

engaged for the purpose were already in waiting to convey us away from the smells into the cool mysteries of the mountains rising before us a little distance off.

When the sun was sufficiently low, placing our bundles of bedding and wraps, our water-bottles and lunch-baskets in the roamy carts which were well supplied with straw, we stowed ourselves away and with a delicious sense of expectancy set out on the last stage of our journey.

Leaving behind the village of Mettupolliam with the intervening strip of dusty road, we began about dusk to enter the shade of the forest covering the mountain side, and to follow the serpent-like road which was to land us at the top, towering some 6,000 feet high. We were well aware that these woods had long been the home of fierce beasts of prey, and the thought would occur of the possibility of the nearness of some animal lurking in the shadows. Indeed, three years later, a party of missionaries arriving in Coonoor reported having actually "smelt a tiger," said to have carried off a buffalo into the jungle near by this road that very night.

In 1909 some of us visited Ootacamund, the beautiful hot season resort of the Governor of Madras and his suite, ten miles beyond Coonoor, and took tea with two maiden ladies who showed us the skin of a tiger killed on their brother's tea estate, and said to be the largest tiger ever killed on those hills.

In their home we saw also a pair of elephants tusks obtained on the estate and for which they refused one thousand rupees.

Comparatively recent appearances of panthers in the vicinity of Coonoor have been reported and a picnic party has been known to encounter one of these fearsome prowlers.

With the exception of an occasional halt for fresh oxen, the donning of a warm garment or addition of an extra cover, the night passed peacefully for our party, and at 7 o'clock on Saturday morning we came to a full stop before the large house which was to be our home for the next few weeks.

Oh, the unforgettable fragrance of that cool mountain air—a compound of blue gum (eucalyptus), geranium, heliotrope, mignonette and what not—the happy twitter of the birds; the gleam

and gurgle of the little mountain streams; the perfect panorama of woody beauty all about us, lit up by the morning sun from a blue sky frequently flecked with fleecy clouds; and the wealth of cream roses breathing sweet welcome from the porch of our own new home!

What a contrast to the cloudless sky, blazing sun, scorching clouds of dust, parched and cracked earth, seared foliage, streamless waterways, thirsty songless birds, and suffering creation in general, below!

What a respite the one from the other, and how great the loving kindness which provided it. Our delight was great, but the next day being Sunday, there was much to be done, so, leaving the enjoyment of the outside world for the days to come, we busied ourselves getting settled.

By evening, rooms had been assigned, belongings set in order, housekeeping begun, and a general readiness for Sunday attained.

On a more leisurely survey we found Coonoor to be a medium-sized town situated in and about a bowl-shaped valley at the top of the hills with an altitude at its lowest level of 5,760 feet.

The valley was occupied by Hindus and Mohammedans, and under a mid-day sun presented many of the characteristics of a village of the plains.

Like most central villages of the plains, it had a weekly market, when cart-loads of fruits and vegetables came up from the market-gardens below and were placed for sale in the sheds of the market place, where Europeans and natives came for their week's supply.

Of all the good things included in a trip to the hills, not the least is the acceptable change in diet provided by these markets in the way of home, as well as Indian, fruits and vegetables. On the surrounding ridge of the valley, and beyond, in the cooler, sweeter atmosphere, lived the Europeans in pretty bungalows among trees and flowers, many of the latter being such as we see at home.

Beyond, the hillsides and valleys were covered with tea and coffee estates with their picturesque surroundings.

High up, toward the crest of a hill to the left stood the large Roman Catholic church, while farther to the right, hidden from view by trees, was the Anglican church in the midst of a beautifully terraced and well-kept