

young fellers a coming this way to walk off with the grub. There aint never no waste here, Sir, I can tell you. Look at all them outside, Sir, why they're only waiting for the word of command to set-to on the whittles."

"Well, but," says I, "why not let them come in at once and join our party? It will save time."

"P'r'aps it might, Sir," replied the host, "but it wouldn't save my meat. Blesh yer, Sir, you should just see some of them planters eat after a ride! It would astonish you a bit. Why if I was to let them loose just now on these here hot joints, they'd finish 'em all off slap. Hot meat, Sir, goes down like new bread and butter, and I am always obliged to let in the young chaps when the meat gets chilled a bit, and the fat's greasy and thick, and hangs about the teeth. Meat quite cold I find's about as bad as hot meat, but if you take it just at the right nick of time, Sir, it's astonishing how soon you may skewer up half a score of planters."

There was no doubt some moral philosophy in all this, so assenting to what had been said, I took a glass of beer with mine host, and we soon after made room for the consumers of chilled joints, and retired to our beds.

In the morning there was just the same packing and saddling and blowing up as there had been the day before at Epping, with the additional nuisance of being in a strange place and not knowing where to find all your people. At last, however, we made a fair start, got the animals and the carriages across the river in good style, and away we went. Coming visibly to some rather queerish bits of narrow, steep roads, my wife insisted on my having the two coolies to hold Pig-tail's head, and two more to their cart, and in this plight we passed over some of the most terrific ground known since Napoleon passed the Alps. We halted in the middle of the day, and at 2 p.m. pushed on again quietly, and quietly was a very necessary part of the arrangement, I assure you, for anything like nonsense or gammon on the part of our cattle would have been the death-warrant of the whole of the Brown dye-nasty, and a very nasty die we should have made of it! There was lots of bridges without sides to 'em, and plenty of sharp turns in the narrow roads, with edges that crumbled away like rotten-stone when you went too near, and deuce a stump or a stone was there to keep you from rolling down into some coffee estate if you made a false step. Thanks to our good fortune, nothing occurred worthy of notice, and we got safe and sound to the last rest-house at the foot of the great pass. There lay the pass right before us, with the road up it for all the world like a gigantic corkscrew, and behind us was the road we had come stretching for many a weary mile, twisting and turning round the hills like a monstrous snake glistening in the setting sun. It was a lovely sight, to be sure, at the door of that lonely rest-house, with the big dark mountains frowning over you, and the roar of the many waterfalls around dashing away into the distance, fainter and softer, till they all met merrily together in the green valley below, through which they ran smoothly and softly over pebbles and over grass.