

them giving a *furtive glance* as if they were suspicious of your motives. I speak here of those who are continually with the Indians, and from whom they have inherited this peculiar trait of character; the half-breeds who have lived amongst the whites and worked for them lose to a great extent their Indian watchfulness, but seldom become as communicative as one would wish. There is a marked difference between the French, English, and Scotch half-breeds, and the character of the white man seems to come out in some very marked points in the three classes. Taking them all in all, Indian and half breed, they are quite a study to a student of Nature, and not many years will pass over before the true Indian will be extinct, not so much lost through death, but absorbed into the white blood of the country, and in this way will disappear.

A fact worth noting in connection with this great country, and which has not been often stated, is, that no *rate* nor *cents* have ever made their appearance, and I have been informed on good authority that it is really the case as far as the former individuals are concerned.

As far as the *cents* are concerned, we are a people who do not trouble with trifles, and amongst other things, it saves the minister giving an announcement of a silver collection; prevents the tampering with children's morals and behaviour by offering them a stick of candy to be good or giving them a cent not to cry; prevents the small boy in the street greeting you with a "Give a cent, sir!" they'd never think of asking for five; saves your pockets from wearing out; very handy for the seller of goods to credit himself with the difference in change, this is the privilege the purchaser has to pay for buying, a due profit on goods sold is not considered in such affairs by the shop-keepers; and if a person persists in being too nice we can fall back on cent postage stamps. A poor man though, if he cannot afford to lay out a quarter at a time for his bread, has to pay through the nose for it; a loaf of bread cannot be sold for less than ten cents, but three tickets will be given for a quarter.

I was greatly surprised to meet Mr. Johnson, late bandmaster of the Flagship, in the streets a few days ago, he is now in charge of the 90th band, which he is reorganizing. Major Guy, also of Halifax, has been here and left for Ottawa two days ago, he is permanently appointed to the Militia Department at Ottawa. Miss Alexander, late leading soprano singer of Halifax, has been charming the people here with her voice, she is now leading singer in the Congregationalist Church. I had the pleasure of hearing her lately. The people here are very much taken with Miss Alexander's singing, and those who are able to judge say that her voice has been well trained by a very efficient and first-class teacher, who I believe, is Mr. S. Porter, organist of St. Pauls.

Yours, &c.,

SCITON.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

RAMBLING NOTES IN BURMAH.

At the present moment, when Burman affairs are prominently before the public, and the annexation of the native State is almost an accomplished fact, I have thought that some notes of a short sojourn in that country (including a trip to Mandalay) might be of interest to your readers, especially as, through commercial and missionary enterprise, it is already somewhat familiarly known to the people of Nova Scotia.

War was threatening with Upper Burmah in 1875 (owing to trouble between our Kason allies and the native ruler) and an expedition (for which I volunteered), was fitted out in Madras. Sailing from this port for Rangoon (the capital of British Burmah) we put in *en route* to the Andaman Islands, about half-way across. It is the great convict establishment for India, and it was here that a short time before, Lord Mayo had met his death at the hands of a fanatical convict. Relieving a detachment of the 21st Fusiliers, we steamed on to the Burmese coast, and, after three days of a rough passage, we left the blue waters of the Bay to plough the muddy element which marks the entrance of the great Irrawaddy.

Out of the green, waving jungle, which creeps down to the shore, all we can distinguish from the sea is the golden summit of the far-famed Shoooy Dagoon Najoda (one of the wonders of the Eastern world) which rears its head crowned with the jewel-laden umbrella high above the shops and bungalows of the City of Rangoon. As we pass up the river, we meet ships of all nations seeking the port. Junks from China and Japan, and queer looking craft from Siam, and Yankee clippers, with the more lumbering "ditchers" from Europe, bringing in exchange for rice, teak wood and silk, the shoddy cottons and creature comforts of the west. As soon as we slacken speed, we are surrounded by a shouting crowd of Chinese boatmen in sampans, who jostle and pummell each other, to be first to the ship. It is a wonder that, in the tangle, none of them are swamped. And woe betide the Chinaman who seeks the depths of the swift flowing river. No more curry and rice for him on this side the celestial's paradise. Later on, many miles up the river, the captain of our transport nearly ended his career, by walking overboard in his sleep; the uncalled for bath brought him to in time to seize a rope hanging from the ship's side, as he was flying down the stream at the rate of six miles an hour. The bodies of those drowned in the river are rarely recovered.

The Irrawaddy, in which we now find ourselves, forms the great channel of communication between Upper (native) and Lower (British) Burmah, running from the Chinese frontier through both countries to the sea. Now that the whole stream is in our control, it is hoped that the commerce of Western China may find an outlet through our land. Trade with China through this highway has been for years the dream of the merchants of Rangoon, but it has hitherto been blocked by the rapacity and short-sighted policy of the native ruler at Mandalay. Margary's ill-fated expedition—he had been murdered near Bahmo, just before we left Madras—had, however, demonstrated the difficulties (as to transport) and dangers (from savage tribes)

for commercial relations between Upper Burmah and the Province of Yunan. A mountainous region with but few passes lies between. The land carriage would greatly increase the cost of such products as we would find, and this is the least productive part of China; and the same articles would probably be procurable more easily and cheaply at Shanghai or Canton.

Rangoon presents a pretty picture from the sea. Neatly built bungalows and stores, of teak wood and stone, surrounded by trees, with occasional glimpses of church spires and pagodas, the whole surmounted by the famous Shoooy Dagoon. Let us step ashore and make acquaintance with the place. First, having a careful eye to our luggage, for our light-fingered China friends are not to be trusted, and it is, to put it mildly, unpleasant to make one's first appearance in a strange city, minus an important and unreplaceable portion of one's outfit. I had an experience of this sort on first landing in India. I had gone straight to Poona with troops from the ship, ignorant of the country and its ways, particularly its thriving ways, as any griffin. Leaving my luggage in charge of a half-caste apothecary, at the depot—he was as black as your boot, but called himself a European, and the Government by G. O., Col. orders flattered him to that extent—I went off to the Napier hotel. On calling for my boxes next morning, "they are all right, sir," said my Eurasian friend, except what you sent for last night. "But I sent for nothing, last night." "My servant"—his servant had accompanied me to the hotel—"said you did sir, and took the things to you." On further enquiry, his servant had disappeared, and so had a good lot of luggage, and I am glad to say, about 30 rupees of the apothecary's, whose knowledge of his countrymen should have made him sharper.

Failing friends to meet us on shore, and extend the right hand of hospitality to us, we work our way through the odd looking crowd of loafers who line the pier, and signalling a gharry, drive through the pleasantly shaded streets to the dak bungalow, a sort of rest house, where the weary are not at rest.

The dak bungalow! what scenes the name recalls. Visions of interminable oxen-drawn journeys over execrable Indian roads—journeys in the middle of sweltering nights, in a cart that a criminal would swear at on the road to the gallows; sick, perhaps, parched with thirst, and played out, the dak bungalow our only oasis in the desert of discomfort, though scant the rock that government charpoy gives and scant the larder that Ramaswamy (the government peon) controls. Visions, too, of sport in the old days along the south coast of Madras, with a pleasant party of friends under roofs reared by former Princes in the land, now abandoned as a rest-house to the weary, or sport-seeking tourist with neighboring bank, paddy field, and jungle full of wild fowl, partridge, snipe, and other game; a hard day's sweat through the rice fields, then a plunge in the cooling tank, a jolly dinner to follow, well washed down; a quilt, rubber, and cheroots, preceeding the well-earned sleep, under swinging punkah,—those are some of the offsets to the Indian dak bungalow; but what have we here?

A wooden hut, built upon piles, reached from the ground by a rickety ladder; a swampy compound (angelic garden), and a dirty negro in charge, who, at first sound of our approaching footsteps, may be seen chasing a long-legged fowl around the back yard. Too well we know it, this shouting ornithological specimen is our prospective, but fleeing dinner.

We enter a squalid, ill-furnished and mouldy room, decorated with a copy of the regulations and tariff, the frame of which, thanks to the damp, has severed connection with the paper, and lies a heap of sticks upon the floor. Our luggage is brought in, and we next proceed to have a bath. We began by dislodging a scorpion and a frog or two from the towel rack, attracted hither by the presence of water, and oust a wandering centipede from our bath sponge; then casting a fearful eye upon the house-snake in the rafters, kept in lieu of cat, and for the same purpose, we empty the refreshing chatties over our head, for though this be what they are pleased to call the cold season—there is no real cold season, it is six months hot and six months hotter here—the air all day has been inuggy and oppressive, and the cool waters restore some vigor to our enervated frame.

(To be continued.)

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

BRITISH POLICY—IRELAND.

The Liberal party in the British House of Commons lacks four "a" majority over both the Tories and Parnellites. The Irish Home Rulers are the only united party. The Tories are not a unit on the Irish question, while the Liberals have amongst them two very uncongenial elements, Whigs and Radicals. The latter would be willing, notwithstanding the time-serving utterances of Joseph Cowen, to form an alliance with Parnell; but the old Whigs are more opposed to making concessions to the Irish people than are the most conservative of the Tories.

It seems that Lord Salisbury's Cabinet has unanimously decided to make at present no overtures for an alliance with the Parnellites, but to meet the new Parliament with a programme of legislation of a progressive character, generally speaking, but with only a limited concession, consisting of a county government scheme for Ireland. If this programme have nothing in it threatening the landed interest, the general opinion is, that it will receive the support of the Whigs. Should this occur, of course the Parnellites will ally themselves with the Liberals. This may enable Gladstone to return to power, and distinguish the latter part of his career by wise and beneficent legislation for Ireland.

Some ill-informed writers evidently think, that while Ireland's grievances are unquestionable, Parnell is to blame for getting together such a formidable following! One writer, not a thousand miles from Halifax, says in one article, that the Home Rulers have hitherto been shamefully trampled upon, and systematically tempted to seek satisfaction by other than constitutional