs. Crookshank up a ladder into the fort, and lay her on a table; but happily Mr. Chambers arrived that night from Banting, and furnished a curtain as a screen, and pillows from his boat to make a more comfortable couch. As we were setting off again next morning, we met Mr. Johnson in a long boat, going straight off to Kuching. He was lying ill of fever at Sakarran, when his Malays roused him by saying, without preface—"The news is bad, Tuan: the Rajah is killed and Kuching in the hands of the rebel Chinese." Upon this he jumped up, called together the chiefs, and bidding them follow him with a strong force of Dyaks, he set off himself without calling at Linga by the way. When we told him that Rajah was alive and on his way to Linga, he turned back with us, and taking me, my ayah, and the children into his boat, soon landed us at his house. This was Tuesday, but we heard nothing of the Rajah until Friday. Mr. Johnson, after breakfasting with us at his house, went on to Kuching, and found that, after we lost sight of the Rajah's war boat, they had fallen in with the steamer belonging to the Borneo Company, the *Sir James Brooke*, just entering the river. Mr. Helms' schooner also came across her, so all the passengers in the schooner and the war boat had moved into the steamer, and they immediately proceeded up the river, preparing the guns on board to attack as soon as they reached the town. What must have been the feelings of the Chinese in the fort when they saw the smoke of the steamer curling above the trees, and then received one ten-pounder shot after another into their midst! They fired one round of grape shot at the steamer, and shouts of "Run!" rose on all sides. The steamer then proceeded up to the Malay town, where the Malays still held out against the Chinese; but as they were getting very short of ammunition, and their enemies were bringing some large guns to bear on their position, they greeted the steamer with shouts of welcome. The Chinese fled in every direction. Cut off from their boats, they ran into the jungle; and while many no doubt reached Bau in safety, many fell into the hands of the Dyaks, who, following their usual course of warfare, spread themselves through the jungle, and took the head of every man they met. The town was quite clear of the rebels in a few hours, and the *Sir James Brooke*, anchored in the river, furnished the base of operations which the Rajah required: from thence he could direct the Malay and Dyak forces, which were immediately at his disposal, to drive the rebels out of the country. The day before, the Chinese had filled our house and looted it completely, except the books in the library, for which they seem to have had some respect; but we had reason to believe that on Monday the house would have been burnt, for gunpowder and inflammable materials were found strewed about after they left. They took everything they could carry away, and destroyed the rest, cutting long slits in the gauze of the mosquito-rooms, and pouring all the chemicals and medicines of the dispensary over the contents of the drawers, clothes, and papers they did not wish for. They found a long table set out ready for breakfast, and had only to gather up the small plate, which, with a house full of people, was all in requisition. The church, too, was emptied of all its furniture, and the harmonium smashed; but the opportune arrival of the steamer prevented these buildings from sharing the fate of the other houses.

[145]

[146]

[147]

Meanwhile, we were settling ourselves with our large party in Mr. Johnson's house, which he kindly placed at our disposal. This house was surrounded by a latticed verandah, the ground immediately about it was cleared of jungle and drained by deep ditches. From the fort you looked over the wide stretch of water of the Batang Lupar, but it was a lonely and monotonous look-out. As the fort men were taken away to fight at Kuching, the gentlemen had to form themselves into watches day and night, with the few Malays who remained to guard the fort. Boats full of Dyaks continually arrived, to join the Rajah's force—Balows, Sarebas, and Sakarrans lay side by side on the river, all excited by the prospects of war, and frequently causing silly panics among the Malays of Linga, lest these warriors, from tribes so long enemies, should fall out with one another before they got to Kuching. There were, of course, no books or newspapers to read; our Bibles and Prayer-books alone were among our luggage. We women were the best off, for we got some unbleached calico from Sakarran, and cut out some under-clothing, of which we had but little; this gave us occupation. We also had every day to wash our linen and towels after bathing. The bath was a clear running stream, covered in near the house, very pretty and romantic, but the water was of a light brown colour, like toast and water, and had a slightly acid taste, very

[148]

agreeable but not very wholesome. Probably the spring forced its way through dead leaves in the jungle; at any rate, it did not wash the clothes white. It was very difficult to procure food for us all. Rice and gourds made into a kind of curry stew was our daily meal; if a chicken was got it was devoted to the children and the sick. We were very anxious for some time on account of Mrs. Crookshank. Had she remained quiet at Kuching, her wounds would have healed quickly, for she was young and perfectly healthy; but all the moving into boats, and carrying up ladders and steps, had broken open the wounds, and it was a struggle of strength and youth against adverse circumstances. She was so patient and cheerful that we never heard a complaint, which was in her favour no doubt; still there were some days when her life was in great danger in that hot climate. Twice during the month we received a box from Kuching, sent by a native boat. Once it contained our mail—an immense pleasure; also some bread and biscuits, but they were wet with salt water, and mouldy besides. However, Mab and Alan could eat them. I used to look with thankful astonishment at those children, both so delicate generally, but who throve all the time we were without proper food or shelter. But baby Edith shrank and pined, and at last my husband said, "We shall lose this child if you stay here any longer: better go and live among the Dyaks, who have plenty of fowls."

[149]

So Mr. Chambers kindly took us in at his house at Banting, where we had a most loving welcome, and saw something of the Dyak women and children. The men were mostly gone to the war, and great excitement prevailed among the tribe with the prospect of acquiring heads again, for the Sarawak Government had quite stopped that hunting in the country. Boats were continually arriving, gay with streamers, and noisy with gongs and drums beating, with heads of Chinese on board. One day we were invited to a feast in one of the long houses. I said, "I hope we shall see no heads," and was told I need not see any; so, taking Mab in my hand, I went with Mr. Chambers, and we climbed up into the long verandah room where all the work of the tribe goes on. This long house was surrounded with fruit-trees, and very comfortable. There were plenty of pigs under the house, and fowls perching in every direction. About thirty families lived in the house, the married people having each their little room, the girls a room to themselves, and the long room I spoke of being used for cooking, mat-making, paddy-beating, and all the usual occupations of their lives. We were seated on white mats, and welcomed by the chief people present. The feast was laid on a raised platform along the side of the room. There were a good many ornaments of the betel-nut palm, plaited into ingenious shapes, standing about the table, so that I did not at first remark anything else. As we English folks could not eat fowls roasted in their feathers, nor cakes fried in cocoa-nut oil, they brought us fine joints of bamboo filled with pulut rice, which turns to a jelly in cooking and is fragrant with the scent of the young cane. I was just going to eat this delicacy when my eyes fell upon three human heads standing on a large dish, freshly killed and slightly smoked, with food and sirih leaves in their mouths. Had I known them when alive I must have recognized them, for they looked quite natural. I looked with alarm at Mab, lest she should see them too; then we made our retreat as soon as possible. But I dared say nothing. These Dyaks had killed our enemies, and were only following their own customs by rejoicing over their dead victims. But the fact seemed to part them from us by centuries of feeling—our disgust, and their complacency. Some of them told us that afterwards, when they brought home some of the children belonging to the slain, and treated them very kindly, wishing to adopt them as their own, they were annoyed at the little ones standing looking up at their parents' heads hanging from the roof, and crying all day, as if it were strange they should do so! Yet the Dyaks are very fond of children, and extremely indulgent to them. Our school was recruited after the war by the children of Chinese, bought by Government from their captors. This was my first and last visit to a Dyak feast. I used to go and see the women in the early morning sometimes, and they constantly came up to the mission-house to see my children. Of course the war had an evil influence on them, increasing their interest in heads, and all the heathen ceremonies connected with their possession.

[150]

[151]

We stayed about ten days at Banting, walking every afternoon to the little church through a long avenue of fruit-trees—great forest trees which threw a grateful shade over the path, charming for the children's walks. They could have chicken broth too for their dinners; and Edith revived, but it was a whole year after this before she grew any taller, so that when she began to run about, three months later, it looked a surprising feat for a baby who should be in long clothes, yet she was then sixteen months old. This life at Banting was a kind of dream, after all the hurry and anxiety we had gone through. At last we heard that we might go back to Kuching, the Chinese had all been driven out of the country, or killed. Our house was purified, and the dead bodies lying about in the jungle had been buried, so that the air was sweet again. We returned to Linga, and all embarked in a little schooner for home. It was not a much better boat than the one we had fled in, and we suffered two very trying days' voyage; but when we walked into the mission-house and found Miss Woolley to welcome us, and our house, though dismantled, uninjured, and most of the books in the library, we were very thankful. The Sunday after, we had a thanksgiving service in the church, in which all joined very heartily.

[152]

I must return, however, to the history of the war, from the time the Rajah steamed up the river in the *Sir James Brooke*.

At Bau there were supposed to be from three to four thousand Chinese rebels, who had lately been strengthened by many malcontents from the Dutch country. The Chinese held Bau, Seniawan, the government fort of Baleda, and a fort at Peninjauh opposite to Baleda. They boasted that they had rice and gunpowder enough to last out six months in these places; but they were gradually surrounded on all sides by Malays and Dyaks, so that they could get no fresh stores. On the 10th of March a body of Chinese came down the river to Leda Tanah (Tongue of

Land) about halfway to Kuching. They built a breast-work by the river-side, dug a trench behind it, placed some brass guns in position, and then retired to eat their dinners in comfort behind their defences. There was a little house and garden belonging to the Rajah at Leda Tanah. The Datu Tumangong and Abang Boujong hearing of this, went up the river with a Malay force and attacked the breast-work in front. The Chinese fired one volley and ran. The Malays entered, sword in hand, but only killed two men; all the rest fled into the arms of the Dyaks, who lay in wait in the jungle behind, and took a hundred heads, some say two hundred, but stories do not lose in the telling. The Chinese begged hard for their lives, wrung their hands, wept, prayed the Dyaks to be friends with them; but Dyaks know nothing about prisoners. One of the principal kungsi was killed in this affair, and some say that Kamang, the leader of the attack on the 18th of February, lost his head to the Sakarran Dyaks.

[153]

This success was matter of great rejoicing at Kuching. Two days afterwards they heard that Baleda Fort was deserted by the Chinese. Mr. Johnson went up and found it quite empty; Seniawan too, and soon after Bau also. All had fled towards the Dutch territory. A dreadful march they had, poor creatures; carrying their sacred stone Tai pekong with them. Nearly a thousand women and children delayed their progress. They were harassed all the way by parties of Malays, and Dyaks cutting off the stragglers. The party dwindled by degrees, until nearly all the kungsi were killed, either by the enemy or their incensed countrymen, who found themselves driven from their peaceful homes for the sins of these rebels. It is so painful to think of the many innocent who suffered with the guilty on this occasion, of the miseries they endured, and the relentlessness of their foes, that I cannot detail it. War naturally brines such evils in its train; even civilized warfare is not without its horrors and its injustice: but when revenge falls into the hands of savages these ills are multiplied. The Malays both hated and despised the Chinese. That *such* people should have taken their forts, burnt their dwellings, compelling them to seek safety for their families by flight, was so great an insult that their most violent passions were aroused, and only the blood of all the Kay tribe could wipe out the disgrace they had incurred. It was indeed wonderful that these Chinese should imagine for a moment that they could remain rulers in a country whose inhabitants regarded them as the natural hewers of wood and drawers of water to the community; but no doubt they were intoxicated by their unlooked-for success on the 18th of February, and a Chinaman seems destitute of any appreciation of people who are not Celestials! A remnant of these people got safely into the Dutch territory, where the authorities took what arms and ammunition they had, and, very properly, returned them to the Sarawak Government. They also offered to send a war steamer and soldiers if desired. So our misfortunes called out the goodwill of our neighbours. Soon after we returned home, H.M.S. *Spartan*, Captain Hoste, arrived to protect British interests in Sarawak. They stayed with us for a while, but the troubles were over, and the only difficulty was how to make any visitors comfortable or to feed them. We had to pass round a knife and fork at table for some days, and there were only a few spoons left to us. On the beds there were hard mattresses, but no pillows, sheets, or in fact any bed-furniture. Our guests being travellers and full of resources, slept on their pith hats for pillows, and used their pocket-knives. A good deal of fun was made of our privations, and indeed, as no beloved friend was missing, we could afford to laugh.

[154]

[155]

We had all great reason to be thankful for the good behaviour of the Dyaks during the war. There were no intertribal quarrels, and Mr. Chambers told me that his Christians among the Balows were in the first boats which went off to succour the Rajah, when they knew nothing of the arrival of the steamer, and believed themselves to be facing a great danger, and fire-arms, which they do not like. This was not the only time that the Christians were among the bravest when all behaved well—a fact which recommended their religion to their countrymen, with whom courage is the first virtue. It was some years after this, however, that Dyak Christians learnt to fight without taking the heads of their enemies.

When we left our house, our servants generally, except James a Portuguese, and my Bengalee Ayah, fled from the place. But we had an old Hindoo Syce, who was much attached to us and to the creatures under his charge. He drove the two ponies we rode into the jungle, where they looked after themselves, and, living in his cottage next to the stable, did what he could for the cow and calves. When the rebels filled our house and appropriated our effects, they broke open the plate-chest, and melted the silver they found. Then Syce came forward and claimed a portion of the spoil. They gave him a lump of silver with some alloy in it, the produce of some plated salvers, as his share. He pretended to help them, but this lump he hid in the earth near his cottage, and, on our return, triumphantly produced it as what he had saved for us from the wreck. Some years after, this old man was very ill with an abscess in his thigh, which he was sure would kill him. Bishop doctored and nursed him through it, but he had given him a good-sized bag of dollars, his savings, saying he wished Bishop to be his heir. When he got well and the money was returned to him, he spent it in paying a visit to his relations at Trichinopoli. I believe this faithful creature worshipped the bull of our herd, and it was a great trouble to him that the Chinese cruelly cut off the tail of the poor animal, thereby depriving him of the means of whisking off the flies which sting so vehemently in that climate.

[156]



CHAPTER XIII.

EVENTS OF 1857.

When we were once more at home we found it would be better to go to Singapore, and from thence to Penang, for a little quiet. We were both ill, the Bishop seriously so. We wanted for everything, and the bazaar in Sarawak could not supply us: besides, ours was the only English dwelling-house left in the place, except the Borneo Company's premises. Captain Brooke and Mr. Grant with their brides were immediately expected, and must be housed at the mission while a bungalow was being built across the water. We left Miss Woolley to take care of the expected visitors, the children and I went to Singapore in the *Sir James Brooke* steamer, and Sir William Hoste gave a passage in H.M.S. *Spartan* to the Bishop and Alan Grant.

I was glad of an opportunity to get my baby vaccinated, which could only happen at Singapore in those days. We were two months away, and the cool quiet of Penang Hill was a great refreshment. The first news I heard there was that Miss Woolley was to be married to Mr. Chambers. This wedding took place immediately on our return home, the end of July. It was a great benefit to the Banting Dyaks, for Mrs. Chambers devoted herself to the women and young girls, and was a true friend to them. She taught them to sew, and instructed them in morals and religion. When I went to Banting some years afterwards, I found a set of modest young women who were much pleased with gifts of needles, thread, and thimbles; they also enjoyed a game of croquet after the lessons were done, and it was wonderful to see what smart taps of the mallet were fearlessly given under their bare feet; for of course the Dyaks do not wear shoes.

[158]

About a month after our return to Sarawak, Captain Brooke's baby boy was born. No one can tell what a care and anxiety this event was, in a place where there was no doctor except the Bishop. The well-being of so important a person as the Rajah mudah's wife, and the birth of the heir of Sarawak, called forth much sympathy from everybody. Thank God, all went well; but we said it ought never to happen again—there should be a medical man whose sole duty it was to care for the bodies of the community, while the Bishop was free to minister to their spiritual wants. Soon after there was a public baptism of this boy Basil Brooke, and his cousin Blanche Grant, in the church, which was full of Malays as well as English to witness the ceremony. This was the day before the Rajah set off for England.

[159]

There were many happy days during the next few months, for there were several English ladies in the place and we were all friends. In October the Bishop went to Labuan, and while he was away the cholera made its first appearance at Sarawak, among the Malays. The Rajah muda and I consulted together what physic should be made ready for those who would take it. A short time before, a little pamphlet had been sent to us about the virtues of camphor, and especially its value in cholera. We made a saturated solution of camphor in brandy, and gave a teaspoonful of it on moist sugar for a dose, adding three drops of Kayu Puteh oil, extracted from a Borneon wood and called cajeput oil in England, a very strong aromatic medicine. This mixture proved itself very useful. If the patients applied in good time it invariably gave relief to the cramp and pain in the stomach; if the disease had gone on to sickness it was more difficult to administer. Sometimes we followed it up with laudanum and castor oil.

The Malays suffered very much from this epidemic. Constant funerals were to be seen on the river, and there was much praying at the mosque. Then the Chinese were attacked, but not so fatally. Two dead men were, however, found on our premises; they were strangers to us, but we supposed they came late at night to the mission for medicine, and, lying down in the stable or cow-house, died without reaching the house. It was an anxious time. I used to hang little bags of camphor round the children's necks, and was very careful of the diet for the household. Thank God, we had no case either in the school or the house.

[160]

Seven years afterwards the cholera returned much more violently. An English gun-boat, lying off the town, lost several of her crew; and at last the Bishop advised them to go to sea and let the sea air blow through the ship, to carry off the infection. He went on board himself to see them off, and while they were going down the river two more men were seized with cholera, and died in half an hour.

This time the cholera was very fatal among the Dyaks up some of the rivers. The poor creatures were so terrified that they left their houses, as in small-pox, and scarcely dared bury their dead. In one instance they paid a very strong man to carry the dead on his back to a steep hill, and throw them into the ravine at the bottom. The food enjoyed by the Dyaks, rotten fish and vegetables, no doubt inclined them to get cholera. The first time of its visitation was after a great

fruit season when durian, that rich and luscious fruit, had been particularly abundant. A durian is somewhat larger than a cocoa-nut in its inner husk; it has a hard prickly rind, but inside lie the seeds, enclosed in a pulp which might be made of cream, garlic, sugar, and green almonds. It is very heating to the blood, for when there are plenty of durians the people always suffer more from boils and skin disease than usual. We never permitted them to enter our house, for we could not bear the smell of them. But many English people liked them; and they were so much esteemed by the Dyaks, that when the fruit was ripe they encamped for the night under the trees. When a durian fell to the ground with a great thud, they all jumped up to look for it, as the fallen fruit belongs to the finder, and they loved it so that they willingly sacrificed their sleep for it. Woe be to the man, however, on whose head the fruit falls, for it is so hard and heavy it may kill him.

[161]

In February three new missionaries came from England—Mr. Hacket, Mr. Glover, and Mr. Chalmers. The two last came straight to Sarawak on their arrival at Singapore, Mr. Hacket and his wife about a month afterwards. They were all from St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, thoroughly good people, and a great happiness to us. Mr. Chalmers was settled among the Land Dyaks at Peninjauh, afterwards at the Quop. Mr. Glover went to Banting, to work among the Balows. The Hackets stayed at Sarawak: indeed they all remained with us until Easter, when their ordination took place. The Easter services that year, 1858, were very delightful. All these missionaries were more or less musical, and Mr. Hacket adorned the church as it had never been decked before. Flowers and ferns, and lycopodium moss, were always to be had in abundance; and the polished wooden walls were brightened by some beautiful scroll texts, printed by a friend in England. We had full choral service on Easter Sunday, and the school-children sang their part beautifully; indeed, our new comers were astonished to find such good material for a choir in little native boys.

[162]

I had been fully occupied with preparations for these missionaries while the bishop was at Labuan; some additions to the comfort of the house for the Hackets; a new cook-house and servants' rooms near, to build; and the church to reroof. The balean attaps were as good as ever, but the strips of wood on which they hung were attacked by white ants, and had to be renewed or the shingles would have fallen through. Such responsibilities fell to my share when the Bishop was away, and heavy cares they were when money was not abundant. The prospect of three new missionaries was, however, worth any trouble. They came to teach the Dyaks, who had so long waited for teachers, and we hoped they would settle themselves among them for many years. In this hope we were to be disappointed. Mr. Glover fell ill of dysentery at Banting, and before two years had passed away was obliged to remove to a cold climate. He went to Australia, and has been doing good work there ever since. Mr. Chalmers was a very valuable missionary, and his labours among the Quop and Merdang Dyaks bore much fruit in after years; but he also fell ill from the climate, and the food which was attainable up country. In 1860, he also made up his mind to follow Mr. Glover to Australia. There are no doubt many difficulties for Englishmen living in Sarawak jungles. Some become acclimatized to them, others cannot bear the low diet, the loneliness, the apathy and indifference of the Dyaks. The Bishop was once accused, by a person who ought to have known better, that he was too apt to gather his clergy at Sarawak and keep them from their Dyak parishes: but it was a necessary part of the Bishop's work to keep a home where the missionaries could come for change and refreshment; where they could enjoy a more generous diet, and the society of English friends; where they could consult a medical man, and get some hints how to treat the maladies of the Dyaks—for they expected all the missionaries to know the art of healing, having had more or less experience of the Bishop's skill. Mr. Hacket was consumptive, but Sarawak is the best climate in the world for that disease: he got much stronger with us, and might have lived many years there, but he was too nervous for so unsettled a country. We were often subjected to panics for many months after the Chinese insurrection, and though we old inhabitants took it very easily, Mr. Hacket always thought his wife and child in danger. I remember, one day a Malay was being tried in the court-house, when he, by a sudden spring, escaped from the police, and snatching a sword from a bystander, ran amuck through the bazaar, wounding two or three people he met. The hue and cry in the town fired the imaginations of the timid. People came running to the house for shelter, bringing their goods and chattels, and all sorts of tales—"The Chinese were coming from Sambas," and all sorts of nonsense. Then, Mrs. Hacket fainting on the sofa, and the servants all leaving their work to listen, and look out of the verandah, provoked us extremely: we administered sal volatile and a good scolding, and sent everybody off to their business again. But those scenes were very trying to the nerves. That a Malay should run amuck (amok, in Malay) with anger or jealousy, or a fit of madness arising from both these passions, was an occasional event all through our Sarawak life, but it was no more alarming in 1858 than in former years. It was the breach in the general feeling of security under the Sarawak Government, which for a time magnified every little disturbance of the peace into a public danger.

[163]

[164]

Our school was enriched this year by, first, seven new Chinese boys, then four more and four girls, the captives of the Lundu Dyaks, ransomed by Captain Brooke. Those children were, some of them, miserable objects, covered with sores from neglect. One boy had been set to carry red wood which blisters the skin, another was badly burnt. Mrs. Stahl took them in hand, dressed their wounds, nursed them, clothed them, and soon they looked quite nice, sitting on a bench at the end of the church with a monitor to take charge of them, for they were still unbaptized—they were old enough to be instructed first, except two of the little girls who were immediately received into the Church. About this time a little Dyak boy, Nigo by name, was paying a visit to the school, and was baptized in church, answering for himself. He was about six years old, and as he stood at the font his face was lit up with so sweet a smile it touched us all. Mab begged him to

[165]

stay at Sarawak; but the Dyaks never part with their children, and in this case it was not necessary, for Nigo's father was a Christian. It was a great happiness to us that none of our boys were killed in the insurrection; three got away to Sambas, the rest came back to the school one by one, having all escaped the Dyaks. The Christian goldsmith, too, who was put in prison by the kungsi for trying to warn us of the attack on the 18th of February, got to Sambas safe, and afterwards returned to us at Sarawak.

This summer a doctor came out to Sarawak with his family. I heard of their proposed arrival some months before, and wrote to Mrs. C— to beg they would leave their elder children in England, and only bring the babies with them, for the little ones thrive well enough at Sarawak. I also gave a plain unvarnished account of the place. But Mr. C—, having made up his mind to bring all his family out, put the letter in his pocket; and we were very sorry when they arrived, a party of nine, having lost one child at Singapore. They only stayed one month; the lady was so disgusted with the place—"no shops, no amusements, always hot weather, and food so dear!"—that she persuaded her husband to take advantage of some difference he had with the Government, and return in the same steamer by which they came out. I, however, gained by their departure, for they brought a sweet young girl with them as governess, and as she did not wish to return so soon, she remained with me, and became Mab's governess and friend. We liked her very much, and I cannot help mentioning an incident of her spirit and courage. One of our children being ill, I had taken her down to Santubong, where we had a seaside cottage; but as the house was full of clergy preparing for ordination, I left Miss McKee to do the housekeeping and take care of our guests for a few days. She slept at the top of the house, and little Edith in a cot beside her. It was late at night, and the moon shining into Miss McKee's room, when she woke and saw a Chinaman standing at the foot of her bed with a great knife in his hand. She felt under her pillow if the keys were safe, for the box of silver was put in her room while I was absent; then she jumped up, shouting "Thieves!" with all her might. The man ran and she after him, down a long passage, down the staircase, out of the house, by which time her cries had roused the gentlemen—the Bishop was nursing a sick man in fever, and was not in the house that night. They looked out of their doors, asking what was the matter? However, Miss McKee had by this time made up her mind that the thief was our own cook; she had seen enough of him by her courageous pursuit to be sure of it. No doubt he thought she would be fast asleep, and he should carry off the silver and the keys without discovery. Only a servant of the house would have known where they were kept. This young lady afterwards married Mr. Koch, one of the missionaries. He came from Ceylon, and eventually returned to his native country, where I hope they are still.

[166]

[167]

Now we were again without a doctor, and in the autumn Mrs. Brooke expected her second confinement. This brings me to what we always called the sad, dark time at Sarawak. The weather was rainy beyond any former experience. We always had heavy rains in November, but this year they began in October, and the sky scarcely seemed to clear. In October, God gave us a little son, and in a usual way I should have been quite well at the end of three weeks, and across the water to see Mrs. Brooke many times before her confinement. But a long influenza cold kept me at home, and the weather being always wet, there was no prospect of getting over in a boat without a drenching, so only notes passed between us.

On November 15th, Mrs. Brooke had another boy, and though there was some anxiety at the time, she seemed pretty well until the fourth day, when inflammation set in with puerperal fever, and at the end of ten days our much-loved friend was gone to her home in heaven, leaving her husband and children desolate. It seemed so impossible that so bright a creature should pass away from us, that to the last day we believed she would recover. That afternoon she called her husband and brothers and sisters to her bedside, and said, "I have tried hard to live for your sakes, but I cannot;" then she calmly and sweetly bade them good-bye, and no earthly cares touched her afterwards. Very sad hearts were left behind, but her example remained to us and called us upwards. Her short life had been continual self-sacrifice. She gave up her beautiful home in Scotland for love, and the prospect of doing good to Sarawak. On her arrival there the most rigid economy was practised, on account of the losses in the Chinese insurrection. A mat house, called "The Refuge," neither airy nor comfortable, was her only home; but it was always bright with Annie's good taste and cheerful spirits. Then came the last sacrifice, her husband and children. These, too, she laid at her Lord's feet with a willing heart. Everybody went into mourning; for in so small a place it was quite a calamity to lose the head of our little society. But to the Bishop this event was a great trial. He had spent most of his time, day and night, striving to save this precious life. He was very fond of her; he ministered to her as her priest; from his hands she received the Blessed Sacrament a few hours before she died, and he heard her say with almost her last breath, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" but he had also to witness agony which he could not relieve, and no effort could prolong her life. It made him quite ill for some time, and all the happy holiday days passed away with Annie Brooke. Government House was never again, in our time, a bright and cheerful home: it returned to its bachelor ways; and business, not social pleasure, presided there. On Christmas Day, exactly a month after Mrs. Brooke died and was laid in the churchyard, we placed a bouquet of flowers from her garden on the altar, but there could be no festivities. The Chinese Christians had their feast, and the school-children; but we who had lost our companion and friend could not rejoice. It was sad enough to go over the water and see Annie's empty room, kept just as she had left it, and no sound in the house except the wails of the motherless baby, who we feared would soon follow his mother to the grave. Captain Brooke was obliged to go to England very soon after his wife's death; the Rajah was struck with paralysis, and it was at first doubtful whether he would recover. In the midst of all this sorrow I had the trouble of losing my faithful servant, Mrs. Stahl, who took all the care of the school-children off my hands. Her husband had found more lucrative work at

[168]

[169]

Singapore, and sent for her to join him. It was a grief to both of us, and a great addition to my responsibilities. Mrs. William Channon, then a widow, was installed matron of the school, but she had neither knowledge nor experience. She did as well as she could, with continual supervision. The sick children now came to me to be doctored early every morning. I also had a large sewing-class of boys, and a tailor to teach us how to cut out and make their peculiar-shaped clothes: however, we soon learnt to do without the tailor. Mrs. Hacket taught the little ones to sew, and I had the elder ones from seven to ten every morning. Sometimes I gave a music lesson between whiles; sometimes I had to leave them for a while, first to see what the cook had brought from the bazaar for their day's food, and to give out the rice which was kept in my store-room; also the cocoa-nut oil, which trimmed the lamps of both house and school. Sometimes I read aloud to my boys, stories from history. They could understand English quite well.

[170]

While our spirits were at their lowest ebb, and the rain still pouring with little intermission, we had a visit from H.M.S. *Esk*, Sir Robert J. McClure captain. He did his best to cheer us. How kind and bright he was I shall never forget, nor how he used to sit patiently under a tree in the rain to be photographed, simply to amuse us. There are certainly some people who have more of the wine of life than others, and who are a wonderful refreshment to their friends. It was during this year, 1858, that we built our seaside cottage at Santubong—Sandrock Cottage, as we called it, which sounds rather cockney; but as it stood on the sand, with great boulders of granite rock scattered about, it seemed the most appropriate name. Santubong is the most beautiful of the two mouths of the Sarawak River, but not as safe as the Morotabas for ships to enter. The Bishop had a mission yacht this year; consequently he was away, visiting the mission stations. The next year he sailed the *Sarawak Cross* to Labuan. The voyage took only one week either way, whereas in other years he had to go to Singapore, more than four hundred miles off, in order to get to Labuan by P. and O. steamer, or any man-of-war chancing to go there. Months instead of weeks were consumed by this means.

[171]

Our cottage took three weeks to build. We sent three men down with a thousand palm-leaf attaps for the outside walls and roof, and thirty mats to make inner walls. The men went into the jungle and felled wood for posts and rafters, then nibong palms were split into strips for the floors. The whole building was tied together with rattans, like all Malay houses. There were three rooms, twelve feet by fifteen each, and two little bath-rooms. A verandah ran along the whole length of the front, and this was planked to prevent little feet from slipping through. But the rooms were covered with thick mats, and the floor was so springy it danced as you moved. We put very little furniture into these rooms, and the inside walls were only eight feet high, so that though you could not see into the next room, you could hear all that went on in all three rooms. The cook-house and servants' room were separate.

As early as the year 1848, the Rajah had a little Dyak house built on high poles, under the mountain of Santubong. It was an inconvenient little place, into which you climbed up a steep ladder—only one room, in fact, with a verandah; but we spent some happy days there, for the beauty of that shore made the house a secondary consideration. A small Malay village nestled in cocoa-nut palms at the foot of Santubong; in front lay a smooth stretch of sand, and a belt of casuarina-trees always whispering, without any apparent wind to move their slender spines. The deer in those days stole out of the jungle at night to eat the sea-foam which lay in flakes along the sand, and wild pigs could often be shot in a moonlight stroll under the trees. In the morning, we used to set off as soon as it was light to a fresh spring in the jungle, where we took our bath. Dawdling along the edge of the waves, then quite warm to our bare feet, with towels and leaf buckets in our hands, we reached the little stream, running under the shade of tall trees in which the wood-pigeons were cooing. How delicious and fresh that water was! and every sense was charmed at the same time, unless some stinging ants walked over our feet, which was not uncommon.

[172]

Then we trudged home again, with the wet towels folded on our heads to shield us from the sun, who by that time was an enemy to be shunned.

A little colony of Chinese were settled here in 1852, but they never took to the place; the soil was perhaps not good enough for their gardens. In 1857 the Malays fell upon them and killed them all, because they were of the same tribe as the rebels, although they had nothing whatever to do with the insurrection. When we were building our cottage on the sands two Chinese skulls were dug up. We were all indignant at this wanton cruelty, but unable to resent it, except by the expression of our opinion, for the English were a mere handful of individuals in Sarawak.

[173]

Footnotes"

- [7] The Dyaks believe there is a special place in the other world, after death, for those who are killed by the fall of a durian.



[174]

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MALAY PLOT.

Our cottage at Santubong was a source of much pleasure to many people. We often lent it to invalids, sometimes to newly married couples, who certainly had a good opportunity of studying each other's characters and tastes in that lonely solitude.

Sometimes we sent down all the children from the school, who wanted sea-air and a holiday. Indeed, when we were staying there, we always had relays of children to play on the sands and enjoy themselves. We had a place staked round with strong hurdles, where we could bathe in safety from sharks and alligators, who both infested the coast. I have often seen quantities of jelly-fish and octopus sticking on the outside of the hurdles: they sting dreadfully, so they were quite welcome to stay there.

During one of our visits to Santubong I remember a timber-ship lying off the mouth of the river, to lade planks from a saw-mill which was on the other side. One day three sailors came ashore to fill a cask with fresh water; there was a spring among the rocks close to the water's edge. As they neared the shore, the three men jumped into the sea for a swim; but suddenly, one of them threw up his arms and disappeared. In vain his comrades searched for him, but the next day his body, partly devoured by a shark, was thrown upon the rocks. No doubt he was seized and dragged under water. His comrades were much distressed, for he was a favourite among the crew. Frank buried him, and helped the men to put a wooden cross on the grave.

[175]

In the north-west monsoon we sometimes went to Buntal, a bay on the other side of the mountain of Santubong. No soul resided there, but it was the resort of great flocks of wild-fowl at that season. We rowed into the bay while it was still high tide, then left the boat; and our men made little huts of boughs some distance from the shore, where we could sit without being perceived. As the tide ebbed the birds arrived—tall storks, fishing eagles, gulls, curlew, plover, godwits, and many others we did not know. They flew in long lines, till they seemed to vanish and reappear, circling round and round, then swooping down upon the sand where the receding waves were leaving their supper. I never saw a prettier sight. The tall storks seemed to act like sentinels, watching while the others fed. At a note of alarm they all rose in the air, flew about screaming, and then settled again on the sands in long lines, the smaller birds together, the larger ones in ascending rows. At last, alas! a gun fired into their midst caused death and dismay. A few fell dead, and the rest fled to some happier shore, where no destroying man could mar their happiness. And there are many such spots in Borneo where no human foot ever trod, and where trees, flowers, and insects flourish exceedingly; where the birds sing songs of praise which are only heard by their Maker, and where the wild animals of the forest live and die unmolested. There is always something delightful to me in this idea. We are apt to think that this earth is made for man, but, after many ages, there are still some parts of his domain unconquered, some fair lands where the axe, the fire, and the plough are still unknown.

[176]

While we were at Santubong, in 1859, we were distressed to hear that Mr. Fox and Mr. Steele, two Government officers in charge of a fort at Kenowit, had been murdered by some Dyaks, whom they were judging in the court-house. We were very grieved for our friends, especially for Mr. Fox, who was for two years with us as catechist in the mission, and only left because he could not make up his mind to be ordained. However, he was most faithful in the performance of his duties at that lonely fort, and most blameless in his life; we could only regret the loss of so good a young man. We did not at that time connect this event with any general enmity to Englishmen among the natives, but only thought that particular tribe of Kenowits were not to be trusted.

[177]

It was really a much more serious matter. Mr. Charles Johnson went up to Kenowit directly, taking the Bishop's yacht, the *Sarawak Cross*, as his floating fortress. He sent a thousand Dyaks to attack the fortified village of the Kenowits, who were engaged in the murders. These Dyaks

were repulsed, but he led them on again himself with two hundred Sarawak Malays, good men and true. They took a brass gun overland to the village, and pounded them for a day; then the Malays and Dyaks attacked and fired the place, and took it.

There were many killed, but it was their own fault; for, before attacking, a flag of truce had been hoisted, and all who would were invited to submit, and promised their lives, but only a few women and children availed themselves of it and were saved. Tanee the brave was killed, and Hadji Mahomet. It was found that these traitors had spread a report that all the English at Sarawak and at Labuan, as well as at Bunjermassin, had been killed, and this was so thoroughly believed that the Kenowits thought they had only to kill Mr. Fox and Mr. Steele, in order to possess themselves of the arms and goods in the fort with impunity. It was true that the Malays at Bunjermassin had risen upon the Europeans there, and killed twenty Dutch officials and their families; also four of the German missionaries living among the Dyaks, and a Mr. Mattley, with his wife and three children, who used to live at Labuan. The Dutch took summary vengeance for this massacre, but in spite of that the Malays at Coti killed the Europeans who lived there; so that neighbouring countries showed a bad example to our people, and we were afraid that religious fanaticism might have something to do with the hatred to Christians, whether Dutch or English.

[178]

In every country there are unfortunately some bad men, who are irreclaimable by kindness or severity. Such were the two who instigated a plot to murder all the English in the Sarawak territory, and take the Government to themselves. The oldest and most shameless of these men was the Datu Patinghi of Sarawak, and to tell his story I must go back to the early days of Sarawak. When Sir James Brooke first visited Mudah Hassim, the Malay Rajah, he found him endeavouring to put down a rebellion among his subjects. After a time Sir James Brooke helped him with the guns of his yacht and the services of his blue jackets. The enemy submitted, and then he begged their lives of Mudah Hassim. It was with very great difficulty this unprecedented favour was granted.

Gapoor and his followers were pardoned, and when Sarawak was given over to Sir James Brooke by the Sultan of Bruni, it was naturally supposed that this man who owed his life to the English Rajah would remain his faithful friend and follower. He was made the chief datu, or magistrate, of whom there were three—the Datu Patinghi, the Tumangong, and the Bandhar. These Malay chiefs were members of the Council, and represented Home Department, War Office, and Treasury in the State. For some time all seemed to go well, but the Rajah soon found that the Datu Patinghi could not be restrained from oppressing the Dyaks under his charge, levying more than the proper tax, or obliging them to buy whatever he wished to sell, at exorbitant prices. His power over the Dyaks was therefore taken away, and a fixed income given him to preclude temptation. When the Rajah was in England, in 1851, this Datu intrigued with the Bruni Malays to upset the Government; he mounted yellow umbrellas, a sign of royalty, and arrogated power to himself which might have been mischievous had he been more popular with the natives. But he had many relations among the high Malays of the place, and it was a question whether they would resent his being publicly disgraced. Captain Brooke told them plainly that he must be exiled, but that it should be done in the most cautious way, and appearances should be saved. Datu Patinghi was therefore advised to go a pilgrimage to Mecca. Money and servants were supplied him, but he had no choice about it. We all hoped he would never return.

[179]

About a year afterwards Sir James Brooke said to me, "Did you ever feel pleasure at hearing of the death of an old friend?" Before I could consider this knotty question, he added Gapoor had died of small-pox at Mecca. It was only a report, and proved untrue. Datu came back a hadji, but was desired to go and live at Malacca the rest of his days. In 1859 he begged to be allowed to return to Sarawak, and, as it was hoped he could not be ungrateful for so much kindness and forbearance, he was permitted; but he was only biding his time. After his return to Sarawak he married his daughter to Seriff Bujang, the brother of Seriff Messahore, whose rascality and bad faith were on a par with his own. Bujang was a quiet creature enough, drawn into the wicked plots of his brother and father-in-law, but they were bad to the core. A Seriff is supposed to be a descendant of the Prophet Mahomet, at any rate he is an Arab, and Messahore was said to be invulnerable and sacred in his person. He was a fine, handsome creature, with insinuating manners, but there was nothing more to say in his favour. He was at the bottom of every disturbance in the country, but was cunning enough to keep himself in the background. Directly a plot miscarried, he came forward zealously to punish the wrong-doers.

[180]

He instigated the murder of Mr. Fox and Mr. Steele; nay, it was intended to be a general massacre of all the English in Sarawak territory; but by a mistake of the Kenowits these two unfortunates were killed prematurely. The day had not arrived, and this led to the discovery of the plot. When Mr. C. Johnson went with an armed force to Kenowit, Seriff Messahore had already killed the fort men, who had only executed his own orders. For some time he, the guilty one, escaped detection. At last some Christian Dyaks of Lundu and Banting disclosed to their missionaries that Malays had visited them to say they had better turn Mahometans, for soon there would be no English left in the country. These stories being communicated by the Bishop to Mr. Johnson, he consulted the Malay members of the council and other trustworthy native friends, and it was evident they knew there was good reason for anxiety, as they advised all the English to wear firearms, even the ladies.

[181]

At last the rumours of threats were traced to old Gapoor, the ex-Patinghi, and he was again banished the country by order of the council. Seriffs Messahore and Bujang, being connected with him by marriage, were also suspected. Messahore was warned that if he came to Kuching he would be treated as an enemy. Nevertheless he advanced up the river; his boat was greeted by a

shower of balls, and he ignominiously fled. When the glamour was thus taken from him everybody was ready to divulge what they knew of the plot, and that a pension of six hundred rupees a year was promised to any one who would kill Mr. C. Johnson. The Rajah was in England, and known to be in bad health. Very few English men-of-war visited Sarawak at that time. Rumours were got up at Bruni that the Rajah was in disgrace with his own queen. This was the consequence of the commission of inquiry about piracy, which had taken place in 1858, by order of the English Parliament; for though the results of that commission thoroughly exculpated Sir James Brooke from any blame, there was never any *amende honorable* made for subjecting him to such an indignity. It was never understood by the natives as anything but a slur on the Rajah's character, and was a terrible injury to his prestige for a time. Indeed, it was the seed of the Malay plot; and if we had all been killed, our own English Government would have been the remote cause of our death. It is no doubt difficult for Englishmen to understand the feelings of Malays and Dyaks. We are accustomed in England to find fault with our rulers, and submit to them all the same. But in the East it is different: no breath of blame must touch the Rajah, nor can he be arraigned before any court, except the throne of God.

[182]

Fatima, Seriff Bujang's wife, was an old friend of mine. She had always visited me from the time of our first arrival at Sarawak, and was then a very handsome girl, with a pale, clear complexion, and fine hair and eyes. We took a great interest in her marriage, and Seriff Bujang frequently came to our house. He was apparently fond of Mab, and liked to hear her tell fairy tales. Mab spoke Malay very well, and was always popular with the natives, to whom she would sing, dance, or relate Cinderella, the White Cat, or the Three Bears, etc. It was curious to see a grave-looking Malay sitting to listen to fairy stories; still more so when all the time he was party to a plot for the destruction of the household he visited. He was more weak than wicked; and two years after that he died. I had occasion to visit some Malays in his kampong after his death, and found poor Fatima bereft of all her ornaments and gay dresses, and working as a drudge in the house. Widows are little accounted of in Eastern households.

[183]

To return to the events of October, 1859.

A timber-ship, the *Planet*, was lying in the river, and Mr. Johnson requested that the women and children of the mission should be sent on board until the panic passed away, and the old Datu was got safely out of the place. The fort and Government House were manned and armed, and the rest of the Europeans sheltered there. The Hacket family went down at once, and in the evening we sent Miss McKee and the two youngest children with her; but Mab was ill of fever, and could not be moved. So the Bishop and I stayed with her, and ten Chinamen guarded our house.

Mr. Chalmers had come from Merdang with news that some of those Dyaks had joined the Datu Hadji, and also some bad Lundus, who had been punished for sedition four years before. We all sat up that night; but I was too much occupied with my sick child to be nervous about anything else. The night passed over without any rising of the disaffected, and the next day Gapoor consented to leave the country quietly, finding no chief Malays would stand by him, and to be taken in a Government gunboat to a brig just leaving the river. Thus, through God's mercy and the loyalty of the people, no harm came of this plot, except that Mr. and Mrs. Hacket decided to leave the mission, not being strong enough to stand such alarms. They went to Malacca, where he became Government chaplain, and died there of consumption, after some years' service.

[184]

The heat of Sarawak climate was so injurious to our child Mab, who had frequent attacks of fever, that as soon as the place was quiet again, we resolved to pay another visit to England. The Bishop's health was much shaken, and the doctors at Singapore ordered him home at once. But it was winter, and we were afraid of taking our children too quickly into the rigorous cold of England; therefore we took a passage in the *Bahiana*, a steamer which had brought out a telegraph cable to lay between Singapore and Batavia, and having accomplished her purpose, was returning empty to England. The Bishop went with us as far as Bombay, and then took P. and O. boat to England; whilst we called first at Mauritius, then at the Cape of Good Hope, staying some days at each place, and at the latter adding several passengers to our small party. We proceeded very happily until we were within a day's steam of the Island of St. Vincent, off the coast of Africa; then the great crank of the steam-engine snapped in two, and we had to sail. It took us ten days to beat up to the island, for a large screw steamer was never intended to be propelled by sails.

[185]

We began to have gloomy forebodings of the time which must elapse before we could reach England, sailing at this rate, when we saw, lying in the roads at St. Vincent, a very large West Indian steamer on her way home. It was difficult to communicate with this ship, because she lay in quarantine, yellow flag flying; and we did not know whether she had yellow fever on board or not. Our captain, however, called us all together, and said, "I hoped to have found some provisions in this island, to add to our stores; but I find there is nothing." The island seemed just a bare rock, with one solitary palm-tree growing by the office door, and not a blade of grass. It was difficult to imagine what provisions there could be, except the coal left by ships to supply passing steamers. "It will be necessary," added Captain Grenfell, "that some of you should go home in the *Magnolia*, West Indian steamer, for we have not food on board for all, and cannot expect to be less than another month reaching England under sail: therefore you must each of you decide to-night what you will do; and if you choose to go home in the *Magnolia*, I will pay your passage. But I ought to tell you that probably there are cases of yellow fever on board that ship; for it is the time of year when it is rife at the South American stations."

Here was a problem to solve in the night! Should I take my children on board a ship where there was probable infection, or should I subject my husband to harassing anxiety about us for a whole month? In the morning I decided to go home in the *Magnolia*; and I was rewarded when we climbed up into that great ship, with two hundred passengers on board, by finding that there was not a single case of yellow fever, or anything infectious. We had a delightful ten days' passage, stopping a few hours at Lisbon, but not allowed to land, and then straight to Southampton. My only regret was leaving Captain Grenfell, who had been so kind to the children all the way.

The *Bahiana* took just a month to get to England from St. Vincent.



PART III.



CHAPTER XV.

THE CHILDREN'S CHAPTER.

In 1861 we again returned to our Eastern home, leaving our three children behind, and taking only our baby girl for companion. What a difference it makes in India, to "leave the children behind!"—a common fate indeed for parents, but not the less to be deplored. We used to think and speak of Sarawak as home until 1861; but ever after, we spoke of going home to our children, for where the treasure is there must the heart be also. To do the work so that the time might pass quickly and peacefully, to live upon the mails from England, to carry on two lives as it were, one in the present, the other in the pictures our English letters presented—such at any rate was my fate, though my husband was too true a missionary to feel as I did.

Most of our old Sarawak friends had either died or gone away when we returned in '61, but the mission grew more and more interesting as Christian Churches sprang up on the Dyak rivers. Four new missionaries came out soon after our arrival. Mr. and Mrs. Abè, Mr. Zehnder, Mr. Mesney, and Mr. Crossland, the two latter from St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, from whence had formerly come those two good men, Mr. Chalmers and Mr. Glover. They had both gone to Australia on account of their health, but the teaching of Mr. Chalmers had left its mark among the land Dyaks of Murdang and the Quop, so that Mr. Abè, who was afterwards placed on that station, reaped the harvest which had been sown with many prayers two years before. Mr. Mesney succeeded Mr. Glover at Banting, and its many branch missions; and Mr. Crossland went farther off, to the Dyaks, on the Undop, where he eventually built a church and gathered a little flock of Christians about him. Mr. Richardson came as catechist about the same time, and after staying a short time at Lundu, built himself a house among the Selaku Dyaks at Sedemac, in the country towards Sambas. He was much beloved by those simple people, who speak quite a different language to the Lundus. They exerted themselves to build their own church of substantial balean-wood, and their women learnt to pray as well as the men. "To learn to pray" is the Dyak description of a Christian. "What will you do," asked a missionary, "to bring those around you to Christ?" "I will teach them to pray," was the answer. And surely this is the great distinction between the Christian and the heathen—the one has communion with his Father in heaven, an all-powerful, wise, and loving Friend; the other may cherish some vague belief and worship of an unknown God, but has neither love nor trust to carry him above this world's troubles and trials.

Another baby was added to our family in May, 1862, whose mother died at her birth. This little one stayed with us only seventeen months, and was a great happiness to me; then Sir James Brooke took her to England. However, it was a pleasant chapter as long as it lasted.

Julia, one of our original school-girls, became very useful to me at this time. We had taken her home with us in '59, and sent her to a training-school for teachers in Dublin, so that she was quite competent on our return to take the management of the girls' school. We had eight girls in the house, and a few day-scholars from the town. Lessons used to go on in a room on the basement, where of course I was superintendent, and they learnt sewing in the afternoon. Julia was a very gentle mistress, and I was feeling very happy about my girls, when I found to my sorrow that Julia had an admirer, and I must make up my mind to part with my child who had lived with us since she was four years old. Such natural events must not be considered trials, but the difficulty of replacing her was insuperable. I was obliged at last to send my girls to Mrs. Abè, at the Quop Station, for I was too often away in the mission-boat with the Bishop to keep them at the mission-house. This was not until 1865, however. Poor Mildred felt parting with "her girls," as she called them, very much, and often said, "Mamma, if Sarah and Fanny might come back we would never, never quarrel any more." Are not such pricks of conscience common to us all when our dear ones leave us? But the past never returns!

[192]

In 1863, the Bishop built a charming little yawl for mission work. The *Fanny* was just suited, from her light draught of water, to cross the bars of the rivers, and she was a very good sea-boat too. Not only was she wanted to take the Bishop on his missionary, tours, but she brought the missionaries to Sarawak when, they came for ordinations, or the annual synod; also when they were sick, and required medical aid or change. Very few clergymen know much about the management of boats, and native crafts are very unsafe, so that until the Bishop had a yacht many accidents used to occur, not actually dangerous, for the natives swim like fishes, but drenchings and loss of goods from the upsetting of boats. In the north-east monsoon *Fanny* was thatched over and laid snugly up a creek, but all the south-west monsoon she was very useful; and no one wanted to travel about, if they could help it, during the wet tempestuous weather which prevailed from November to March.

The Bishop paid his annual visit to Labuan in any steamer which happened to be going. We had the great advantage of frequent visits from an English gunboat, for the admiral of the Chinese seas had orders from England to tell off one gun-boat for the two stations of Labuan and Sarawak. This arose from our being also blest with the presence of an English consul. But after he and his wife had remained two years at Sarawak, they were heartily tired of the dulness of their lives, and did their best to get removed to a more stirring station. However, the recognition of England gave confidence to native traders and security to the well disposed, so that there ensued a time of peace such as we had not experienced during our former sojourns in the country.

[193]



Tommy. Fanny. Mary. Mab. Sarah. Nietfong.

Page [194](#).

I think the history of our life during these years may be partly told by the letters I wrote to my children at home, or extracts from them; so that this may be called the children's chapter.

Sunday before Easter, 1862.

MY DARLING MAB,

I am glad you are not here, for it is very, very hot, and you would probably have a bad headache. Julia is sitting in the verandah teaching Polly, Sarah, Fanny, and Phoebe the Easter hymn for next Sunday. Ayah is walking up and down with Mildred, and Louis Koch is running about, making her laugh. I must tell you how we spend the day. Papa gets up at five, and takes a ride on his pony. I make the tea at six, and cut bread and butter for Ayah and Julia, and Samchoon, one of the boys who

has had fever and wants feeding up. The bell calls us to church at seven, but I don't go till the afternoon. The gardener brings me a tray of flowers, and I make the nosegays for the day. Then I go downstairs and see the butter made. The boy brings in a great jar of milk, with which he mixes some warm water; into this he puts a long piece of bamboo, with cross pieces fixed in it like the spokes of a wheel. This he twirls round and round in the jar till the butter comes. Then he takes it out with his black hands, and I carry it off and wash and salt it. We only get five ounces now at a time, though there are six cows in milk; but the calves are such miserable little things they have to be helped first, and fed with rice-gruel also. The butter finished, I go up to the sewing-class, who are very busy making their Easter clothes, both boys and girls; and I help them with my sewing-machine until half-past ten, only running away twice—once to see what the school cook has brought for their breakfast, and then to order our own. Then we all bathe and breakfast, and Ayah goes away for two hours for her breakfast and midday nap; and I take care of Mildred, which is, I own, the hardest part of my day's work, for the little restless thing will never let me sit down, and is up to all sorts of mischief. At two o'clock Ayah comes and sings Mildred to sleep, with the same old tune of "Doo doo baby" which you used to sing to your dolls. I think in the next box I have from home you might send your old friends Sarah and Fanny a doll each, and dress them yourself. Our Malay Tuan Ku was here the other day and asked after you; he remembered your Malay fairy tales.

[194]

MY BELOVED CHILD,

[195]

Our letters were very welcome last Sunday, *Easter Sunday*, telling us good news of you all. Our church was very gay with flowers and moss ferns; and the font was filled with large pink water-lilies, whose beautiful round green leaves, a foot wide at least, looked quite lovely round the white shell font. All holy week and Easter Monday and Tuesday we had full service at seven o'clock in the morning, papa preaching a short sermon from the altar. It was delightfully cool at that hour, and began the day so pleasantly. I always love Easter, when all our dear ones seem to be gathered to us in Christ our Lord, whether those in Heaven or those far away—all one family, and Christ's children through God the Father's love and mercy. I have been very busy. The school-children had all new clothes for Easter. We worked diligently for three hours every morning. The jackets were made of the Irish gingham I brought from home. This week is holiday, and Julia and I have had a fine wash, and have clear-starched the Bishop's sleeves and ruffles—such a business! My hand aches to-day with lifting the heavy smoothing-iron, which is not iron, but a large brass box, hollow and filled with hot charcoal. We shall get more used to it in time. Mrs. Stahl used to do it. Now she is gone it is quite impossible to let the Kling Dobie touch papa's sleeves; they would soon be torn to ribbons. I gave the school a treat on Easter Tuesday. They had two soup-tureens full of syllabub, plum cake, and pine-apple puffs. My cook stared when I said, "Make forty large pine-apple puffs." However, they were for his own countrymen—he is Chinese. I thought at first he understood English, for he always said "Yes" to my orders; but it was his one word. After the school-children had finished off with fruit and native cakes, they had, what they like best of all, quantities of crackers, which filled the house with the smell of gunpowder, and frightened baby Mildred out of her sleep. Good-bye.

[196]

July, 1862.

MY PRECIOUS MAB,

Thank you for your note, written on the 4th of May, which I received the other day. I always rejoice to think of you in the springtime, because, like other young things, you enjoy the opening buds, flowers, and sunshine after the long grave winter. But winter is a good friend, although he has a grave face; we should be all the better for a visit from him out here. My garden is now as full of flowers as it will hold; Mrs. Little brought me so many new ones from Singapore. I have a very gay nosegay every morning, and still, leave flowers to adorn the beds outside. We have turned out some of the fruit-trees to make more room for flowers. This morning I have sown a quantity of blue and purple convolvulus, which only display their beauties to those who rise early before the sun closes their blossoms; but we have flowers which only open at night, the moon-flower, and night-blowing cereus, both white and fragrant. Dr. Little has been travelling about the country looking for new plants. He and Mr. Koch went to the top of the mountain of Poë near Lundu. It was so cold six thousand feet above the level of the sea, that they had to supply the natives who went with them with blankets. At the very top of the mountain they found a new orchid growing on the ground, a bright yellow flower, with streaks of magenta colour inside. Dr. Little picked some of the blossoms, and dug up one hundred roots, two of which he gave me; but they will not live in my garden, they want mountain air. He also gave me the dead flowers, and asked me to paint a picture of one from his description and the faded blossom. I did it as well as I could, but I fear it was not very good, and, after all, the flower was not nearly as pretty as a bunch of laburnum in England. They also found growing on the roots of a tree that strange fungus flower described by Sir Stamford Raffles in his book on Java and Sumatra—a yard wide across the petals, brilliantly coloured red, purple, yellow and white, and, in the hollow of the flower (nectarium), capable of holding twelve pints of water, the whole weighing from fifteen to twenty pounds; for it is a thick fleshy flower, not frail and delicate as one likes a flower to be. It is very curious and gorgeous, but as soon as it is fully expanded it begins to decay and smells putrid. Sir James Brooke once found a specimen of this gigantic flower in the jungle, and sent it to me to look at; but it had lost all its beauty in the journey, and I held my nose as I looked at it. The Dyaks said, "It is an auton" (spirit), which is their explanation of anything they never saw before. The natives of Sumatra call it "The Devil's sirih-box." [8] Are you as fond of frogs as you used to be? Last week, some people were dining with us. I had just helped the soup, and, letting my hand fall upon my lap, picked up one of your friends who had settled himself there. Not knowing at first what the cold clammy thing was, I jumped up, and everybody else jumped up too, to see what was the matter; for it might have been a snake, you know! Good-bye.

[197]

[198]

MY DEAREST MAB,

Uncle told me of your walk with him to West Hyde Church, and how you made believe to get to Sarawak and see mamma walking in the verandah. You are much better off in the cold December air of England, than you would be in this sultry place, for all its green beauty and never-failing flowers. I had rather you carried the roses in your cheeks than have them in the garden all the year round. Last month papa went to visit the Quop Mission, where Mr. and Mrs. Abi and their little baby, and your old Ayah Fatima, live. To get there he goes down the Sarawak River and up the Quop River, then lands at a Malay village, from whence there is a walk of three or four miles, up and down pretty hills and across Dyak bridges, and over paths made of two bamboos tied together, with a muddy swamp on either side. Then you come to the mission-house which papa has built, and to Mr. Chalmers' old house, which at present serves as the church, and to some long Dyak houses. Papa baptized twenty-four men, women, and girls, and confirmed nineteen people who had been baptized by Mr. Chalmers. The old Pangara, one of the principal chiefs, was baptized, and three of his grown-up sons, and one little grandson whom the old man held in his arms. We had made white jackets for the baptized, but the old Pangara had not quite made up his mind, fearing the ridicule of the other elders of the tribe, till papa talked to him; so there was no jacket for him, and papa gave him a clean white shirt, round the skirt of which we tied his chawat, a very long waist-band which wraps round and round the body, and that was all! no trousers, and very funny he looked; but papa was too rejoiced at his becoming a Christian, to laugh at him. These people will all be Christians soon. They come to Mr. and Mrs. Abi, morning, noon, and night, to be taught, and there are two daily services; so the missionaries have plenty to do. Two of our old school-boys, now grown up, are catechists there, Semirum and Aloch. There is much love between the people and their teachers; they are so happy at the Quop they never want to come away. However, I have asked the Abis to come for a fortnight at Christmas, and bring their poor little baby to be fattened on cow's milk. There are no cows at the Quop.

[199]

[200]

January, 1863.

MY BELOVED CHILDREN,

As I cannot have you with me this Christmas and new year, I must comfort myself as best I may by writing you an account of all we have been doing, and how we have tried to fancy ourselves in old England amidst the frost and snow, notwithstanding the bright sunshine and perpetual green of our Eastern home. When we woke before daylight on Christmas morning the school boys were singing under our windows, "When Joseph was a-walking he heard an angel sing," so we got up and looked out, wishing the children a happy Christmas. Then we dressed, for there was a great deal to do. Papa had many services in church, Chinese, English, and Dyak. I had the wreaths to make. The church had been decked with moss fern the day before, but the flowers must be added in the morning, or they would be faded. So Julia and I made a crown of French marigolds to hang on the cross over the altar, two large wreaths for either side, and one at the west end made entirely of the golden allamanda, in the buds of which you used to imprison fire-flies when you lived here. The font was adorned all over, in preparation for the baptisms to take place in the morning service. At half-past eleven we all went to church, and after the Litany there were sixteen Dyaks from Murdang, six Chinamen, and six little children baptized. Mr. Koch read the service in Malay, and papa baptized. It was a beautiful sight. The children, four of my little girls, and two small boys from the school behaved very well, and looked pretty in their new clothes. But they all understood something of why they were sprinkled with the blessed water, for we had been teaching them for some time, and Limo told me on Christmas Eve, that "our Saviour came into this world a little child, to teach us to be good; and when He had blessed them in their baptism, they must take pains to do all He desired them." I thought this pretty well for a beginning. Ambat always repeats what Limo says, so I do not know how much is her own: she is Limo's sister. Ango and Llan, the other two girls, have been taught by Miss Rocke, who has given them to me; they know but little, but are gentle children. The school had a feast at five o'clock, beef curry (papa had an ox killed), salt pork, rice, and a huge plum-pudding. They had newly white-washed their dining-room the week before, and decked it with boughs, so that it looked very nice with six lanterns hanging from the roof. They played there while we were at dinner, and the Christian Chinese feasted at Sing Song's house. Julia had her little party in her school-room, and dinner from our table: some of the grown-up schoolboys and Polly. We had Mr. and Mrs. Koch, Mr. and Mrs. Owen, Mr. Zehnder, and Mrs. Crookshank at our table. Papa counted that ninety-seven people were fed on the mission premises on Christmas Day. After dinner we had a bonfire in the hollow below our hill, between the house and the church. Quantities of dry bamboo had been collected there, which threw up columns of sparks, and lit up all the under leaves of the trees, making the dark sky and the young moon look so far far away. Then the boys began with crackers and rockets. Baby Agnes was not frightened, but poor Mildred could not sleep for terror. Every rocket made her call out "Bumah," and hide her face on my shoulder; however, she got used to it at last. Christmas is the time of year which belongs especially to children, because our Lord Jesus Christ then deigned to become a little child. We forget what happened to us when we were very young—even a mother does not know all the feelings, little troubles, ardent wishes and desires of her little ones—but it is impossible that our Saviour can ever forget. He knows exactly all that belongs to the daily life of a child, not only because He is God and knows everything, but because He was once a child Himself, and remembers all the joys and sorrows of His child-life in the cottage at Nazareth; and so children are very dear to Him—He listens to their prayers, accepts their praises, and watches over them always. Remember, my darling, that He is your best friend; to Him you may tell all your little troubles and confess all your faults, for He is very pitiful and of tender mercy.

[201]

[202]

[203]

I gave my school-girls a box of dominoes and a set of draughtsmen with a board for their Christmas present. They play very well. All the sewing-class boys, too, had each a present—either a knife, or belt, or box or basket to keep their treasures in, or a head-handkerchief; but the Sarawak bazaar does not furnish many desirable things, even for school-boys. H.M.S. *Renard* has arrived since I wrote thus far, and we have had the boat races, which always take place in January. Eleven of our

school-boys won the boys' race, pulling against Inchi Boyangs' school, the Mahometan school, and some other boats. We dressed our boys in white and blue, and they pulled beautifully. Papa had taught them to pull all together, when they went to mission stations with him, and they are really good paddlers. They disdained the short course marked out for the boys, and pulled all the way out to the winning-post, a boat anchored near the wharf, round it, and back again, winning by two boats' lengths. They won five dollars, and papa added two more; they gave some of the money to their school-fellows, and celebrated their victory by singing all the evening so nicely, and hurraing at the end of each song. They are good boys, and much happiness to us. Good-bye.

Footnote:

[8] The real name is *Rafflesia Arnoldi*. See page 343, vol. i., "Raffles' Life and Journals."



[204]

CHAPTER XVI.

ILLANUN PIRATES.

I have described in a former chapter the habits of the Dyak pirates of Sakarran and Sarebas, and how, after being punished by Sir James Brooke when they were caught at the entrance of their river, with captives and plunder in their boats, they were required to live at one with their neighbours, and to study the arts of peace. Happily for them, they had a wise and paternal Government to repress their vices, and, after a time, Christian missionaries to teach them the fear and love of God. But the Malay pirates who lived on the islands and coasts of North Borneo were governed by sultans who encouraged piracy, and insisted on sharing their spoils; moreover, they are Mahometans by religion, and that is not a faith which teaches mercy or respects life. To this day, therefore, these Illanuns remain pirates. They have larger prahus and carry heavier guns than the Dyaks, and nothing can exceed their cruelty. When we lived at Kuching there was scarcely a Malay family there who had not suffered from them, either by the loss of relations or property; for they are naturally a trading people.

[205]

It is a common practice for a party of men to join together in hiring a boat in which to venture goods or gold-dust by trading on the coast, or even to Singapore three hundred and sixty miles away, These small and comparatively unarmed boats fell an easy prey to the pirate prahus, who went out in fleets.

The Spaniards and the Dutch were every now and then roused to search the seas for these pests of the human race, but they were so cunning they generally evaded them. At last they had a signal lesson. In the year 1862, Captain Brooke, then governing Sarawak in his uncle's absence, decided to go to Bintulu on the north-west coast of Borneo, a territory which had lately been ceded to the Rajah by the Sultan, and build a fort on the river, to check piracy and protect the peaceable inhabitants who were settling there on the promise of such protection. For this purpose he took the *Rainbow*, a small screw steamer of eighty-nine tons and thirty-five horse power; and the *Jolly Bachelor*, a Government gun-boat. The Bishop accompanied him, to see what missionary prospects there were in that distant spot, also because he was at that time anxious about Captain Brooke's health. Mr. Helms, the manager of the Borneo mercantile company, accompanied them as far as Muka, where was an establishment to collect sago for exportation. On the second day after his arrival, a piratical fleet of Illanuns, consisting of six large, and as many smaller vessels, appeared on the coast, and blockaded the town. For two days they remained off Muka, capturing there, and on the coast southwards, thirty-two persons.

[206]

Mr. Helms persuaded Hadji Mataim and a few natives to start in a fast boat and apprise Captain Brooke; and this boat, though chased by the pirates, got safe to Bintulu. Hadji Mataim got alongside the steamer early on Thursday morning, while it was still dark, and the Bishop, recognizing his voice, called him on board. He delivered a letter from Mr. Helms, asking for help. Steam was got up directly, the Chinese carpenters who were to build the fort were landed, and the guns which had been brought to protect it were put on board, as well as the fort men who were to man the fort, that they might strengthen the crew. With the first dawn of light the *Rainbow* steamed over the bar taking the *Jolly Bachelor* in tow, and steered for Muka.

Meanwhile all preparation was made for fighting. Planks were hung over the railing to raise the sides of the poop where there were no bulwarks, and mattresses were laid inside to receive the

shot and spears of the enemy; this doubtless saved the lives of several of the crew. There were eight Europeans on board, including the captain of the *Rainbow* and his mate, the engineer, Captain Brooke, Mr. Stuart Johnson, Mr. Hay, Mr. Walters, and the Bishop. As soon as there were any wounded, Mr. Walters assisted the Bishop in his work of mercy. The Bishop always carried a medicine chest and case of surgical instruments wherever he went; and, happily, a large sheet had been packed among his things this voyage, which was speedily torn up into bandages. Now all was ready, but it was not until Friday morning that they sighted what looked like three large palm drifts to seaward off Tanjong Kidorong, to the north-east of the British River. They proved to be three large prahus, with their masts struck, and bristling with men, who were rowing like the Maltese, standing, and pushing for shore, casting off their sampans^[9] one by one to make better way. Hadji Mataim recognized the sampan which chased and fired at him when he slipped away from Muka. Brooke then asked one of the chief officers of the Sarawak Government, who was on board, and Pangeran Matussim of Muka, if they were perfectly sure that these prahus were Illanuns? "Not a shadow of doubt," they said. So they loaded their guns and prepared for action. The leading prahu was going almost as fast as the steamer herself, and though steam was put on, and every effort made to get between her and the Point, the prahu won the race, and got into shallow water where the steamer could not follow; then she opened fire on the steamer, which was returned with interest. This prahu had three long brass swivel guns, and plenty of rifles and muskets. As she was beyond the reach of the steamer, Captain Brooke turned to the second prahu, which was now fast nearing the shore. His plan was to silence the brass guns by the fire of the rifles on board the steamer, and shake the rowers at their oars by a discharge of grape and round shot; then to put on all steam and run at them with the stem of the *Rainbow*. This was done with great coolness by Captain Hewat when Captain Brooke gave the order; the steamer struck the prahu amid-ships and went over her. Those on board called to the slaves, and all who would surrender, to hold on by the wreck until the boats could take them off; then they steamed away after the third prahu, which had already got into two-fathom water and was struck too far forward to sink. All the pirates in her jumped overboard and swam for shore, leaving their own wounded, the slaves, and captives, who were also bid to remain by their vessel till they were rescued.

[207]

[208]

Meanwhile the first prahu, seeing the fate of the others, ran ashore among the rocks inside Tanjong Kidorong; and all the crew, pirates, and slaves ran into the jungle. Had the captives known better they would not have run away. The *Jolly Bachelor* was left to look after these runaways, and then the captives of the other two prahus were helped on board the steamer. Several of the crew of the *Rainbow* recognized friends and acquaintances among the saved; and the joyous, thankful look of the captives, as they came on board and found themselves among friends, was indeed a compensation for the awful destruction of the pirates. Many were wounded, either with shot or the fearful cuts of the Illanun swords of the pirates, who tried to murder their captives when they saw all was lost. The Bishop was dressing one man who was shot through the wrist, when he spoke to him in English, and after pouring out his gratitude for his wonderful escape, said he was a Singapore policeman, and was going to see his friends in Java when he was captured. There were also two Singapore women, and a child, and two British-born Bencoolen Malays, who were taken in their own trading boat going to Tringatau. The husband of the younger woman had been killed by the pirates, and she, like all women who fall into their hands, had suffered every outrage and insult which could be offered her. They were almost living skeletons. One was shot through the thigh, and after the Bishop had dressed her wound, Mr. Walters said quaintly, "Poor thing, she has not meat enough on her bones to bait a rat-trap." It is a wonder how the poor creatures lived at all, under the treatment to which they were subjected. When the Bishop asked some of the men whether their wounds hurt much, they answered, "Nothing hurts so much as the salt water the Illanuns gave us to drink. We never had fresh water; they mixed three parts of fresh with four of salt water: and all we had to eat was a handful of rice or raw sago twice a day." Very few of the pirates who were not wounded surrendered. They are marvellous swimmers: took their arms with them into the water, and fought the men in the boats who were trying to pick up the captives. The Bishop and Mr. Walters were fully occupied doctoring friends and foes, arresting hemorrhage, extracting balls, and closing frightful sword or chopper wounds. One man came on board with the top of his skull as cleanly lifted up by a Sooloo knife, as if a surgeon had desired to take a peep at the brain inside! It took considerable force to close it in the right place. This man had also two cuts in his back, yet the next morning he was discovered eating a large plate of rice, and he ultimately recovered. Another poor fellow could not be got up the ladder because he had a long-handled three-barbed spear sticking in his back: the Bishop had to go down and cut it out before he could be moved.

[209]

[210]

While all this was going on, the captives told Captain Brooke that there were three more pirate vessels out at sea, waiting for those near shore to rejoin them; as soon, therefore, as the steamer had picked up as many captives as she could find, she steamed out to sea in search of them. After an hour, the look-out from the mast-head reported three vessels in sight. It was then a dead calm, and they were using their long sweeps, when they were seen from the deck, to arrange themselves side by side, with their bows towards the steamer; but, a breeze springing up, they hoisted sail, spread themselves out broadside on, and opened fire on the *Rainbow* as soon as she was within range, so that there was no question as to whether these were pirate prahus or not. The same plan was followed as in the case of the other boats, and with more success, as there was no shore to escape to.

[211]

The pirates had secured their captives below the decks of the prahus, but when the steamer struck them and opened their sides, they were liberated. But few of them were drowned, being all good swimmers; but some were killed by the pirates in their rage and despair, and some had

been lashed to the vessel and could not therefore escape.

One poor Chinaman came swimming along, holding up his long tail of hair lest he should be suspected to be a pirate; other men held up the ropes round their necks, to show they were captives. The deck of the steamer was soon covered with those who had been picked out of the water, men of every nation and race in the Archipelago, who had been captured during this cruise, which had lasted seven months. These vessels left Tawi-Tawi, an island to the south-west of Sooloo, in October. The Sultan of Sooloo is in league with the pirates, and receives part of the plunder and slaves. In the only boat boarded by Captain Brooke was found the Sultan's flag, which is only given to people of high rank; also the usual Illanun flag, six Dutch, and one Spanish flag, which no doubt belonged to vessels they had captured. The men who were saved gave details of the taking of two large vessels—one a Singapore prahu trading to Tringnanau; the other a Dutch tope, of one hundred and fifty tons, on the coast of Borneo to the south of Pontianak. There they fell in with five other Illanun boats, which had come down from the northward—they themselves were going up from the southward. The new-comers told them of a merchant vessel near at hand, and proposed they should join them in capturing her, which they did. She had a valuable cargo, worth ten thousand dollars. They killed everybody on board, plundered and burnt the vessel. Only the one Chinaman escaped who told this tale. The captives stated that this was the usual proceeding if resistance was made. When they spare their captives' lives, they beat them with a flat piece of bamboo over the elbows and knees, and the muscles of arms and legs, until they are unable to move; then a halter is put round their necks, and, when they are sufficiently tamed, they are put to the oars and made to row in gangs, with one of their own fellow-captives as overseer to keep them at work. If he does not do it effectually, he is krossed and thrown overboard. If these miserable creatures jump into the sea they spear them in the water. They row in relays, night and day; and to keep them awake, cayenne pepper is rubbed into their eyes or into cuts dealt them on their arms.

[212]

The masts of these prahus are very small, so that they may not be seen at a distance. They go very fast. Those encountered by the *Rainbow* were seen off Datu on Monday night, and on Friday morning they were near Bintulu, a distance of two hundred and forty miles, although they had delayed nearly two days at Muka, picking up thirty people on the coast. Most of these were recaptured and returned to Muka. On reckoning up, it was found that one hundred and sixty-five people had been rescued, and perhaps one hundred and fifty or two hundred had got away from the vessels sunk on shore. In every pirate prahu were from forty to fifty Illanuns, and from sixty to seventy captives, many of whom were killed by the pirates when they found themselves beaten, among them two women. Nine women and six children were saved; seven of the women belonged to Muka or Oya. Of the Illanuns, thirty-two were taken alive; ten of these were boys. Some died afterwards of their wounds; some were taken to Kuching in irons, there tried, and some of them executed. They died the death of murderers; but Captain Brooke gave the boys to respectable people to bring up, hoping they might be reformed. We had one young fellow, about fourteen years old, when he had been cured of his wounds in the hospital. I kept him about me, and used to teach him; but he could not be tamed. He turned Mahometan, and left us to be employed at the fort; but there he stole money, and had to be sent elsewhere. The nature of an Illanun pirate seems almost unmixed evil, because they are taught to be cruel from their childhood.

[213]

There were two circumstances in this affray with the Illanuns which called for thankfulness on the part of the victors. First, that they met the pirates in two detachments, which enabled them to attack them successfully, without the danger of their boarding the steamer, which, from their numbers, would have been fatal to the little party on board the *Rainbow*. Secondly, that their ammunition lasted through the two engagements. It was quite finished; only a little loose powder in a barrel, and a few broken cartridges, remained when the last prahus were taken. Had they fallen in with another fleet, they would have been at their mercy. Almost while I write these last words, we have received a letter from the present Rajah of Sarawak—Charles Johnson Brooke. He says, "I have heard this morning that one of our schooners has been captured by the Sooloo pirates, and the crew murdered." The last twenty years have not therefore altered the character of these people, and their extermination seems the only remedy for the misery they inflict on their fellow creatures.

[214]

Footnotes:

[9] Small boats.





CHAPTER XVII.

A MALAY WEDDING.

MY DARLING MAB,

I am sitting in a darkened room, while Mildred is having her day sleep; and as I am thinking of you, I may as well begin a letter for next mail. Last week I went to a Malay wedding, the first I ever attended, although I have been here so many years. It amused me very much; so I shall try to describe it to you.

Early in the morning the bridegroom's friends came to beg flowers from our garden. Then papa told them I would go to the wedding, and they said, "Be sure not to be later than twelve o'clock." Accordingly, Mr. and Mrs. Ricketts, the British Consul and his wife, Mr. Zehnder, and I set off in two boats, after eleven o'clock breakfast; but we need not have got there before two o'clock.

Eastern people set little value on time. They would just as soon sit cross-legged on the floor smoking for three hours as for one. The bride is the daughter of one of the first merchants in the place, Nakodah Sadum, and the bridegroom is the grandson of the old Datu Tumangong, whom you may remember. A handsome young man is Matussim, and enlightened, for a Malay. He made his betrothed a present of his photograph last year. Formerly Malays objected to having their portraits taken, fancying it a breach of the second commandment. [216]

The bride's father's house was gay with flags and streamers, and in front of it lay, by the river's brink, four small cannon, which had been busy, for days before and all that morning, saluting the occasion. We walked up into the house, which was full of guests. A long verandah, lined with hadjis and elders, all smoking and talking, led to the principal room, which, unlike any Malay house before built in Sarawak, had large Venetian-shuttered doors all round, and was therefore cool and airy. There was a little round table, and some armchairs covered with white mats for the expected guests, in the middle of the room. Sadum and his wife came forward and greeted us very cordially, and then we were told to sit down on the chairs. I looked about for the bride, and saw a crowd of women in one corner, and a boy holding a gilt umbrella over the young lady, who was being shaved. A woman with a razor was shearing her eyebrows into a delicate line, and all round her forehead trimming disorderly hairs. Four women, seated on their heels in front of her, were fidgeting over her face; she, impassive as a log in their hands. A vast deal of singing and drumming went on all the time, a row of musicians keeping it up all round the room. The girl was washed; then her hair, magnificent black hair down to her heels, knotted in two great bows on either side of her head. Over these, gold ornaments like wings were fixed, and a little tower of gold bells above them. Then the women painted a black band round her forehead, and added a silver edge to it, also painted. Her eyebrows were likewise touched up, and her skin rubbed all over with yellow powder. Poor child! she was a curious figure by the time it was all finished, and her skin must have felt painfully stiff. She was then attired in very handsome silk robes, ornamented with solid gold, and the attendants carried her to a raised dais or bed-place at one end of the room. There she sat, not daring to lift her eyes until the bridegroom's arrival. [217]

The divan was gorgeous with silk curtains and cushions embroidered with gold thread and embossed with tinsel ornaments, the work of the bride herself. The seat for the bridegroom was somewhat higher and larger than the bride's. At last the bridegroom approached in a large barge, which held about two hundred people. A small boat preceded it with three guns, which kept up a deafening noise as he drew near. He was carried up the steps, and the house door was shut to in his face, according to the Malay custom. Then he begged admittance very humbly, and after paying a fee of five dollars, was admitted. His followers rush in first—such a clatter! Greetings, welcomes, jokes, and laughter, make a Babel of noise; everybody speaking at once. Then a cloth was laid down for the bridegroom to pass over, and he was pulled with apparent reluctance into the room, panting and shutting his eyes as if exhausted. His head was wreathed with Indian jessamine. He was naked to the waist, except a gold scarf over one shoulder; otherwise he had plenty of gold and red silk about him. He was pulled up to the bride, turning his head away as if he was ashamed to look at her, and dropped a red silk handkerchief over her face for a moment. Then he sat down on the divan, and all the old women of both houses sprinkled the couple with yellow rice, and rubbed their foreheads with some charm, which looked like a bit of stone and a nutmeg-grater, and wished them all kinds of luck—but especially that they might be the parents of *sons* only. After the young people had endured this long enough, the curtains were let down round the dais, and only two or three old women kept going in and out. We found they were taking off all the finery, and dressing the bride and bridegroom in their usual clothes; for while we were drinking coffee and eating Malay cakes at the little table, they came out from the curtains, looking quite pleasant and natural. So we shook hands, made our congratulations, and bade them adieu. We got home at four o'clock, very hot and tired, and papa laughed at us for going; but I was glad I did for once in a way. [218]

A wedding is a very serious expense to Malays of any rank. The bridegroom has to make settlements on the bride, and the bride's father has to keep open house for weeks, besides fees to the hadjis, and gunpowder *ad libitum*. The religious part of the ceremony is enacted some days before the marriage. One day papa was calling at a Malay house, where a wedding was about to take place, [219]

and found the bridegroom learning a passage in the Koran, in Arabic, which he could not translate, but which it was necessary he should repeat. A hadji was standing by, driving the words into his head. The hadji could not translate it either; but the Koran may only be read in Arabic, lest it should be desecrated. Sometimes papa would read a chapter to any Malay who desired to understand the meaning of his sacred book; but they were generally content with learning it as a charm, or certain parts of it.

The Rajah often made a present of an ox for a great man's wedding. This was a great help, for many dishes of curry could be made out of so much meat. When we wished for some meat at Christmas and Easter, we sent for the Mahometan butcher to kill the animal. He turned its head towards Mecca, repeated prayers over him, and then cut his throat in such a way that no drop of blood was left in the flesh; for the Malays hold to the Jewish law in that as well as many other particulars. Then the people would buy whatever beef we did not want ourselves; but not otherwise.

[220]

This is a long letter, but as I am on the subject of weddings, I may as well tell you about a Chinese wedding we had the other day at our house. The bridegroom was Akiat, a carpenter, about six feet two inches high. He was dressed in whity-brown silk, which made him look like a tall spectre; and the bride was Quey Ginn, a fat, dumpy little girl of sixteen, the Chinese deacon's daughter, and one of my scholars. She did not choose her old husband of fifty years, but her parents arranged it, and Akiat paid one hundred dollars for his wife. I went to see her the day before the wedding, and she showed me all her clothes and ornaments; but I thought she did not look as if she cared for them. So I whispered, "Are you happy, child?" "No, not at all," burst out Quey Ginn. "I don't want to be married and leave my parents." Whereupon I could not help taking her in my arms and comforting her, telling her to be a good wife, and she would soon learn to be content. She has been to visit me since her marriage, and I am amused to see that she is quite a little woman, instead of the shy girl she used to be; and, whereas as a girl she was never allowed to be seen in the streets, or even to go to church, she now does exactly as she likes, and, I am happy to say, comes regularly to church. These people were all sincere Christians. Akiat was the Chinese churchwarden, and, as papa esteemed them very highly, he allowed the breakfast to take place at our house.

[221]

I had a cake made for the occasion, which Quey Ginn cut up with much pleasure. The ring in it fell to Mr. Zehnder's share, which amused him also. Good-bye.

It was this year, 1865, that Mr. Waterhouse, the chaplain of Singapore, came to visit us. The doctors often sent us a patient or friend to be under the Bishop's care, and for rest and change; the latter was the cause of Mr. Waterhouse's visit, and six weeks of jungle life did him good, while his society and sympathy were a great pleasure to us, the Bishop especially. The Bishop took him to visit the different mission stations, and he often spoke to me with satisfaction of the "real mission work" he witnessed at Banting, Lundu, and the Quop. At each of these stations he found a consecrated church and a community of Christian people; whilst the missionaries set over them, not only instructed and ministered to the tribe among whom they lived, but journeyed to outlying places, founding branch missions and setting catechists to work under them. I find in one of my letters, when Mr. Waterhouse returned from Banting, he said, "I cannot but admire the patience with which Mr. Chambers talks all day, morning, noon, and night, to every party of Dyaks, who march into the house whenever they like, making it quite their home: it is what very few people could do day after day." This is the trial of Dyak teaching. You cannot appoint specific hours for instruction. People come when they can, sometimes long distances. They can never be denied, except you are actually at meals, and then they sit down and wait till the eating is over. Here is a programme of a day at Banting:—

[222]

By seven in the morning Mr. Chambers goes to one or another Dyak house to teach. These houses contain many families under one roof. The people understand now that teaching is the sole object of Mr. Chambers' visit, so, when he enters, all who are at leisure gather round him. He returns home to eleven o'clock breakfast. After breakfast his school of boys occupies him for the afternoon; but every party of Dyaks who come in must be listened to, and, if they are willing, instructed, taught a prayer, a hymn, a parable, or some Scripture lesson. This goes on till five o'clock, when the bell calls them to daily prayers, and they all walk together down the beautiful jungle avenue to the pretty church. A short service, in which the Dyaks respond heartily, and a catechizing follows, during which they are allowed to ask questions of their teacher. Then an hour's rest before dinner. But immediately after dinner more Dyaks, sometimes a whole house, *i.e.* forty or fifty persons, come in, and have coffee, and pictures, and a lecture. All this does not happen every day, but most days during what we call the working season, from March till October, and no doubt so much talking and so little leisure is very fatiguing. But then comes the harvest, and afterwards the wet monsoon, and the schools fall off, and the Dyaks no longer come from a distance to be taught. It is sufficiently dull and lonely then in the jungle stations. The sea runs too high for boats to bring mails, or books, or provisions; the rain falls heavily, and with little intermission, and food becomes scarce. Mrs. Chambers told me that the prayer for daily bread, which seems to us to relate to the daily needs of our souls for the bread and water of life, bore a literal meaning to them in the north-east monsoon, when the day's food was by no means certain. Rice they had, it is true; but English people get nearly starved upon rice alone, without fish, meat, or bread. It was therefore with sincere thankfulness that they welcomed a chicken, however skinny, in that season.

[223]

After the Banting expedition, the Bishop took Mr. Waterhouse to Lundu, and Mr. Hawkins, a missionary lately come out, went with them. They arrived on a Saturday. On Sunday there was a great gathering of Christian Dyaks: fifty-two people were confirmed, eighty received the Holy Communion, so that they were more than three hours in church, the Bishop preaching to them in Malay. On Monday Mr. Waterhouse and Mr. Hawkins paid a visit to a beautiful waterfall, about two miles from the town; and on Tuesday all the party, Mr. Gomez included, went in boats forty

miles up the river Lundu, with three hundred Dyaks, to tuba fish. The Bishop had paid the Dyaks to collect tuba the week before. It is a plant found in the jungle, the root of which washed in water makes a milky-looking poison. It does not make the fish unwholesome to eat, only intoxicates them for the time, so that they rise floundering about on the surface of the water, but it destroys human life, and is the poison chosen by Dyaks who commit suicide, though I do not believe that this crime is common among them.

[224]

When the party had ascended the river far enough, the Dyaks built a hut for the English to sleep in. They made a floor of logs of wood, spread over with the bark of trees, which, beaten down hard, made a capital mattress on which to lay their mats and pillows. The kajangs (leaf mats) off the boat made some shelter from the weather, although it takes a good deal to keep Borneo rain out! The Dyaks were much too busy to go to sleep at all: they drove stakes all across the river to secure their fish, then they beat out the tuba in the bottom of their boats. It took all night, by the light of torches, to do this; and a wild sight it was, in the midst of the solemn old jungle. Very early in the morning, when the tide was at its lowest ebb, they put the tuba into the river; the flood coming up, and bringing plenty of fish, encountered this intoxicating milk, and carried over the stakes a whole shoal of dead and tipsy fish. Then the Dyaks, darting about in little boats, speared the big fishes, and caught the small ones in landing-nets.

Hundreds of fish were caught, and the Dyaks had a grand feast; also, they salted quantities, in their nasty way—pounding the fish up, letting it turn sour, and then packing it into bamboos with salt, as a relish to eat with their rice. Certainly it has a strong flavour! They all camped two nights in the jungle, then returned to Lundu, and reached Sarawak in the yacht *Fanny*, after an absence of ten days. We had a visit from H.M.S. *Scout* about this time, and one day sat down sixteen to dinner in the mission-house, some of the officers having come up to spend the day. It is difficult to improvise a dinner in a country where no joints of meat are to be had, unless you kill an ox for the purpose. Sheep there are none. A capon or goose, or a sucking pig, are the only big dishes, and not always to be had. However, we did very well, and our visitors were delighted with Sarawak, and with the schoolboys' singing; for I had them up to sing glees and rounds, and "Rule Britannia," after dinner. Captain Corbett was so pleased with the little fellows that he invited them all to see the ship the next morning. Accordingly our largest boat took the choir down very early to Morotabas, where the *Scout* lay, and Captain Corbett took them all over it himself, even down to the screw chamber. The boys had never seen so large a man-of-war before (1600 tons), so they were delighted. Some Dyaks who went with them were much terrified lest they should be carried off to sea, for the captain ordered "up anchor," that the boys might see how it was done, and then sent them off the last minute. They came home in high glee. Only those who live at the ends of the earth can tell what a pleasure and refreshment is a little visit from her Majesty's ships from time to time. The whiff of English air they bring with them, and the hearty English enthusiasm which has not had time to evaporate, is most reviving.

[225]

[226]

Many Chinese Christians returned to China this summer. I hope they carried the good seed of the word of life with them. They are only birds of passage at Sarawak: when they grow rich they prefer to spend their money in their native country. Our Chinese deacon took his family for a visit to their Chinese relations. Even the married daughter went with them; and a few days afterwards, Akiat, her husband, came to tell me that he was so wretched without his wife, that he should go to Singapore for the few months of her absence, to while away the time, and he meant to have a nice new house ready for her on her return.

Voon Yen Knoon deserved a holiday, certainly, for he worked hard among his countrymen, besides teaching every day in the school. Three evenings every week were devoted to the instruction of the Chinese, at the mission-house. Two distinct languages were spoken by the different tribes of Chinese who had settled at Sarawak. They could not be taught together. The people of the Kay tribe came on one evening, the Hokien another, each having their own interpreter. On the third evening the interpreters were instructed in the lessons for the following week. On these nights our long dining-room was full of Chinamen, and a large tray of tiny cups of tea was carried in, and consumed before the teaching began.

[227]



[228]

CHAPTER XVIII.

LAST YEARS AT SARAWAK.

Mr. Chalmers' Merdang Dyaks once said to him, "See how many races of people there are: Dyaks, Malays, Klings, Chinese, English. They have all different religions: this is proper, for God has given to each the religion suited to them."

I remembered this ingenious remark when I was reading Mr. Helms's interesting book, just published, "Pioneering in the Far East." He says: "Like most barbarous and savage nations, the Dyak identifies his gods and spirits with the great phenomena of nature, and assigns them abodes on the lofty mountains. Though, in his opinion, all spirits are not equally malignant, all are more or less to be dreaded. The silent surroundings of primæval forests in which the Dyak spends most of his time, the mountains, the gloomy caves, often looming mysteriously through cloud and mist, predispose him to identify them with supernatural influences, which in his imagination take the form of monsters and genii. With no better guide than the untutored imagination of a mind which in religious matters is a blank, who shall wonder that this is so? I have myself often felt the influences of such surroundings, when dark clouds deepened the forest gloom, and the approaching storm set the trees whispering: if, at such a moment, the shaggy red-haired and goblin form of the orang-outang, with which some of the Dyaks identify their genii, should appear among the branches, it requires little imagination to people the mystic gloom with unearthly beings."

[229]

Mr. Helms is quite right—the religion which springs from circumstance and surrounding nature is always one of fear; evil is so close to the heart of man that the very elements and mysteries of nature seem his enemies, so long as he is ignorant of the love of God. The great creating Spirit, whose existence is acknowledged by all Dyaks, inspires them with neither love nor trust; it is only malign spirits who are active, who concern themselves with his affairs, and threaten his happiness and prosperity, and who must therefore be propitiated. What a different aspect his native woods must present to the Christian Dyak, who can look around without fear, and believe that his Heavenly Father made all these things! You would imagine that Christianity would be welcomed as a deliverance from such superstition; but here the apathy of long habit raises a barrier. The Dyak who professed to think his dismal religion was given him by God, was probably too intellectually idle to think at all. "What you say is most likely true, but we have received our belief from our forefathers, and it is good enough for us," is the common remark of the Land Dyak. This listlessness was perhaps originally caused by oppression and misery, a hard life and cruel masters. In the days we knew these people they had a sad and patient expression in their faces, as if they could not forget the time when they were ground down by Malay extortion, and despoiled by stronger, more warlike tribes. The present generation may have more spirit, more independence, and the blessings of peace and liberty may leave their minds more open to the light of truth. It is, however, interesting to note how different races of men develop different religious beliefs, and how these Dyaks intuitively perceive spirit through matter, and are governed, however blindly and ignorantly, by the powers of the unseen world.

[230]

The orang-outang, or wild man, is not very commonly met in the jungle. I have seen the trees alive with monkeys, but never met an orang-outang at liberty. The Dyaks may well be afraid of them if it is true, as they say, that if one of these monsters attacks a man, he picks his flesh off his bones like a cook plucking a chicken. They are immensely powerful, but once caged are gentle enough. Their one desire in confinement is clothing, why I cannot tell; large-sized monkeys always wrapped themselves in any bit of cloth they could find, partly in imitation of their keepers, and perhaps also because they are very chilly creatures, and, deprived of their usual violent gymnastics, suffered from cold. A Chinaman had a female orang in his shop while we were at Sarawak, who took a violent liking to the Bishop, and always expected to be noticed when he passed the shop. Then she would kiss and fondle his hand; but if he forgot to speak to "Jemima," she went into a passion, screamed, and dashed about her cage.

[231]

I never allowed any kind of monkey to be kept at the mission-house. We had too many children on the premises, and they are jealous and uncertain in their behaviour to children. Indeed I always regretted their being either shot or caged—they enjoy life so intensely in the jungle, and are so amusing, swinging themselves from the branches of tall trees, leaping, flying almost, in pursuit of one another for mere fun, that it was sad to put them in prison, where they never lived long, and where they only exhibited a ludicrous and humiliating parody on the habits of mankind.

There was a race of monkeys at Sarawak called by the natives "Unkah," from the noise they made, but which we called Noseys, for they had long noses which fell over their mouths, so that the large males had to lift their noses with one hand, while they put food into their mouths with the other. When we first lived in the country, and were anxious to send specimens of every new and curious thing to England, my husband shot one of these large monkeys for the sake of his skin, but he was so distressed at the look the beast gave him when he felt himself hit, he was so like his own uncle in England, who had rather a red face and long nose, that he resolved never again to shoot a monkey. This ape was clothed in long brown fur, while his legs were encased in much shorter hair of a tan colour, which gave the idea of leather breeches. I once saw a monkey's nest in a high tree. The tree was very bare of leaf or the nest might have escaped notice. It was formed of big sticks laid in a strong fork of the branches; and whether it was lined with anything

[232]

softer could not be seen from below, but the sticks stuck out, covering a large space, which had no appearance of comfort or snugness.

The one monkey I liked, and that at a distance, was the wa-wa, whose voice was very sweet and melodious, like the soft bubbling of water; but it was a very melancholy animal, and never seemed to possess the fun and trickishness of the more common sorts of ape. They are all delicate and difficult to rear, and invariably die of over-eating, or rather eating what is unwholesome for them, if they have a chance. It seems as if, in approaching the form of man, they lost the instinct of the brute. It was a great addition to the pleasures of life in Sarawak that there were no wild beasts to be feared in the jungles. When we were once staying at Malacca, and, for the sake of a natural hot spring, inhabited a little bungalow in the country, we were always liable to encounter a tiger in our walks; on Penang Hill, also, there was a large tiger staying in the woods. During one of our visits, we tracked his footsteps in a cave on the hill; and he carried off a calf from a gentleman's cow-house near us—at another time a pony from a neighbour's stable. Tigers do not, however, live at Penang: they occasionally swim over the strait from Johore, opposite the island, if driven by hunger. The natives made deep pits to catch them, with bamboo spears at the bottom to transfix them when they fall in. On one occasion a French Roman Catholic missionary fell into one of these tiger-pits, and remained there, starved and wounded, for three days before he was discovered. He was a very good man, and gave a wonderful account of his happiness, his visions of heavenly bliss while dying in that slow torture, for he was too far gone to be restored. He died rejoicing that he had known what it was to suffer with Christ.

[233]

The last two years of our life at Sarawak, the Bishop's health failed and caused me much anxiety. The long jungle walks, which were so necessary in getting about from one mission to another, became more and more difficult to him. Often he had to stop and lie down under a tree till the palpitation of his heart abated; repeated attacks of Labuan fever affected his liver; and our friends often warned us that we ought to go home to save his life. The interest of the different missions increased so much at this time, that it seemed hard to give up a post in which many trials and disappointments had been lived through, just as success seemed about to reward the years of patient labour. The peace and harmony of the mission was greatly promoted, the last three years of our stay, by an annual meeting of the clergy with their bishop. They came from their different rivers to spend a week at the mission-house, and for certain hours of each day met in the church to discuss missionary operations, Church discipline, religious terms, translations, etc. It was very desirable there should be no diversity of opinion in these matters, but that the different missions should have the same plans, uses, and customs. And these meetings, besides the importance of the subjects discussed, knit the missionaries to one another and all to the Bishop, promoting also that *esprit de corps* which strengthens any institution, be it school, college, or Church in a heathen country.

[234]

A curious adventure happened to the Bishop in 1865. It was the rainy season, and the roads were saturated with water and full of holes, especially a new bit of road towards Pedungan, where sleepers of wood had been laid down, to steady what would otherwise have been a bog; but holes here and there could not be avoided. The Bishop always took a ride early in the morning, before seven o'clock service in church. That morning I had asked him to go to a house down that road, to inquire about a servant. He came home late, and covered with mud all down one side. "Papa has fallen," said little Mildred, playing in the garden. At her voice her father seemed to wake up out of a deep sleep, and gradually he became conscious of a severe bruise on his face and pain in his head; but he could give no account of the matter, which was, however, explained by a Malay in the course of the day. This man was walking on the road to Pedungan, when he met the Bishop returning home. He saw the horse put his foot into a deep hole and come down, the Bishop also. He did not, however, at once fall off, not until the horse in his efforts to rise had inflicted a blow with his head on his rider's face. The Malay helped the horse up, which was not hurt, and the Bishop on his back; and seeing he was much stunned, he followed them for some way lest the Bishop should need assistance: but when they reached the town and seemed all right, he went back. All this time, however, the Bishop was perfectly unconscious; the horse carried him as he chose, over a ditch, up a steep bank, under low-hanging trees, and quite safely until he stopped at our own door. A headache and some stiffness were the only results of what might have been a fatal accident. We were very thankful to God for having sent His angel to guard steps as unconscious and heedless as any little child's could have been. No memory of what had happened ever came back to the Bishop.

[235]

In 1866 the *Rifleman*, her Majesty's surveying ship, gave us a passage to Labuan, where the Bishop wanted to hold a confirmation. This ship was going to Manilla, and from thence to Hong Kong, before she returned to Singapore, and, through the kindness of Captain Reed, we accompanied her. At Labuan I caught the fever of the country, but it did not come out for ten days, by which time we were at Manilla. We anchored off Manilla on Christmas-day evening: it had been a very wet day, but cleared up at night, and we sat on deck watching the lights on shore, and listening to the constant chimes of the numerous church bells, whilst the sailors sang songs and did their best to amuse us. It seemed so strange to be in a Christian country again.

[236]

They have some customs at Manilla which I could not help admiring. When the Vesper bell rings at six o'clock, all business and pleasure is suspended for a few minutes, and all the world, man, woman, and child, say a prayer. The coachmen on the carriages stop their horses, the pedestrians stand still, friends engaging in animated conversation are suddenly silent. The setting sun is a

signal for the heart to rise to God; it is a public recognition of His protecting care, and an act of thanksgiving. When it is over, the children ask their parents' blessing for the night. This was told me by a native of Manilla, an educated gentleman, who gave his children every advantage of learning and travel. The Vesper custom I saw for myself every time I took an evening drive. We witnessed a very gorgeous procession on the feast of the Epiphany. All the city functionaries, the military, the priests, bands of music, and a masquerade of the three kings on horseback, surrounded by troops of children beautifully dressed in white and scattering flowers, passed through the streets to a church, into which they all poured, the three horses riding in too, to attend high mass. I saw but little of Manilla, being ill nearly all the time. It is a place shaken to pieces by earthquakes. When we were there the great square, where the Government offices once stood, was a heap of ruins, and the treasury was too poor even to clear them away. The bridges were all broken in the middle, and patched up somehow; and all the rooms in the houses were crooked, the timbers of the walls being joined loosely together to admit of the frequent trembling, heaving, and subsidence of the ground, without their cracking. I believe the country all round was lovely, but I only took one drive when I was convalescent, and then we steamed away to Hong Kong. I shall say nothing about Hong Kong, for all the world knows what a beautiful place it is in winter—how bright and sparkling the blue sea, how clean and trim the streets, and how stately the buildings; also what a dream of loveliness is the one drive out of the town to the Happy Valley, where many an Englishman lies buried in the cemetery. I had a second bout of fever at Hong Kong. Happily for us, we found kind relatives both at Manilla and Hong Kong, who nursed me, and who were very good to us. We found it very cold there after stewing for six years in Borneo, and the Bishop caught a chill which made him ill all the rest of the way home. Had we thought when we left Sarawak in '66 that we should never return there, it would have been a great trial to bid adieu to our old home, but we had no such intention. We were only taking Mildred to England, and seeking a necessary change for the Bishop's failing health. The knowledge that he would not be able to resume his work in the East dawned upon us by degrees. It was a great disappointment, but we were thankful that an English vicarage was found for us, where we could make a home for our children, and where the duties and pleasures of an English parish remained to us. It is, however, very pleasant, on a foggy day in November or February, to return in fancy to that land of sunshine and flowers; to imagine one's self again sitting in the porch of the mission-house, gazing at the mountain of Matang, lit up with sunset glories of purple and gold. Then, when the last gleam of colour has faded, to find the Chinaman lighting the lamps in the verandah, and little dusky faces peeping out, to know if you will sing with them "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," or the hymn about the "Purple-headed mountain and river running by," which must have surely been written for Sarawak children.

[237]

[238]



[239]

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ISLAND OF BORNEO.

Borneo is so little known that a short account of it may be interesting. If any one will examine a map of Borneo they will see that it is a large island, in shape something like a box with the lid open. The interior of the square part of it presents almost a blank on the map, for the coasts only are known to the civilized world. Its greatest length is eight hundred miles, and its greatest breadth six hundred and twenty-five miles. Ranges of mountains through the centre of the island provide the sources of many fine rivers which are the highways of the country.

The Dutch claim the south and south-west of the island. They have settlements at Sambas, at Pontianak, and at Banjarmassin; and forts on the rivers, inhabited by Dutch residents, or Malay chiefs in their pay: but they have never won the hearts of the aborigines, for the Dutch maxim is always to get as much money as possible out of native subjects, consequently they are every now and then obliged to send European troops to enforce the obedience of the Chinese and Dyaks to their rule. On the west of Borneo lies the little kingdom of Sarawak, about three hundred miles of coast line from Cape Datu to Point Kiderong.

[240]

The Sultan of Bruni, who was the nominal ruler of all the north-west of Borneo, gave up this province to Sir James Brooke in 1841, "to him and his heirs for ever," on condition a small sum of money was paid him annually. The province consisted originally of "about sixty miles of coast, from Cape Datu to the entrance of the Samarahan River, with an average breadth of fifty miles inland;"^[10] but from time to time the Sultan entreated Sir James Brooke to take the rule of one river after another beyond this province towards Borneo Proper, for, owing to his own weakness, and the rapacity of his nobles who governed in his name, no revenue came to him from those

rivers, nor could he protect native trade, or secure the lives of his subjects from the extortions and covetousness of their Malay chiefs. So Sarawak grew, and peace, and justice, and free trade flourished where before there were only poverty and oppression. The country is traversed by fine rivers. The Rejang, four fathoms deep two hundred miles from the mouth, the Batang Lupar, and the Sarawak are the largest, and the great highways of the country; along the banks of which are cultivated clearings and Dyak villages, but beyond these extend dense jungle which even clothes the sides of the mountains. Besides the before-mentioned rivers are many smaller ones which are still noble streams—the Sarebas, Samarahan, Sadong, Lundu, etc. It is indeed a well-watered country, and only requires the industry of man to develop its riches.

[241]

There are great mountain ranges to the north-west and through the interior of the island, and the natives speak of lakes of vast extent, with Dyak villages on their shores. But this is only tradition. There is a lake commonly reported only two days' journey from the foot of Kini Balu, a high mountain on the north-west, but no Englishman has yet trod its shores. The difficulties of exploring such dense jungles and mountain precipices as bar the way across Borneo are almost insuperable. I quote from Mr. Hornaday's recent lecture at Rochester. He says, "Owing to the peculiar and almost impassable nature of the country, Borneo has never been crossed by the white man. Travelling over some of the mountains seems to be an absolute impossibility. Many of them consist almost wholly of huge blocks of basalt, soft, moist, and too slippery to walk upon. I would rather attempt to cross the continent of Africa than the island of Borneo. The explorer must carry with him provisions enough to last both going and returning. The jungle affords nothing fit for human sustenance, and there are no inhabitants to supply the explorer with food. Fame awaits the man who will thoroughly explore the interior of the island."^[11]

[242]

Sir Spencer St. John, who has had more experience of Borneo jungles than any other Englishman hitherto, says, "As I have now made many journeys in Borneo, and seen much of forest walking, I can speak of it with something like certainty. I have ever found, in recording progress, that we can seldom allow more than a mile an hour under ordinary circumstances. Sometimes, when extremely difficult or winding, we do not make half a mile an hour. On certain occasions, when very hard pressed, I have seen the men manage a mile and a half; but, with all our exertions, I have never yet recorded more than ten miles' progress in a day, through thick pathless forests, and that was after ten hours of hard work. It requires great experience not to judge distance by the fatigue we feel."^[12]

It seems that the Sultan of Bruni has found out that the best way he can govern his subjects and gain a revenue without trouble, is by ceding parts of his territory to others. He has given over the whole of the north of the island to an English company, on condition they pay twelve thousand five hundred dollars for it annually. This country, embracing an area of twenty thousand square miles, has fine harbours on its coasts very suitable for a commercial settlement. The great mountain of Kini Balu, nearly fourteen thousand feet high, with its range of lesser mountains, stands on the north-west, and between it and the sea lies a very fertile country, thus described some years ago by Sir Spencer St. John, in his "Forests of the Far East": "We rode over towards Pandusan in search of plants. From the summit of the first low hill we had a beautiful view of the lovely plain of Tampusak, extending from the sea far into the interior. Groves of cocoanuts were interspersed among the rice-grounds which extended, intermixed with grassy fields, to the sea-shore, bounded by a long line of Casuarina trees. Little hamlets lie scattered in all directions, some distinctly visible, other nearly hidden by the rich green foliage of fruit-trees. The prospect was bounded on the west by low sandstone hills, whose red colour occasionally showing through the lately burnt grass, afforded a varied tint in the otherwise verdant landscape. In the south Kini Balu and its attendant ranges were hidden by clouds."

[243]

Here is another description after a day's journey towards the mountain:—

"While reclining under the shade of cocoanut palms, we had a beautiful view of the country beyond. The river Tampusak flowed past us, bubbling and breaking over its uneven bed, here shallower and therefore broader than usual. To the left the country was open almost to the base of the great mountain, to the right the land was more hilly, and Saduk Saduk showed itself as a high peak, but dwarfed by the neighbourhood of Kini Balu, whose rocky precipices looked a deep purple colour. The summit was beautifully clear. The people in this part of the country are called Idaan. They seem industrious and good agriculturists, even using a rough plough, and cultivating the whole valley; a rich black soil produces good crops of rice, and Killadis, an arum root used for food. They also grow tobacco."

[244]

These people live too far from Bruni to be robbed by the Sultan and his nobles. The Lanuns who inhabit the north coasts are very warlike, and have always been pirates within the memory of man. They will not be easy subjects to deal with, nor will the Sooloos on the east coast, but if they can be reclaimed they may become an enterprising and fine people, like the Sarebas pirates of Sarawak.

I hope the Company will have patience with the natives of this vast territory. They will probably *not work for wages*. Chinese labour must be depended upon, and as they are the most industrious people on the face of the earth, and will do anything for money, they are always available. But they require a firm government, and great care must be taken that they do not infringe on the rights of the natives or there will be quarrels and bloodshed. Tradition says that there was once a Chinese kingdom at the north of Borneo, whose chiefs married into the families of the principal Dyak chiefs; but it is the misfortune of the Chinese character to be both boastful and cowardly, and when they had irritated the Malays by their big words, they stood no chance of prevailing

[245]

against them in war. If their enemies did not run away after the first attack and discharge of firearms, they were pretty sure to show them an example by doing so themselves. I speak of the Chinese fifty years ago; since they have had wars with Europeans they have learnt better to stand to their arms. But they were gradually exterminated by the Malays in these petty wars, and now all that remains of them is a trace of Celestial physiognomy in their Dyak descendants, and the knowledge of agriculture which they still retain.

The Bruni Government protects no one. It is wonderful that any Chinese should still trade at a place where riches, however moderate, are sure to excite the cupidity of the Malay nobles, and to be transferred, under some pretext or another, to their own pockets. I rejoice to think that English rule and justice is now to be offered to the inhabitants of the North of Borneo. They expect an Englishman to be just and generous, brave and firm, and they ground this expectation on their knowledge and experience of Labuan and Sarawak, and the lessons which her Majesty's ships of war have from time to time impressed on the corrupt and faithless Bruni people. I trust this experience will never be reversed by unworthy agents or settlers. The climate is too tropical for colonization, no families of emigrants can be reared in such heat. There are, no doubt, more decided seasons in the north of the island than in the centre: it is hotter at one part of the year, and colder at another, than in the lands bordering on the equator, which are the rain nurseries of the world. A less fierce heat, but rain almost every day in the year, was our lot at Sarawak; and though it was very healthy for English men and women, it was not so good for crops: pepper and coffee prefer a drier climate.

[246]

There will be one difficulty in the North Borneo settlement which will require wise handling. I mean the slaves which are the possession of every petty chief and every Malay family in the country. All pirates bring home fresh slaves from every expedition. This can be put an end to at once. But it will be as impolitic as impossible to put a sudden end to the state of slavery in which so large a proportion of the inhabitants will be found. In this respect I hope the North Borneo Company will take a leaf out of Sarawak experience. Sir James Brooke, as long ago as 1841, appealed to the English Government "to assist him to put down piracy and the slave trade, which," he said, "are openly carried on within a short distance of three European settlements, on a scale and system revolting to humanity."

The exertions of Sir James Brooke and his nephews, aided occasionally by her Majesty's ships, have indeed nearly put a stop to piracy, and therefore to the kidnapping of slaves. Still the descendants of Dyak slaves remain the property of their masters. Besides these, there are slave debtors, whole families who have sold themselves to pay the accumulations arising from taxes or impositions of the Malays which they had no hope of repaying. Usury, which was the fountain of this evil, has been forbidden at Sarawak, and many are the slave debtors whom the Rajah's purse has freed.

[247]

"Slavery in the East," says Mr. Low,^[13] "has always been of a more mild and gentle character than that which in the West so disgusted the intelligent natives of Europe. The slaves in Borneo are generally Dyaks and their descendants, who have been captured by the rulers of the country to swell the number of their personal attendants. Their duties consist in helping their master, who always works with them, in his house or boat building operations, accompanying him in his trading expeditions, assisting in the navigation of his boats, etc. Their masters generally allot them wives from amongst their female domestics, and many of them acquire the affection and confidence of their superiors. The price of a slave in Sarawak is from thirty to sixty dollars, but as the trade is being as quickly repressed as possible, without too much shocking the prejudices of the inhabitants, they have of late become very scarce, and difficult to be bought. The price of a girl varies from thirty to one hundred dollars, but at Sarawak they are even more difficult than men to obtain." Thus wrote Mr. Low in the year 1848. By this time, 1882, slavery is almost nominal at Sarawak. I read, in a *Sarawak Gazette*, six months ago, that Rajah Brooke had proposed to his Supreme Council, which consists of four Malays and two Englishmen, that slavery should be by law abolished in Sarawak territory. He had proposed this, he said, six months previously, and the Malay councillors present assented heartily as far as themselves and the people of Kuching were concerned, but they thought it would be desirable to give six months' notice to the outlying rivers and coasts, where the people were not as advanced in civilization as those at the capital. Now the six months had passed away, were they prepared to assent to the law? They again expressed their cordial approval of the abolition of slavery, but recommended three months more delay before it was enforced on the out-stations. In the same *Gazette* I noticed a letter from the Resident at Bintulu, one of the farthest stations from Kuching, in which he speaks of a Malay noble, warmly attached to the Sarawak Government, who claimed all the inhabitants of a large district as his slaves. It was merely a nominal claim, as they did no work for him, but he said they belonged to him. Still, when he was assured by Mr. De Crespigny^[14] that such a claim would not be allowed by the Rajah, he submitted without complaint. We may hope that such will be the universal acceptance of the new law, but it is easy to see that forty years of past repression and discountenance, and the strong influence of English opinion on the subject of slavery, has effected what would doubtless have caused strong opposition and estrangement if attempted hastily.

[248]

[249]

I have just received a *Sarawak Gazette*, dated July 1st, which contains an account of a further cession of territory from the Sultan of Bruni to Rajah Brooke of Sarawak.

This is the passage:

"On Saturday, the 10th June, his Highness the Sultan signified his willingness to cede to the Rajah of Sarawak, and his heirs, all the country and rivers that lie between Points Kadurong and Barram, including about three miles of coast on the east side of Barram Point. Negotiations about the sum to be paid for this hundred miles of coast continued for three days, when the deed of cession was finally sealed and delivered. This deed of cession, sealed with the respective seals of his Highness the Sultan of Bruni and the Rajah of Sarawak, was read out in full court on the 10th June. After which his Highness the Rajah addressed a few words to the people, telling them that he intended going to the river Barram towards the end of this moon, for the purpose of choosing a site whereon to erect a fort, and establishing a government there, to be a nucleus of trade. He added that all those who wished to trade there might now do so without fear."

[250]

This is an important addition to the country of Sarawak.

The time may indeed not be far distant when the country of Bruni, now wedged in between Sarawak and the territory of British North Borneo, may disappear altogether, and with it the misrule and oppression of that corrupt Eastern court. Then English people will be responsible for the whole of the north and north-west of the island of Borneo, and a new era of peace and happiness will dawn upon its inhabitants.

Footnotes:

- [10] Letter of Sir J. Brooke to J. Gardner, Esq.
- [11] Mr. Hornaday's lecture before the Young Men's Christian Association.
- [12] St. John's Limbong Journal.
- [13] "Sarawak, its Inhabitants and Productions," by Hugh Low.
- [14] The Resident.

THE END.

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