

tioned in other works on India, but till this occasion they never made their appearance in our presence.

In front of every chair were small baskets, heaped one above another, full of small brittle balls, filled with red powder, and alongside them large bowls of thick yellow saffron, and long gold squirts, with which each of us armed ourselves. As soon as we were all seated, the Rajah took a large butter-bout kind of article, filled with the said saffron, and poured it on Sir Henry's bald head; while, at the same time, the prime minister rubbed him all over with gold and silver leaf, mixed with red powder.

We were all holding our sides with laughter at the chief bowing to all this, wondering the meaning of it, when our mirth (or rather mine) was changed into grief, at having one eye nearly put out by a long-bearded gentleman opposite, who deliberately threw a ball, filled with red powder, into one eye, while another facetious youth closed up the other with saffron soup. The origin of this ceremony I am not sufficiently acquainted with Hindoo mythology to explain, but the custom of throwing red powder about is universal among that sect throughout India; and our servants, though prevented by respect from actually committing the atrocity, still bring round a plate with some of it at this season, and expect a present in return.

Runjeet himself seemed to enjoy the fun as much as any one; and though few of the courtiers aimed at him personally, this did not prevent his taking an occasional shot himself, his being more particularly directed against an Affghan ambassador, just arrived at his court from Candahar.

This poor man was dressed in his best, his beard combed and died to a nicety, his feet tucked well under him, and his face drilled to a grave, diplomatic caste.

Never having before seen the festival of the Koli, he had not the smallest idea what he had to expect, and his look of astonishment at a ball of red dust being shied at his eye, and his horror when his beard was turned to a bright saffron colour, I shall long remember. This soon turned all our amusement upon him; till at length he was fairly beat out of his etiquette, and took to his heels amidst a roar of laughter from all our party.

The battle raged for more than an hour, during which neither the Commander-in-chief nor the Amazons came off scot free; and by the time we all got up to return home, the honourable company of London chimney-

sweeps might have turned us out as too dirty for their society.

A SCENE IN MODERN GREECE.

Penetrating at once into Acarnania, we will introduce the reader to an encampment of small low reed wigwams, resembling the pastoral capanne of the Roman plains, containing a wandering community, very frequently met with in similar troops in various parts of Greece. It will be seen how the pastoral habits of ancient Greece are still preserved to some extent:

"The best of the wigwams seemed barely sufficient to supply the shelter absolutely necessary for the proprietor or his family by night, or during inclement weather. The household apparatus was arranged in front of the entry, where sat also the women and children in the open air, or under mats supported on sticks, engaged in their domestic avocations. As we approached, however, roused by the noise of the dogs and of our voices, there crawled forth, out of some of the nearest huts, two or three male figures of such gigantic dimensions as I had hardly supposed possible the den from whence they issued could have accommodated. They were joined by several others, as we rode past, from the extremity of the encampment, all nearly of the same stature; none of them appeared to me less than six feet high, and several were equally remarkable for manly dignity and beauty, both of person and feature. One more especially, a man past the prime of life—whom, from his stopping our caravan with an air of authority, to give some instructions to the *agogiate*, I discovered to be one of the chiefs of the community—was a most magnificent-looking barbarian.

"This colony, together with some others spread along the coast, are neither natives of the district they occupy—which indeed seemed totally devoid of indigenous inhabitants—nor of genuine Hellenic blood, but are nomad shepherds of Wallachian race, who come down annually with their flocks, when the herbage fails in their native mount Pindus on the Thessalian frontier, to the warmer region and extensive grassy plains on the sea-shore. For the use of these they pay a tax to the proprietor or the Greek government. In spite of the squalid misery of their habits, they possess considerable wealth in live stock of all kinds. This encampment, consisting of sixteen families, occupied with its herds not only the hilly region in its own immediate vicinity, but the rich though swampy and un-