

THE MAJOR.—His name is Laurence Oliphant, son of Sir Anthony Oliphant, Chief Justice of Ceylon. The father is a lawyer of good repute, but the son's existence has hitherto been unknown to me.

THE LAIRD.—How does the lad handle his pen, Crabtree?

THE MAJOR.—Pretty fairly. He tells his story, in a plain, straightforward manner, but does not appear to be burdened with much ideality. Seldom if ever can wild and dreary regions which he traverses, rouse him to the altitude of enthusiasm.

THE LAIRD.—A' the better, Culpepper, a' the better! I like to meet wi' a plain matter o' fact tourist, wha tells you honestly what he sees and leaves you to do the reflections yourself! Gie me the oysters in their unsophisticated shells, and let me add the pepper and vinegar to my own mind!

THE MAJOR.—As a sample of Mr. Oliphant's style I may read you the following account of a review of Nepaulese troops at Katmandu:

The parade-ground was situated immediately under the city walls, and upon it 6000 men were drawn up: the uniforms differed in some instances; the "rifles" were in a pea-green suit which hung about them loosely, while the regiments of the line wore red coats, with trowsers ample enough to please a Turk. Upon their turbans or caps were the distinguishing badges of their respective corps—a half-moon, a lion, the sun, and various other devices. The regiments were not numbered as with us, but adopted some magniloquent high-sounding title suggestive of their valour in war, fearlessness of danger, and other martial qualities.

There was no cavalry, the country not being adapted to that arm of the service, but the artillery seemed very fairly handled; there was an immense deal of firing, both of small arms and great guns, which I believe was very good; and there were a great number of evolutions performed, which, as I am not a soldier, did not seem to me more incomprehensible than such manoeuvring usually is, but I was informed by those who were capable of judging, that in this instance they really were altogether without meaning. Regiment after regiment marched past, the men swinging their arms regularly as they moved, and trying to persuade themselves they were British grenadiers. At all events the band was playing that tune. Suddenly the music changed; they struck up a lively polka, and a number of little boys in a sort of penwiper costume, clasping one another like civilized ladies and gentlemen, began to caper about, after which they went through various antics that surpassed the wildest notions of our highly civilized community: all this while the troops were manoeuvring as vehemently as ever, and the boys were dancing as fantastically; and the whole thing was so eminently ridiculous and looked so very like a farce, that it was difficult to maintain that dignified and sedate appearance which was expected from the spectators of a scene so imposing.

Jung alone looked for no expressions of surprise or admiration from us, but was evidently disappointed and chagrined at the inferiority of his own

soldiers to those he had seen in Europe and amongst our Indian troops. He could indeed point with pride to the stalwart bearing and soldier-like appearance of his men, but he had seen "the Guards" reviewed, he had been present at an inspection of 15,000 of the French army at Versailles, and he seemed half ashamed of the display we were witnessing, notwithstanding our efforts to comfort him by telling him that we had little thought the art of war was so far advanced in the wild valleys and rocky mountains of Nepal.

THE DOCTOR.—This weather is a trifle too melting for the latitude of Nepal. The very name adds to the perspiration which dims the glasses of my spectacles. Let us then don the seven leagued boots, and leaving the East, hasten away with Mrs. Ida Pfeiffer for Iceland!

THE LAIRD.—A loup indeed! Frae a sun-stroke to a frost bitten tae! Wha may the said Luckie Fife (is that what ye ca' her?) be when she's at hame?

THE DOCTOR.—She is a German lady gifted or cursed with an uncontrollable impulse to visit all the nooks and corners of this round world of ours. Hardy as a Shetland pony, she contrives to journey with tolerable comfort through regions where a Cockney Tourist would starve, and so easy are her commissariat wants supplied that for ten days at a stretch her commons were confined to mouldy bread, and cheese as hard as Aberdeen granite!

THE MAJOR.—And where have the fair Ida's wanderings extended?

THE DOCTOR.—After rustication for a season in Palestine, she took the notion to visit Iceland, and the results of her pilgrimage are contained in this volume, the title page thereof runs as follows:—"*A Journey to Iceland, and Travels in Sweden and Norway, translated from the German by Miss Charlotte Fenimore Cooper.*"

THE LAIRD.—Cooper! Is she only relation to the great novelist think ye?

THE DOCTOR.—His daughter, and by all accounts worthy of her accomplished sire.—Her present task she has executed in an exceedingly business like manner. I have never seen the original of Mrs. Pfeiffer's work but the translation bears internal evidence sufficient to convince any practiced reader, that the *spirit* and *character* of the writer's style has undergone no organic change in the process of conversion into Anglo-Saxon.

THE LAIRD.—What kind o' a place does Mrs. Feef—(I never can pronounce your German jaw-breaking names) make out Iceland to be?

THE DOCTOR.—Very far from being a Paradise, I can assure you. The presiding genii of the region appear to be filth and famine, and the inhabitants not many degrees removed from that aboriginal tribe, described by old lord Montboddo, who sported tails, and fed upon acorns!

THE LAIRD.—I think Ida had little to do