

Selections.

Chow-Chow, Selections from a Journal kept in India, Egypt, and Syria. By the Viscountess FAULKLAND. Hurst and Blackett.

Chow-Chow is an Eastern word for "odds and ends," and of such scraps the present book professes to be composed. It is a medley of rather light materials; a large portion of them already well used, and familiar to all readers of Eastern travels, mixed up with much unimportant gossip, and large extracts from books read, in less proportion with the writer's own observations on remarkable and curious features of the East. The "Hodge-Podge Basket" is a great deal too large. All that it contains about Egypt and Syria has been told so often that we are quite tired of the ten times repeated story—of the donkey boys of Cairo, and the mongrel company on board Levant Steamers, and the witticisms of travelling dragomans, mixed up with Scriptural allusions and poetical quotations. The portion about India is spun very thin, and overloaded with passages transcribed from printed books, which any person might very well write out for private use, but which need not be retailed again to the public. Interspersed, but far too thinly interspersed for the bulk of the volumes, are notes of what Lady Falkland saw of Indian scenes and Indian life, which are worth preserving. This book, no doubt would be a pleasant amusement for friends to read in confidential manuscript, but it should have been very much reduced in size if it was to claim attention outside that partial circle.

The following will incidentally explain the quaint title of the book:—

The pedlars have shops in the bazars; but almost every day you see them coming slowly up to the European bungalows, followed by men, often by women, carrying large boxes and baskets, in which are a variety of goods. They generally go to a back door, as they are very much protected by ayahs and ladies' maids, who look forward to the Bohra's visit with as much satisfaction as the gentleman of the house does the contrary. The maid is sure to tell her mistress she wants something, whether a yard of tape or ten of broadcloth, is sure to be at the bottom of the last box; so the lady and her maid have the satisfaction of seeing the contents of the five or six boxes. In them is everything from a Delhi shawl embroidered in gold to a piece of Welsh flannel, but not all indiscriminately packed up together.

There is, however, one basket called "*Chow-Chow*," which literally means a mixture—in fact "*hodge-podge*," or "*odds and ends*," and in it is contained a mass of mingled objects, good, bad, and indifferent—something like the subject of this book, the two latter probably predominating.

"Lady Sahib want fine cheese? Here *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (which the Bohra has just purchased at a sale.) I got good pickle. There box of French gloves. Take soap, Lady Sahib?" Then he tempts the lady's maid with a gay ribbon, and by degrees the contents of the chow-chow basket are displayed. Side by side stand a bottle of anchovy sauce and one of tincture of rhubarb. There lies a Wiltshire cheese surrounded by Gou lée, English tape, and French ribbons; there are bottles of ink, blacking, and hair-dye, in the neighborhood of tringles, pins, and needles; there are gum and gauzes lower down, tooth-brushes, flannel jackets, and cigars; deeper and deeper are found more treasures, till at last the contents of the basket are exhausted; and after the Bohra has shown his numerous goods all ends in half a yard of ribbon being bought for Madame Sahib's cap.

There is a pleasant chapter relating a visit to Sattara, the old capital of the Mahrattas, where the sword of Sivajee, their founder, is still said to be worshipped, under the name of his tutelary goddess, the Goddess of Slaughter. Lady Falkland saw the blade, which, curiously enough, is not of Eastern manufacture, but an Italian one, "of admirable temper and workmanship, with the word '*Genova*' and part of the maker's name still legible on it." Here is her account of a visit to the Ranees, the widows of the Rajahs of Sattara:—

The little palace was nearly surrounded by a small tank illuminated on all sides. The interior of the building was brilliantly lighted from top to bottom. One of the rooms was entirely encrusted with mirrors, even the ceiling, which had a curious effect, owing to the incessant multiplication of every light and object in the apartment. The ceiling of another chamber was painted vermilion, with a little gilding, the pillars were also of red. There were numerous examples of the Hindoo taste for decorating the walls

of their dwellings with pictures and engravings, most frequently of the commonest sort, as they do not know the difference between a Claude and a one-shilling woodcut. In one instance the walls were covered with paintings, apparently copied from common English prints. They were on glass, and done in china, so crowded that the frames touched each other and were placed with little or no reference to the subject. Modern kings and heroes, ancient gods and goddesses of Greece or Rome, and Hindoo deities, all being mixed together.

I was much amused by observing the device employed to obtain space for one picture; there had evidently been no room for it in its proper position. The subject was Venus lying down. The person who had arranged this curious gallery would not leave the goddess out, and she was so placed that she appeared standing on her head!

It was now time to go to the principal palace, where the Ranees expected the Governor. The building was surrounded by rows of lamps, and the street illuminations were managed in a very primitive manner—a number of small wicks were placed in little pans of oil, fixed on poles. There were crowds of natives, and several elephants were drawn up when we left the carriage. We were conducted into a large room, brilliantly lighted with coloured lamps. Here a supper was ready, half European, half Indian in the arrangements.

We were almost immediately told that the Ranees wished to receive the ladies. We had not far to go, for I heard the Princesses were established in an inner apartment, with a bamboo screen suspended before the door. Behind this the ladies and I, therefore, retired, and found ourselves in a dark room, when I was made conscious of the presence of the Ranees by one of them taking my hand and leading me to a sofa.

A few minutes only elapsed before a woman made her appearance, holding a common tin candlestick in which was a lamp. I could just perceive the eldest Ranees was unveiled. She seized my hand, and we began groping our way out of the room. The other Ranees and ladies followed—not a word was uttered. At first we traversed long dark passages, then hurried up and down steep narrow staircases; when the way became too narrow, the Ranees and I were obliged to separate, and follow each other; when it became wider, she took my hand and quickened her pace. On we went, the faint light of the attendant constantly flickering before us, and we often lost sight of her as she kept twitching and twirling among the never ending passages. At last we suddenly came to the brink of a tank, surrounded by lights. Here we halted. I began to think we were in an enchanted palace, and that the Ranees might disappear on a broomstick. I had just time to breathe and look at her; there she stood at the edge of the tank, looking rather more like a witch than a fairy. I could see her neck was completely covered with emeralds and pearls, her ankles with splendid bangles, and her wrists and fingers glittered with bracelets and rings, while her highness' feet had not been forgotten—for her toes were likewise adorned with silver rings.

Again, quicker than ever we seemed to fly through more places of mystery, till we arrived unexpectedly at the top of a staircase, where she left me. I looked around, and lo! she had vanished! Below was a blaze of light, and the voices of hundreds of human beings were distinctly heard.

In a minute or two, her highness returned enveloped in a very ample and splendid saree, as were also the two other widows. Again she took my hand, and we went down the stairs, and entered the durbar-room—the Ranees walking slowly, and in a dignified manner through lines of courtiers and numerous attendants, ranged to receive her. The Governor and his suite were present.

There are some characteristic bits in her accounts of life in the Hills. She expatiates with the zest of an artist on the colour of Indian landscapes and skies. But India is still a country where the traveller, or the seeker after country retirement or the picturesque, must be prepared to rough it. She notices the want of bridges—a want extremely felt where it rains for three months and a half continually—and the wretched accommodation in the travellers' bungalows. The strange mixture of manners, of the roughnesses and refinements of both European and Asiatics, each rough and coarse, and each refined and polished in their own way, are now and then exhibited with some success. Such a mixture is rather well sketched in the following account of the familia of servants in a great household:—

First, a very tall, p.r.ly parsee, who is the *maitre*

d'hôtel, would walk forth to begin his day's occupation and then appeared sundry parsee and muselman servants carrying tea and coffee to their different master's rooms. These would be followed by the *duccies* or tailors going to their work. Everybody has a private tailor in India; the Governor has a tailor, captains, councillors, and cadets, ladies, lords and secretaries, all have one a piece. A separate tailor seems to be, considered essential to Anglo-Indian happiness. Then the *dobie* (washerwoman) passed by with a red turban, and a long white dress, carrying a basket full of white linen, which he meant to wash by beating and slapping it on a stone in the tank, at the back of the garden. Then at a quick pace came the gardeners (*malis*), having on their heads red cloth skull caps, and very little other apparel, carrying on their shoulders a long bamboo stick, at each end of which hangs a large copper chati full of water, with which they are going to refresh the drooping plants. Such was the scene from my verandah, looking outwards.

If I turned round, in a room immediately adjacent was an individual (wearing moustaches, like all the natives) clothed in white drapery (twisted round his body, and descending to the knees), a white jacket, and a blue and white turban—his black, shining legs and feet being uncovered; over his shoulders hung his badge of office—a duster—with which he occasionally rubbed a chair or table; he represents the housemaid, and, as I have before said, is called a *hamal*. Near him was another Hindoo in a similar dress, except that he wore a blue turban, and held a tray full of small glasses full of cocoa-nut oil to place in the lamps suspended round the room; he is called a *mussal*, and the lamps and lights are his especial department.

Many of the native servants speak and understand a little English, particularly the parsee servants, some of whom write as well as speak it very tolerably.

Sundry native shopkeepers, also, are, in different degrees, masters of the language of their European customers; but the extent to which they possess this accomplishment is very unequal, and sometimes very limited, as the copy of a letter—which I will transcribe—to an English lady in India from her Muhamedan butcher will sufficiently evince:—

"To Mrs. Collector Sahib, Esq.

"Honoured Madam.—Madam's butler says that Madam is much displeased with poor butcher because mutton is much lean and tough. But sheep no grass got, what lot fat? When come rain, then good mutton. As your honor's pious feet—I have the honor to remain, Madam, your affectionate butcher,

"MAHOMED CASSEIN."

EDUCATION.

It is with education as it is with medicine; one species of drug will give health to the body, another prove powerless, or perhaps hurry the sick man into the grave; and our system of public school education—is it the drug for the maladies of our body politic, or is it rather like to prove ineffectual, or perhaps destructive to what health remains?

Now, what is the character of that system which the State has adopted for the training of those who are to become her future citizens? It is, as every one knows, a system of secular instruction; a system of training, so far as it goes, for the business, and not for the business and duties of life; a system which cautiously allows the pupil to be taught just this much, that he is to prepare himself to be a skilful tradesman, tailor, carpenter, sculptor, lawyer, physician; to take his stand in the world and aspire after its highest places; but cautiously declines allowing him to be primarily taught to "fear God and honor the King;" to be instructed in the duties of a good brother or sister, husband or wife, father or son, magistrate, or subject: for of course these duties could not possibly be mentioned without moral teaching, and moral teaching in a christian country must involve Christianity, but Christianity, as it involves among us differences of opinion, must be eschewed.

That which prepares a man to be expert in the business of after life is a portion of his education, and a necessary portion; but it is no more education for a christian man and a good citizen, than going to sea upon a single plank would be the same thing as going to sea in a well ordered ship.

Nothing more than a godless, secular education is or can be given in our public schools, and for the best of reasons, that a religious character is not allowed to be considered as one of the qualifications of teachers. The law forbids it being made a condition of admission to the Normal Schools, and of course the law forbids it being made a condition of their employment