

COCHIN-CHINA,
AND MY EXPERIENCE OF IT.

A SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE,

OF HIS

Adventures

DURING A

CAPTIVITY AMONG CHINESE PIRATES,

ON THE COAST OF COCHIN-CHINA,

AND AFTERWARDS DURING A

JOURNEY ON FOOT ACROSS THAT COUNTRY,

IN THE YEARS 1857-8.

BY

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COCHIN-CHINA :

A SEAMAN'S NARRATIVE OF ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Hong-kong.—Crews discharged.—Dislike of British Seamen to the Government Service.—Buildings and Population of Victoria.—Hong-kong Harbour and Shipping.—Situation in the Police Force.—Sook-ham-poo.—Chinese Disturbance.—Engagement as Master of a Chinese "Lorcha."—Resignation of the Police Employment.

MANY modern authors of eminent ability have employed their time and talents in writing tales of "those who go down to the great sea in ships," but they have generally taken for their hero some fierce and bloody pirate, or daring and desperate smuggler of a past age. Such lawless characters, however, may still be found, engaged in that iniquitous traffic, the slave-trade, or pursuing their avocation on the coast of China, with all the cruelty and wickedness for which their predecessors were so notorious.

It is true that, by going back to a distant period for their themes, they have a more widely-extended field for the play of their imaginations, and are less liable to severe criticism, on the score of consistency; but

at the same time they have less hold on the feelings of their readers ; for when perusing a tale of the present time, instead of thinking of the characters, the incidents, and the scenes, as things that were, or might have been a century or two ago, we are vividly impressed with the fact, that even now events equally startling, deeds as dark and desperate, scenes more horrible, may be enacting on the bosom or the borders of a distant part of the same ocean, that laves with its salt waters the shores of our own happy land.

But the present will recede too far into the past, if we lengthen our introduction, so let us proceed to our story at once.

It fell to my lot, along with many other British seamen, to be "hard up" on the beach at Hong-kong, in October 1856.

Owing to hostilities having commenced between the British and Chinese authorities at Canton, commercial business in the south of China had almost sustained its death-blow, and there was little prospect of any revival for some considerable time. The merchant ships had to leave the ports of Canton and Whampoo, and come to Hong-kong. All those that had been waiting for cargoes of tea and silk, being bound for Europe or for the United States, were manned by Europeans. In many instances, these were discharged, and the vessels were either laid up in this harbour, or went out on the coasting trade with a crew of Lascars.

I was discharged from one of these vessels, and

thrown upon my own resources in the inhospitable colony of Hong-kong.

The privation and distress to which British seamen were subjected at this period were very great. More than three hundred British and American seamen were thrown out of employment. Many could not find accommodation in the boarding houses; some were lodged at the police station, while others took refuge in mat sheds out at West Point, or lay in unfinished buildings, or wherever they could find shelter.

Fortunately, I was not doomed to remain long out of employment; for, a vacancy having occurred in the Police force, I applied for the situation, and obtained it. Although the pay was very small, anything was preferable to remaining in an idle and destitute condition.

Shortly afterwards, the British naval authorities advertized for volunteers, and many able seamen joined Her Majesty's ships; though not from any affection for the service; some of them detested it, and would not have entered it, however high a bounty or wages were offered them, if they could have obtained other and "free employment." And why do the mercantile seamen of Great Britain dislike the Government Service? This question has been often asked in both Houses of Parliament; and all their legislation has not abolished the one great cause, namely, that most ignominious of all punishments, FLOGGING!

Within the last twenty-five years, free schools, Sun-

day schools, naval and military schools, and other places of cheap instruction, have done much to promote education among the poorer classes of Great Britain, and one-third of them are now able to read and write. A man that can read becomes conversant with many matters; he finds out his position in society, and his claim upon his country. He knows that he is a being endowed with reasoning power as well as his masters, or rather oppressors. He finds that his services are equal to, if not greater than, his reward: he therefore does not like to be treated as a dog, and flogged for any little irregularity he may commit. Many a man would rather be shot dead than receive the ignominious LASH in the sight of his shipmates. It is not the pain, but the shame, that depresses or crows a man ever afterwards. The men thus affected are generally the very best in warfare, and would willingly face any danger when opposed to an enemy.

Until some decided reform be made in the treatment of the seaman in the Royal Navy, the Government will be compelled to pay higher wages than the merchant to man their ships effectively, or else witness the discreditable panic of invasion whenever they are menaced by their neighbour.

— The Island of Hong-kong is about twenty miles outh-west from the entrance of the Choo-keang or Canton river. It is in lat. $22^{\circ} 16'$ north and long. $114^{\circ} 9'$ east of the meridian of Greenwich. It is very mountainous: the highest points are Victoria

Peak, 1825 feet, and West Peak, 1774 feet above the level of the sea.

The city of Victoria is situated on the north-east side of the island, and is very irregularly built. Some of the houses are placed one-third of the distance up the mountain side, and have to be approached either by very steep roads or by numerous stone steps. The west end is almost entirely occupied by Chinese houses, a great part of them forming a fine row of stuccoed and chunamed warehouses. The lower story of many of them forms an arcade, supported by pillars at short distances. They are only two stories high, and devoid of architectural ornament, but are convenient buildings for trade.

At the east end are to be seen the buildings appropriated to the use of the government. The principal of these are the Government house and offices, on a hill at the back of the parade ground, the church, artillery and infantry barracks and officers' quarters, the commissariat department, the arsenal and dockyard (but without a dock!).

In the central portion of Victoria are many large merchant houses, besides the Oriental Bank, and the Club-house.

The Chinese inhabitants have greatly the preponderance over the Europeans and other foreigners, being in the proportion of more than thirty to one.

All the petty trades of the colony are carried on by the Chinese, who resort in numbers to Hong-

kong because there they can grow rich, and live unmolested under the laws and rule of the British, which are mild when compared with those of their own country; and because there they are not subjected to the "squeeze pidgin" when they have amassed wealth, as they are under the iron rule and barbarous government of their own mandarins or native rulers.

There is always a great variety of shipping in the harbour, and generally a large fleet of vessels of war, from the stately line-of-battle ship to the tiny gunboat, from the large and well-formed Indiaman to the small and graceful schooner, and from the hulk-like junk to the light and skipping sandpan*. Not only are a great portion of the vessels of a novel description, but their national flags are equally strange to a foreigner, and are displayed in various ways: some are flying at each mast-head, others floating from horizontal yards, while the more civilized nations are distinguished by ensigns pendent from the peak. The variety in the style of painting and ornament is equally great. The Chinese junks exhibit their arched sides painted in

* "Sandpan" or "sampan" is the Chinese name for a small light boat, the form and size of which vary in every port and place in China. It is short, broad at the stern, in shape like an isosceles triangle, and resembles a miniature junk. It is very light and buoyant, and, although of slender construction, will live in a considerable "seaway." Thousands of the Chinese in every port make their livelihood in sandpans, by taking off passengers, etc., to vessels. Most of the owners of these sandpans live in them with their families. In fact, they form the home of millions of the poorer classes of China.

curved streaks of red, white, and yellow. The Siamese ships, partly European in structure and model, show huge carved sterns; and these are contrasted with the long, low, and dark hulls of the lorchas and piratical tymungs.

The only advantages the harbour offers as a general port are the depth of water and good holding ground. Its size renders it a precarious anchorage, especially for small vessels, during the typhoon* season, from June to November, and generally it is little superior to a good roadstead.

The Island of Hong-kong was ceded to the British in perpetuity by the treaty of Nankin, in 1842, at the close of the first war with China; but they could hardly have selected a more insalubrious rock from among "the thousand and one islands" which the Emperor of China affirms to be under his sway.

Having joined the Police force of the colony, I was posted at an "out station," called Sook-ham-poo, at East Point, distant about three miles from Victoria, where Messrs. Jardine, Matheson, & Co. have a large establishment. They have a patent slip here, for haul-

* From the Chinese words *tai*, great, and *fong*, or *hong*, wind; literally, "great wind."

Tyfoons are very prevalent, from May to October, on the coast of Cochin-China, to the northward of Saigon; but there is no record of any of these violent and dangerous hurricanes extending to the southward of that port. September is by far the worst month in the year, and seldom passes without one or two of these tempests visiting the northern parts of the coast of Cochin-China.

ing up small vessels for repairs, the only thing of the kind in Hong-kong. Owing to the small rise and fall of the tide there are no dry docks.

// Sook-ham-poo is quite a Chinese village, with the exception of this establishment. In Sook-ham-poo Bay the Chinese salt-junks anchor, which, from their number, appear to carry on a considerable trade.

Between the village and Victoria is situated the Hong-kong race-course, forming the *débris* of Happy Valley.

The burial-ground is on the Victoria side of the valley. I was much struck with the handsome and appropriate head-stones and other grave ornaments. There was one in particular, a capstan with the "parted messenger," cut out of solid granite, in memory of the heroes of one of Her Majesty's ships, who fell in some naval engagement.

During my stay at Sook-ham-poo as police constable, the Chinese tradespeople, following the example of their brethren of Victoria, thought fit to close their shops, and refuse to sell eatables to any foreigner, partly on account of the hostilities at Canton, and partly on account, as they assumed, of extortionate fines forced from them at the police courts. They even attacked our Lascar constables in the streets. Our small force, consisting of three Europeans and six Lascars, resenting this, turned out, and drove off hundreds of the Chinese, who had collected with bamboos, knives, and stones, making a very formidable appear-

ance. When we marched through the village they had all taken quietly to their houses again. The next morning, under threat of having their shops opened for them, they commenced trading as good-humouredly as before.

I was not destined to remain long in the Police force. I had two reasons for wishing to leave it: First, the small pay, only eighteen dollars per month, out of which I had to furnish myself with all the necessaries of life, and in a dear colony like Hong-kong the sum was quite inadequate. Second, my love of a seafaring life, which unfits me for any situation on shore; and my distaste for any subordinate Government situation, in which a man has so many masters that he finds it impossible to please all.

I had now been three months in my present employment, the monotony of which was not at all calculated to suit me, when one morning a fine lorcha having anchored in Sook-ham-poo Bay, with the British ensign flying at the peak, I resolved to go on board, and pass away a dull hour with the captain.

When I got alongside, I asked if the captain was on board, and was much surprised when the Chinese crew told me they had no captain, but were in want of one, as they were going to Wai-how, on the west coast, in a day or so.

This made my heart beat, as I thought there might be a chance for me to become master of the vessel. I accordingly went on board, offered my services, and we

finally came to an arrangement. I ascertained the name of the Chinese hong or owner, and started for the shore again, delighted with my new fortune, little thinking at that time how it would end.

I went to Victoria, and tendered my resignation as police constable to the superintendent of police in the usual form. He asked me what situation I had obtained, that I required my discharge. I told him that of flag master of the British registered lorcha, *Shunloi*, bound for Wai-how on the west coast. He asked if I was mad, or if I knew the risk I was running by embarking in a native vessel, since hostilities had commenced at Canton. He told me that the Canton mandarins had offered one hundred taels* of silver for the head of any European, and that the west coast was swarming with pirates.

I told the superintendent that I thought the Chinese on board the lorcha *Shunloi* were honest and upright men; that the vessel was well armed, and had a British registry; and that the flag would be sufficient to give me protection from pirates.

"I am sorry," answered the superintendent, "to hear that you are led away by such erroneous ideas of protection, for I can assure you that the Chinese on the west coast, and particularly where you think of going, respect the English flag as much as they would respect a piece of brown paper, made use of in a

* The "tael" is the Chinese ounce, equal to $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounce English. Sixteen taels make one cattie.

similar manner. If this is the protection you are depending upon, I can assure you that your confidence is misplaced, and you might even find it an incumbrance instead of a protection, as the present hostilities at Canton have been caused by a lorcha, similar to that of which you are about to take command, smuggling there, and under the British flag too; so that the Chinese authorities are very suspicious of all lorchas flying that flag; and I advise you, by all means, to abandon the idea of taking command of any native vessel at the present crisis."

Ah! how truly that good man spoke; how real were his warnings; how good his advice; but how utterly useless to a wild visionary like myself!

I found other excuses, and would not listen to the superintendent. Accordingly I obtained my discharge three days afterwards, and joined the British registered lorcha *Shunloi*, bound for Wai-how, loaded with a cargo of dried fruit and salt...

CHAPTER II.

Departure from Hong-kong Harbour.—Bound for Wai-how.—A Gale.—Chinese Compass and Navigation.—Heavy Sea.—The Lorcha in danger.—Guns thrown overboard.—Several Days of Rough Weather.—The Lorcha driven out of her Course.—The Gale abates.—The Course changed.—Land in sight.

WE made all preparations for going to sea. I laid in my small "sea stock," and little comforts, and with what money I had left, I purchased a half-chest of Benares opium for 210 dollars, to take to Wai-how, on my own speculation.

After a great deal of beating of gongs and drums, burning gilt paper, and other interesting ceremonies to the joss, we weighed anchor, made sail, and swiftly glided through the Lymoon Passage.

It was one of those splendid mornings, so common at Hong-kong during the north-east monsoon, without a cloud to be seen in the sky, and with a fresh breeze blowing, but not chilly. The sun was gilding the heavens and the clear blue water with its refulgent beams.

Owing to the high land surrounding the harbour, a stranger can form but a faint notion of the gale that may be blowing outside; though any person acquainted with the wind on the coast of China can soon tell, by the heavy puffs that now and then come off the high land. As one of these puffs occasionally caught our little vessel,

it made her luff up again and nearly broach-to. Had not our ca-ba-sa, or helmsman, kept his weather eye open, and looked out for these squalls, we should certainly have lost a spar or two.

Many small vessels have been thrown on their beam ends, through careless steering, and from the helmsman not keeping a good look-out. After passing under the lee of a high hill, and then coming to an open space, where the whole strength of the north-east monsoon catches the vessel, perhaps close hauled, with all sail set, she must then either go on her beam ends, or lose some of her spars. But if the helmsman puts the tiller down (a-lee) in time, she will luff up and shake it out, when sail can be reduced if necessary.

We got clear of the Lymoon by nine o'clock, a.m., on February the 18th, 1857, and I took a last farewell of the island of Hong-kong. As I expected, we found the monsoon blowing a strong gale outside, and a high sea running, but the wind remained steady up to four o'clock, p.m., when it began to increase.

We were now well clear of the Lema Islands, and had taken our departure—a Chinese departure! for I had nothing to do with the navigation of the vessel, any further than as an observer. There was no log hove, no bearings were taken, no altitudes; the eye, and a guess, were the only means used to ascertain our true position. The only nautical instrument on board was a Chinese compass, and how the Chinese manage to steer their vessels with it puzzles me. A more primitive in-

strument can hardly be conceived, and although they boast of having invented it, they have not aided in its improvement.

Their compass consists of a round box, cut out of the solid; and very much resembling a child's toy. The diameter of the cavity is about two inches; in the centre there is a pin, on which is balanced a small needle, one inch and a half in length, made like the hand of a watch. They have no compass card, but the rim of the box is divided into twenty-four parts or points. It is placed on the deck aft, and the point they wish to steer by is set in a line parallel to the head of the vessel; its correctness is proved by fastening a small string to the deck in front of the box, and holding it over the compass in a straight line fore and aft. They have not what is termed a "lubber's point."

The Chinese compass has also a piece of brass wire, about three inches long, fastened across it, and dividing it into two equal parts or semi-circles. The ends of this brass wire are fastened in the North and South points. The point they wish to steer by is placed in line with the head of the vessel; they then alter its course till they bring the needle in line with the brass wire before mentioned, and the vessel heads her course. As the needle varies, to the right or left of this wire, they know whether the vessel is to the right or left of her course, and alter the helm till the needle comes in line with the wire again.

The Chinese have no charts. They steer from one

headland to another ; and if they get blown out to sea by the roughness of the weather, and manage to survive the gale, they steer in for the land again, and depend entirely upon their knowledge of its appearance, to judge where they are. They are afraid to approach very close to ascertain truly, lest they should be attacked by pirates, who seldom venture far out to sea. I have known the Shantung junks, leaving Tien-sing for Canton during the north-east monsoon, go right out to sea, and never sight land, till they make the Lema Islands, or some other place close to Hong-kong. I cannot conceive how they do it. With no other nautical instrument than a compass, they seldom run past the port, for if they did, they would not be able to beat up against the monsoon. Their motive for keeping out to sea during the whole passage is to avoid the pirates, who, it has been stated before, keep close in to the land, and infest the intricate channels amongst the numerous islands.

As the sun sank in the western horizon, the gale increased ; at seven o'clock, p.m., it became alarming, for the sea was running very high, and our little vessel rolled heavily. Our fresh water for the voyage was stowed in large wooden tanks on each side of the deck, which is a usual, but very bad arrangement. They are so placed, in order to leave more room for stowing cargo in the hold ; but they made our vessel top-heavy. There were four of them on deck, besides ten nine-pounder guns, and only a light cargo between decks.

At midnight the wind veered more northerly, and the scud was flying over our heads rapidly to the southward, as could be seen by the moon, which was nearly at the full, and at intervals cast its feeble light through the intervening masses. Every appearance in the atmosphere foreboded a heavy gale, and several times I heartily wished myself back in Hong-kong, or on board of one of my own country's vessels, where I could depend upon the stability of the craft, and the good seamanship of her commander; which was more than I could do where I was.

The ca-ba-sa told us that the only chance of living out the gale, which he well knew was approaching, was to keep the vessel before the wind. This was rather contrary to my opinion. I should have tried to hove her to, but I had no voice in the matter; to have interfered would have been dangerous, as the Cantonese are a jealous people, conceited in their own stubborn ignorance. I knew, for my own safety, it was best to remain silent until they should ask for my advice, which they would then be more likely to adopt, than if I had pressed it upon them. They altered the course according to the wind, and ran farther out to sea. The sea rose higher as we continued running; so much so, that at three o'clock, a.m., we occasionally rolled, gunwale under, endangering our masts and everything on board. They held a consultation as to what was best to be done, and asked my opinion. I immediately advised them, either to start all the water out of the

tanks, or heave the guns overboard. One expedient was almost as bad as the other; but after a little delay, and another heavy lurch, the tanks were ordered to be bored within a foot of the bottom, thus leaving us a little water to subsist upon. This eased the vessel considerably, and we certainly could have weathered out the gale, had they chosen to keep the wind on the quarter, instead of running before it; however, they were so headstrong, that they would not be persuaded, but continued the same course.

The sea rose higher as we got farther out, though the gale did not seem to increase much. At ten o'clock, a.m., it blew fearfully from the north-north-west, and as we still rolled heavily, they held another consultation, and most reluctantly agreed to heave overboard two of the guns. Three times, as I was about to let them go, they told me to desist, saying the weather was moderating, when gunwale under we went again, and if the breeching of the weather guns had happened to give way, we should never have risen again; as it was, a part of the starboard rail was carried away. I then received the final order, and away went two guns. After this I got permission to heave cargo overboard, sufficient to make room in the hold for the remainder of the guns, and by noon I had them all stowed between decks, to the great ease of the vessel, and the relief of my own mind.

This day passed, but the gale abated little, so that we continued running to the southward all through the

night. Morning came, and our condition was little improved, with the exception of having the benefit of daylight, which, I think, always stimulates the mind in time of danger. We could not discern land anywhere, and what distance we were from it no one on board knew. We hauled up two points, as nearly as I could guess by the Chinese compass, to the westward; but the wind continued still a gale at north. At four o'clock, p.m., the wind veering easterly, and moderating, we hauled up south-west, and continued that course during the night. This was our third night out, and we could not have been running at a less rate than seven knots per hour, on the average, since we left Hong-kong, making nearly a south course, and a distance of about four hundred miles; which, according to this rough manner of reckoning, would place us considerably to the southward of the Paracel rocks and islands, and a long way past Wai-how, our intended port. At the approach of morning the gale abated, and at daylight it blew a pleasant north-east breeze, but there was still a heavy sea running.

They now altered their course to west, well knowing that in that direction they would make land, which they expected to sight before sun-down; but the sun set in a remarkably clear horizon, without the least looming of it.

Next morning brought no signs of land anywhere, though a west course had been kept during the night.

Night came again, and no land; but at daybreak the following morning, land was seen about thirty miles distant, bearing west, so that we must have been at least one hundred and fifty miles out to sea when we first hauled up.

CHAPTER III.

Chinese Mode of solving Doubts.—Cape Verela.—Fishermen in the Bay.—Fleet of Pirates in sight.—Attempt to escape them.—The Chase.—Resistance.—Capture of the *Lorcha* by the Pirates.—Brought back to the Bay.—Gloomy Forebodings.

MANY conjectures were afloat as to what land it was in sight; some thought it was Cochin-China, others Hainan Island, while a few said they were certain it was Wai-how. The latter, I remarked, had an interest in the vessel and her cargo, and therefore they were unwilling to believe that she had run so far to leeward of her intended port, as to be off the main-land of Cochin-China.

The Chinese are very apt to support their spirits by indulging in false hopes. I have known them, when about to enter upon some undertaking which involved a risk, entreat their idol to inform them whether they will be prosperous. This they do by first offering incense to it; then they toss up pieces of bamboo or cash*, and according to the side which turns uppermost (as

* "Cash," called by the Chinese *chieh*, by the Cochinese *tan*, is the only coined money of both countries. It varies in size, form, and value, in every town, and that of one province is frequently not current in another. The Cochinese cash is a compound of lead, zinc, glass, and rice. In some parts of China, iron cash is made, and is negotiable.

we should say "head or tail") it is received as a good or a bad omen. Several times I have seen this done, and it appears to be a general practice among them. My crew explained to me which side of the cash was lucky, and which unlucky. They at the same time told me, that the morning I came on board at Sookham-poo, and offered to go as master of their vessel, they had recourse to the same means to inform themselves whether I was a good or a bad man; and that, as the cash turned up on the lucky side, they at once engaged me. They said that the joss (or idol) they had on board the lorcha was a very good one, and never told lies, nor misled them.

On the present occasion, they tossed up two cash before the idol; several times the unlucky side came up, but they would not credit it, as it contradicted their wish; at length, however, the lucky side came up, which stood for good; the land in sight was pronounced to be Wai-how, and we made for it accordingly.

We neared it but slowly, as the wind had considerably moderated. When we had shortened the distance to about ten miles, we could plainly discern, at the top of a high mountain, a conical stone, resembling an immense chimney. This most remarkable land-mark cleared up all doubts as to our whereabouts; for, in spite of all their prognostications, we were off the coast of Cochin-China, and in sight of the pirate-haunted Cape Verela.

We were out of water, and the ca-ba-sa told us he

was acquainted with a good bay, where we could get a supply. We therefore determined to stand in, and by four o'clock, p.m., we were close to the entrance of a fine, though small harbour, sheltered from all winds. It was one of the most picturesque little places I had seen anywhere.

The land rises rather abruptly at the head of the cape, towering to a great height, and clothed from the water's edge to the very summit with trees, which were mostly evergreens, and in full leaf at this time. On the western side, there is a small scope of level ground, without trees, which forms a handy beach for fishermen to mend and dry their nets, and to haul up their boats for repair.

The entrance to the harbour is about north-west, and a mile broad, with soundings from ten to fifteen fathoms, hard bottom. The conical mountain is about five miles distant.

The coast was swarming with small vessels, each having three angular sails. The men in them appeared to be diligently engaged in fishing, and little heeded our approach, well knowing that, if we were dishonest, they had nothing to lose besides a few fish.

We enquired of some of them whether there were any pirates in the bay, and they assured us there were none; but, in fact, these fishermen are generally on friendly terms with them, and often run in to where they are anchored, to give information concerning vessels that are in sight, which often enables them to

evade our man-of-war cruisers, by running up creeks or small rivers out of sight.

We were all busily engaged in getting our guns out of the hold, mounting them, and preparing our ammunition and stink-pots*, in case of an attack, which we all expected; though, as our sailing capacities were good, and our guns and powder all of English manufacture, I should not have been the least afraid of falling in with any single piratical vessel on the coast of China.

We had just passed through the entrance to the harbour, and had opened it fully to view, when the man on the look-out called our attention to several tymungs lying at anchor at the further end of the cove, about two miles off. I immediately ran forward with a telescope, and, on overhauling them, distinctly counted seven large and apparently Canton-built vessels, which I judged were pirates, and was soon assured of it, by observing them hoist their sails, and prepare to get under weigh, when they saw us approaching.

We wore short round, and made out of the harbour again. The tymungs fired three shots at us, but they

* A "stink-pot" is an earthen pot about the size of a thirty-two-pound shot, half filled with gunpowder, and sometimes mixed with sam-shew or Chinese gin. It is covered with a coneave lid, fastened on with chunam or whiting. On this lid is placed a piece of ignited charcoal. The pot is then put into a bag, by which it is held, and slung from the mast-head. Being very slight, when it falls on anything hard it breaks, and the powder ignites and burns powerfully.

were out of range. We did not return their fire ; we should have been glad to escape from such an overwhelming force.

They were all soon under weigh, and in full chase after us. I observed their decks were crowded with men, and bristling with cannon. We made all the sail we possibly could, and distanced them considerably, for they were land-locked on three sides, and could not catch the full force of the wind until they got clear of the harbour ; but they greatly aided their progress by sweeps*.

By the time they had passed the entrance to the harbour, we were three miles ahead of them ; and I certainly thought we should escape from them. But they were now favoured by the breeze as well as we, and began to gain upon us.

As the sun neared the western horizon, the wind gradually died away, which is a common occurrence in tropical latitudes at this season of the year. Our sails began to swing backwards and forwards, and became almost useless. We took to our sweeps to assist our progress, but the enemy still gained upon us, from the number of men they could employ in this manner. Yet, although they were ten times more numerous than our-

* "Sweeps" are large oars worked in a "becket" on short "stentions." They are used to propel the largest piratical vessels as well as trading junks. Ching Ah'ling's tymung frequently rowed with twenty sweeps on each side, which propelled it through the water at the rate of three miles per hour.

selves, we were determined not to surrender without making a desperate resistance, and fighting to the last. I considered that to be taken by them would be almost equal to death. I had a strange, an awful sensation come over me, when I saw that there was little chance of escape from them.

They soon neared us sufficiently to bring us within range of their large guns; and their shots began to whistle over our heads, and fall splashing in the water ahead of us.

The heavy guns being mostly mounted forward on swivels, and the high sterns, prevent a vessel chased from replying effectually to the fire of an enemy, without changing her course every time she fires a shot; by which she loses distance considerably. It was so with us; we resolved therefore to haul the wind on port tack, by which we brought the enemy on that quarter; and with all the hands that could be spared, I worked two guns with good effect upon the nearest vessel, shooting away her foremast, which so far disabled her, that she fell astern. We had now six more to contend with, all within eight hundred yards of us.

Their firing continued heavy, but they made very bad practice, not one shot out of ten striking us anywhere; notwithstanding, we had one man killed, and three others wounded and disabled; which reduction in our small force of thirty hands we could ill afford. Yet if we could but have kept away from them till dark, we might possibly have given them the slip. We

were not, however, predestined to have such good fortune.

The Chinese on board the lorcha looked to me for advice in this critical position. They left it to my decision whether they should surrender or fight, and put themselves entirely under my command. The men that were loading and running out two of the guns would come and tell me when they were ready, that I might elevate and fire them; and, although I was never trained to gunnery, I made some capital shots that day. Every time I did so, my crew would come and embrace me; and their limbs would shake as though in convulsions, at every report they heard from the enemy's side.

I must own that I had some dread; for some of them assured me that, if we were taken, after making so desperate a resistance, not one of our lives would be spared: but that we should be literally cut to pieces, inch by inch, and be put to the most excruciating torture for our temerity. This account of their countrymen's treatment of captives stimulated me to resist to the last, and to sell my life as dearly as possible. Oh, what would I not have given at this moment to have seen a British man-of-war heave in sight! what pretty play it would have been to her! what grand relief to us at this dreadful hour!

We continued fighting hard; I managed to "hull" several of the enemy's vessels, through the excellent quality of our guns, and of our powder, which were all of English manufacture.

Two more of our men were struck down, and our sails were fairly riddled. The pirates now were within range to use grape shot, and it came popping in the water around us. I bore up again before the wind, and brought the enemy on our starboard quarter, about three hundred yards distant. They waved red flags to us, and asked us (as I was informed) whether we were on a piratical expedition, as well as themselves. I immediately answered their inquiry with a round of grape at the nearest vessel, and had the good fortune to cut away the main halyards, which brought the mainsail down about their ears. My crew shouted with joy when they saw it. I suppose they thought the enemy might be tempted to give up the chase, when they found that nearly every shot we fired took effect: but, in reality, it only delayed our capture a little longer. This disabled vessel could not repair the damage quickly, and had to fall astern, which reduced the number to five.

The wind continued very light, and our men showed evident signs of fatigue, from the extraordinary exertions they had made in sweeping, to keep ahead of the pirates, who were superior to us, both in sweeping and in sailing qualities. The latter applied their sweeps with renewed vigour, when they saw our men flagging. They were able to give "reliefs" to their men, which we were unable to do; and very soon they were up alongside of us. My crew ran below to hide themselves; some even got under the cabin flooring, and laid themselves in the bilge water; not one man re-

mained on deck to keep me company. I had my revolver in my hand, and determined to take the life of the first man who should hold a boarding pike, or present a musket at me. As soon as they came alongside they fired one of their largest guns right into us, and showered their stink-pots on our decks. I had to dodge to get out of the way of them.

They boarded us with a terrific yell, but appeared to take little notice of me. I stood aft to receive, as I expected, my death-blow; but no, two of the pirates addressed me in a very polite manner, and assured me that they did not intend to harm me. One of them, speaking English, asked me where the vessel came from, and what cargo she had on board; which I told them. They said, "you have dollars and opium." I said, I was not aware of it. They asked me what we were doing down at Cochin-China, and what we wanted in the bay. I told them we wanted water; to which they replied, they had plenty, and would give us a supply; but we must go quietly with them, as they wanted our vessel and crew to join their fleet.

This gave me a little confidence. I thought, if we were permitted to remain on board our own vessel, we might some day make our escape from them, by giving them the slip. On what slender foundations we build up our hopes, when dangers encompass us, and death stares us in the face!

The other men who had boarded us had succeeded in ferreting out our terrified crew, and brought them one

by one on deck, to have a better view of them. Some they handed up by their tails, a very handy appendage to move a Chinaman by. This reminded me of my experience in the police force at Hong-kong, where I invariably, in imitation of my comrades, used the same appliance; and not unfrequently, when I had four or five Chinese prisoners, I tied all their tails in a bunch together, in order to secure them, though putting their tails to this use often gave great offence, since they are looked upon as sacred.

Some old offenders in Hong-kong, who have had these appendages cut off as a punishment, have sometimes given a police constable the slip, by leaving in his hands a sham tail, which had been plaited into the old short hair. We used to call this "leaving a Chinese recognisance," or "entering into his own recognisances."

The owner of our cargo was hauled up on deck in a rough manner, and was so enraged that he offered some resistance. The pirates cut him several times slightly with their knives; and some of them, I observed, caught the poor man's blood, and actually drank it! I expected every moment to see them cut him down, as they flourished their knives over his head. I felt extremely sorry for him; he must have been in great pain, mentally and bodily. He had one advantage over me, however, for he could understand what they were talking about. It would have been dangerous for me to have interfered on his behalf, or even remonstrated

with these savages ; they might have made an example of me, and satisfied their appetites by feasting upon British blood, which, I doubted not, they would have relished far better than Chinese. I thought myself very fortunate in having experienced lenient treatment from them, after the information I had received as to the manner in which they usually treat those who resist them.

It appears, from what I ascertained afterwards, that their cruelty to this man was on account of his being the owner of the vessel and cargo ; their object being to make him confess where anything valuable was stowed, so that they might help themselves to a small portion, before the vessel was properly overhauled ; but they could not succeed, so they left him.

By this time the remainder of the fleet were alongside of us, and all were eager to gratify their curiosity, and to pick up anything that took their fancy. What they get in this way forms their share of the booty, and is nearly all they ever get ; the lion's share going to their chief and a few other favoured individuals. This makes the men far more ravenous and cruel, than if it were share and share alike with them.

We had, by this time, full two hundred men on board, searching in every part of the vessel. One of them very much wished for my revolver, but I refused to give it to him ; and, as he could speak a little English, I made him understand that, if I were not allowed to keep it myself, I should give it to his chief,

which seemed to satisfy him; he offered to take it to him for me, but I told him I preferred having that honour myself; upon which he left me.

It was now getting dark, and the tymung that captured us had made a tow line fast to our bows, and twenty of her men being left on board of us, the rest were recalled by their captains to their respective vessels, three of which sailed on each side of us as a guard, and conducted us towards the bay again. All our small arms and ammunition were taken away, so that it would have been useless for us to have made any resistance, though darkness might have favoured us. The wind continued very light during the whole night; and they, apparently, did not care to hurry back as they had obtained their object in our capture.

The calm benefited us in one respect, for we hailed a tymung, and asked for water; they quickly replied, by sending a sandpan with two large kegs, besides pork and fish enough to feed eighty men, and a tub half full of sam-shew (Chinese gin). All these articles we needed; we therefore regaled ourselves merrily, and for a short time forgot our misfortunes. After a hearty supper, I turned in to sleep, as I thought; but there was no sleep for me that night. The account my crew had given me, during the action, of the treatment we were likely to receive was continually on my mind, nor could I divert my thoughts from the dreadful warnings I had received. I now in some measure condemned myself for the long and determined resistance I had

made ; as I thought their fair words might be turned, on the morrow, into the realization of torture and death. Our shot must have killed many of them, and how could I reasonably expect but that they would be revenged, now we were in their power. Even supposing they were to spare my life, when should I be free again? Would they keep me until they had an opportunity to send me to Canton? or having seen my gun practice, would they make me a slave, to drudge for them without receiving any benefit for my services? and then, what would become of me ultimately, when my services were no longer required; when they had become sufficiently rich by plunder (if they were spared from the vengeance of God and of man long enough), and desired to return to their native country again? Even if I had served them faithfully, shared their dangers and hardships, should I share their gains? No. If I had happened to become possessed of money, I could not keep it without their knowledge; and they would murder me to enrich themselves. I concluded, that they would never allow me to depart from them, lest I should inform against them; and, for their own safety, they would take my life. These were my thoughts, as I lay on my pillow that night; and therefore I resolved to make my escape from them on the first favourable opportunity.

CHAPTER IV.

Interview with Ching Ah'ling, the Pirate Chief.—His Promise of good Treatment.—Invitation to dine with him.—My Critical Situation.—Comfort from finding my Bible.—Difficulty of escaping.—The Pirates remove the Cargo from the Lorcha.—Their Barbarity to the Crew.

THE sun had risen high in the zenith before we reached the little cove from which we had been driven the day before by the piratical fleet, and which I have named Verela Bay, from its close proximity to Cape Verela. Upon entering it, I carefully noticed its various features, and took soundings with the hand-lead. The least water I got was six fathoms, hard blue mud, within a mile of the shore, on the north-east side, which was our anchoring ground.

As soon as we were moored, three boats came alongside of us. From the respect that was paid to the foremost one, I concluded that it contained the Pirate Chief, and I was not wrong in my conjecture. He was assisted up the side of our vessel with great care and attention; and when he reached the deck, he received a kind of salute from the men who had been left in charge of it on the previous evening. His attention was immediately turned to me, and he bade his interpreter tell me to follow him into the cabin, which I

did. He took a seat there, and motioned me to sit opposite to him. He then commenced a conversation, through the interpreter.

He first assured me of my perfect safety, and told me it was not his intention to hurt me or any of my crew, provided we at all times conducted ourselves quietly, and attended to his commands; that his men were not pirates, but rebels, under the banner of their immortal king, Tai-ping-wee-wang; that we were very fortunate in falling into their hands, since we should be treated as brothers; that his ultimate intentions were to assist the English in taking Canton from his enemies, the mandarins; that as soon as he had a fleet strong enough, and had accumulated sufficient riches, he should proceed to Hong-kong, to refit and arm them; that this was the reason he had come to Cochin-China, which was a very rich country; and that he was now looking out for the King of Cochin-China's ships, passing to Turon, which, he had been informed, would carry a large amount of treasure on board. He asked me whether I thought his fleet would be able to take a square-rigged vessel. I told him I did not know what armament either his or the king's ships carried. He said that I must go round and see all his vessels, and make myself familiar with his men; that none of them would harm me; and that they would be very glad to be shown how to use their large guns properly. He remarked that I had very much injured two of his vessels during our engagement, and killed

many men ; but that they all forgave me, as they had killed some of our men in return ; and that it was nothing but natural that we should try to escape being taken by them. He added, that he should have given up the chase when his first vessel was disabled ; but, from seeing a European on board, he thought we must have a large amount of treasure or opium, and that he was much disappointed, for the cargo would not pay for the damages they had sustained during the action. He said also that he was much in want of guns and ammunition ; and that he wished to get some Europeans to command his ships.

He wished me to tell him truly what cargo we had on board, which I did, and he appeared quite satisfied. He asked to look at my watch and chain. I handed them to him ; he quietly put them into his pocket, without asking my consent, and from that time I had only the pleasure of an occasional glimpse of them on his person.

I took this opportunity to tell him, that his men yesterday carried away my clothes with them, leaving me almost destitute, and if that was not a piratical action, I did not know what was. He assured me that he would order enquiries to be made that day ; and that they should be restored to me, if possible. I must credit him with keeping his promise this time ; for the greater part of them were returned the following morning.

When the Pirate Chief, whose name I ascertained

was Ching Ah'ling, had finished conversing with me, he did not seem at all anxious to speak with any of my crew, nor even with the owner of our cargo; he appeared to treat them all with contempt. He ascended to the deck again, took a look round, gave some hasty orders about our cargo, shook hands with me quite familiarly, and gave me an invitation to dine on board his vessel that evening, which, partly out of curiosity, I accepted; he then took his leave of me.

I had now an opportunity of thinking over the fair promises this semi-barbarian had made me. I asked myself, can this be reality, or is it all a dream? I, a captive on board a Chinese piratical fleet, on a coast not frequented by Europeans, and nearly a thousand miles from any European port or place; and notwithstanding the barbarous character I have heard of these sea-robbers, their hereditary hatred of all Europeans, especially of Englishmen, yet they promise to treat me and my crew as brothers! It seemed so contradictory to Chinese usage, so utterly incomprehensible, that I could not bring the proceedings of the last two days before my mind as real. I pinched myself, to ascertain whether I was awake or dreaming. I could hear the voices that had become familiar to me. I went into my cabin; everything had been turned upside down by the ruffians who had pillaged it yesterday. One thing, however, they had left me, because they did not value it; it was my Bible, which to me now was worth mines of gold! for it affords comfort to

the afflicted, and hope to the captive; and I thanked God that I could read and understand that precious book. It was a gift from my dear mother, when I parted from her, in the year 1852, to go to Australia. I had kept it ever since as a token of her love. Ah! bitterly I thought, shall I ever see that dear kind parent again? It seemed so improbable, that tears came to my eyes. I opened the Sacred Book, and turned to this passage in the hundred-and-fortieth Psalm :—

“Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man : preserve me from the violent man ; which imagine mischiefs in their heart ; continually are they gathered together for war. They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent ; adders' poison is under their lips. Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked ; preserve me from the violent man ; who have purposed to overthrow my goings.”

This gave me comfort, and invigorated my mind. I resolved to try to gain the favour of my captors, until an opportunity for effecting my escape should offer. I had been able, by chance, to enquire into the character of the Cochineese, and the possibility of travelling across the country to some European settlement.

I had heard from my own crew, that the country is infested with tigers, so that travelling is very dangerous ; and that many parts are so covered with impassable jungles, that a stranger would require guides. I had no means whatever to defray travelling expenses, so that I should be immediately made a prisoner by

the natives, and perhaps receive worse treatment than where I was. They might even take my life ; for their antipathy to Europeans is very great. I determined, therefore, to adhere to my former resolutions, and attend to all orders that I might receive from Ching Ah'ling, so long as they did not compromise humanity and my religion. I closed my Bible with a short prayer, beseeching the Almighty to lead me not into temptation, but to deliver me from evil, to release me from captivity, and at some future day restore me to my own country.

About one hour after Ching Ah'ling had left, the smallest ty-mung in the fleet weighed, and came alongside of us, for the purpose of receiving our cargo of dried fruit, &c. As it neared us, a Canton man with a savage expression of countenance, and two dirk knives at his side, threw a rope on board, telling one of our crew to make it fast in-board ; but as he was, from timidity, I suppose, rather slow and clumsy in doing so, the ruffian sprang on board, drew his two knives, and cut him severely across his left arm.

The Chinese are generally credited as being very quiet and inoffensive among themselves, seldom resorting to blows without great provocation ; but in several instances the conduct of these pirates to one another, as well as to their captives, was most brutal ; they appeared to be beings of quite a different temperament from the generality of their countrymen. This may in some

measure be accounted for from the lawless life they had led, most of them from their childhood.

As soon as their vessel was secured alongside of ours, they mustered our crew, and set them to work to discharge the cargo into it. After four hours' rapid work, our men began to flag, and the pirates commenced using the bamboo on them most unmercifully. I remonstrated, asking them, through an interpreter, if this was "brotherly treatment," which Ching Ah'ling had promised us. They told me, that it was not my business to dictate to them; upon which I left them, exceedingly sorry that it was out of my power to assist my poor fellows, who had always treated me kindly, and with the greatest respect. I thought it would be better to wait till the evening, when I should see Ching Ah'ling, and lay the case before him. I fancied the men who came for our cargo that morning showed some feelings of jealousy, or at least treated me very distantly, though they offered me no injury nor insult. From this commencement, it appeared that Ching Ah'ling's promises would be with difficulty fulfilled among such savages as these. I went to my cabin, to prepare myself for the appointed visit to the chief.

CHAPTER V.

On board Ching Ah'ling's Tymung.—Reception by the Crew.—Arms.—Cabin.—Opium Smoking.—Conversation with Ching Ah'ling.—Appointment as Gunner to one of his Tymungs.—Religious Ceremonies of the Chinese.—Banquet in Ching Ah'ling's Cabin.

THE same sun that shines on the righteous and the wicked, on the free and the captive, on the happy and the miserable, had sunk beneath the high hills that skirted the western side of the little harbour; and the dark foliage of the trees on the shaded side of those hills formed a grand contrast with the brilliant sky overhead, and with the fleet lying quietly at anchor. I seemed almost to be the inhabitant of a fairy world, as I skimmed over the glassy surface of the water in one of our sandpans. The warbling of various birds, and the continued buzz of insects, gave a vivid idea of the myriads of animated things that are constantly brought into being in these tropical and luxuriant climates.

I was soon alongside Ching Ah'ling's tymung. The crew were better clothed, and far superior in personal appearance to those I had just left. They all came to the gangway, and received me with much respect. There seemed little distinction of persons amongst them; one appeared as high in rank and

authority as another. They took me round the vessel to see their guns, ten in number, varying in size from six to nine-pounders, all in excellent condition, and many of English manufacture.

They also showed me a particular kind of grape-shot they use, made out of Cochin-China cash, fastened securely together, in bunches of tens, with iron wire; fifty of these bunches are then strung, in nearly round or rather cylindrical bundles, with stouter wire. They informed me that it was very destructive in close quarters; that the cash was of very little use to them as money, since they frequently took large quantities of it; and that the same day on which they captured us, one of their tymungs took a native vessel with a "thousand thousand" on board.

Their small arms were of a very inferior kind, consisting of gingals, and a few old French muskets which, from their general appearance, may have been used in the Peninsular War; some of them had been converted into matchlocks, whether for the sake of improvement, or because their locks (which were flint) were worn out, I cannot say.

When I had seen all their arms, they conducted me into the cabin, a long room, but rather narrow, as on each side, at right angles to the keel, were bunks, on which they slept. There were three divisions on each side. Every division was furnished with all conveniences for opium smoking, and accommodated two persons. There they might indulge in that luxury until

they insensibly fell into a death-like sleep, for such is the consummation of their enjoyment.

I smelt the fumes of opium as I entered. Ching Ah'ling occupied the farthest division from the entrance; he just rose up from his reclining posture, motioned me towards him, and bade me be seated. He then commenced the following conversation, through the interpreter; first asking me whether I smoked opium, offering me the side opposite to where he lay, if I felt inclined to partake of some. I told him that I never used it. He seemed rather surprised, remarking that, when he was a rebel chief at Shanghae, three years ago, he had many Europeans under him, as well as two Americans, who all smoked opium; and that nearly all his band here did so more or less. He said it was an excellent thing, and that he could not possibly do without it; that there was only one reason against using it, and that was the expense, which kept the Chinese very poor; that their animosity towards the English was owing to their considering the price charged for it as extortionate in the extreme; that its weight in silver is given for it, and that the English merchant realizes three hundred per cent. on the sale of it. He had been to Bombay, he told me, and therefore knew the price of it there.

I informed him that I had never been in any way connected with the opium trade, either in India or China, and therefore did not know what amount of profit was realized by bringing it to China, and selling

it there; but that I had been given to understand that the Chinese, by retailing the drug in an adulterated state, made as much profit as the English merchant did in the wholesale trade; and if they were so very dissatisfied, why did they not build seaworthy vessels, or buy them of Europeans, and go to Calcutta and Bombay to purchase the drug from the growers? for they were just as free to go and buy it there as any Englishman.

Ching Ah'ling, finding that he could not get much "to windward" of me on the opium question, changed the subject of conversation; and asked if I had visited all his vessels yet. I told him that I had entered none but that in which I then was. He said, "Do you think this vessel, with her guns and crew, would be able to take a square-rigged ship?" Wishing to keep on good terms with a person who at a breath could take away my life, I replied, that if all his vessels were armed and manned as well as the one I was on board of then, they might be able to master one of those belonging to the King of Cochin-China, unless the latter were very heavily armed. This seemed to please him exceedingly, and he said that in a few days he should go on a cruise, and look out for one of them. He then informed me that I was posted as gunner to his second tymung, and he hoped that I should fight as well as I did yesterday; that he had appointed an interpreter for me; that I must conduct myself quietly among the crew, and they would all like me very much; that they would be under my orders, and that I

must teach them how to use their guns properly. He affirmed that he would like to keep me on board his own tymung, but that he seldom went into action himself, he only directed the others.

I began to remonstrate with him for taking me away from the lorcha, knowing that my chance of escape would thus be lessened tenfold ; but it was useless. He told me it was their general custom, when they took any prize which they decided upon keeping, to distribute the crew among the fleet ; that it would be best for me, as the crew of the vessel to which I was posted were as brave as tigers, while he doubted very much whether my men were so, from the manner in which they deserted their guns, and hid themselves, the day we were taken ; that none of his men could have had the heart to hurt me, seeing how I stood my ground when they boarded us.

I did not care to tell him the account I had heard of their cruel treatment of captives ; and that it was fear, not bravery, that determined me to sell my life as dearly as I could. I knew the less I spoke about myself, the better ; as I was now their captive, and their commands I must obey.

I thought this a favourable opportunity to acquaint Ching Ah'ling with the barbarous treatment which my men had experienced whilst removing our cargo this morning. I therefore gave him a full account, from first to last ; but it seemed to be of little importance to him. He merely said that he supposed my crew were unwilling

to work, and that his men were obliged to use extreme measures. "But," I asked, "why allow them to use their knives, and cut a man, because he does not understand in a moment what he is ordered to do? This, I consider, is wanton cruelty, and far different treatment from what you promised me this morning. You told me that if we behaved quietly, and attended to your commands, we should be all treated as brothers. Now, to ill-use my men is to ill-use me, for I look upon myself as being one of them; they have always been kind to me, and therefore I esteem them, and wish to see them treated in the same way as myself, as we are all captives, and at your command."

He appeared rather struck with my words, and replied that he did not wish me to consider myself on the same footing as one of them; that he intended to place me in the same rank as the masters of his tymungs; and that, as long as I conducted myself well, he would see that I was treated as such. It was useless to argue with him any longer; and I ended by entreating that my men might not be ill-used in future.

During our conversation a table had been arranged, and a sumptuous banquet prepared, if I could judge from the number of dishes and covers that were laid; but the fumes I inhaled from it were not a good recommendation. There was evidently bad judgment in the culinary department, for a smell very much resembling *assa-foetida* disgusted my nasal organ.

When the steward had finished his arrangements, he

lighted two tapers and some incense sticks, and placed them before a small gilded idol, which was located in a recess at the end of the cabin. He also set some small cakes before it, not as a sacrifice, for they always eat them afterwards; he then finished the ceremony by making several reverences before it.

After making several enquiries on this subject, I ascertained that these pirates "chin chin joss," that is, they worship their idol, and beseech him to give them good fortune in their lawless undertakings, and to protect them from injury.

We had a joss-house and idol in the cabin of the lorcha, and I observed that Ching Ah'ling, on the morning he visited us, made an obeisance to it; we must therefore conclude that the Chinese believe their gods countenance the doings of the just and the unjust, the pirate and the honest trader; and that there is no distinction between good and evil. In fact, to commit the most heinous crime for *gain* is not considered as a *sin*.

They believe that, as long as they apply a small portion of their stolen treasures in the purchase of gilt paper, incense sticks, and other articles used in their worship, they receive a remission of their crimes.

Though there are three distinct forms of religion among the Chinese, — namely, the Confucian, the Taoist, and the Buddhist, — yet they bear a great similarity to each other. The followers of Buddhism are by far the most numerous.

I do not think I am mistaken in believing that the pirates consider themselves as truly religious as any other class of their countrymen. They use the same ceremonies in their worship. They took out of our lorch a quantity of gilt paper, incense sticks, &c., and used them before their own gods.

I frequently witnessed their religious ceremonies. What astonished me most was, that many of their reverences, their manner of burning incense, and their use of the cross as an emblem, are similar to what we see in the celebration of the popish mass. The resemblance to the church of Rome may be noticed also in the dress of the priests, and in the muttering, or rather humming, of prayers in an unknown tongue.

But I am taking up too much of my reader's time, on a subject that may not be altogether interesting, or that I am not able to explain; so to return to Ching Ah'ling's cabin.

The feast was ready, and I was invited very kindly to partake. I at first declined, for the reason before mentioned; but, after much pressing, I was induced to join them.

The repast consisted of fish, flesh, and fowl, all in abundance, and the trimmings were as plentiful and as good as the country could afford. The viands being cooked after their own fashion, were anything but agreeable to an Englishman's palate; for instance, fat pork was cut into square pieces, half-an-inch thick,

boiled, and served up with fish ; and eggs were fried in very inferior oil, with small pieces of the stalk of onions dropped on the upper side. The vermicelli soup would have been good, had it not contained a profusion of garlic. The fowls, boiled with a little green ginger, were very nice. The shrimps and prawns were fine, and not spoiled with appliances.

Everything was carved, and cut into small pieces before coming to table, as the Chinese never use knives and forks at their meals, but chop-sticks, or pieces of bamboo, about ten inches in length, and a quarter-of-an-inch square. They are very troublesome to a person that is unaccustomed to them. I found great difficulty to eat with them ; and I thought I should have to give them up, and take to my fingers. The company were much amused at my awkwardness in the use of these primitive articles. My appetite was not so keen as to make me lose my temper at this petty annoyance, and after a little practice I managed to make a very good meal.

Rice, the Chinese "staff of life," to a basin full of which we were first helped, was served up in two large wooden kids, placed at the head of the table, and holding something like twenty pounds each. These formed rather an inconvenient addition to the feast. They were continually passing to and fro, over and even under the table, to the imminent danger of some of the long-tailed gentry dipping the wrist-bands and sleeves of their silk and satin garments in the gravy

of the savoury dishes. We had no waiters to attend upon us, but every one helped himself to what he required, and then passed the dish or kid to the next person who asked for it.

The liquor, which they called bee-chew, was poured into little cups, and served out hot to each person. It was a very suspicious-looking fluid. The interpreter commenced capering, with a glass of it in his hand, drinking, and hob-nobbing with everybody, and would insist upon my trying some. As soon as I put it to my lips, I knew what "blue ruin" was; for this bee-chew was of a dull blue colour, and it tasted, ugh! of what did it not taste? bilge-water, vitriol, turpentine, copal varnish, tar, fire, and castor oil! An entire stranger might have fancied that garlic had been boiled in it. All Chinese liquor has a very unpleasant flavour, or twang; but this, being pure and unadulterated, was real fire itself, "chain lightning!" The twang may in some measure be accounted for, by their not knowing how to remove the essential oils properly; or because they distil from rice. I cannot give a decided opinion on this subject, I must leave it to some of my kind readers, who may be better chemists than I am.

The repast being finished, they all took to smoking opium again, and therefore I took my leave of them.

CHAPTER VI.

Parting with the Crew of the Lorch. — No Prospect of Escape. —
 Transferred to my new Post. — Treatment. — My Interpreter.
 — His History and Adventures. — “Hong-kong English.”

WHEN I returned on board the lorch, I found that the pirates had removed from her all the dried fruit; the salt, not being valuable enough for them, was ordered to be thrown overboard the next morning. She was then converted into a tymung, by painting her outside, and making a few trifling alterations.

The crew seemed very down-hearted at their present situation. The owner asked me what conversation I had had with Ching Ah'ling, and I told him. “Ah!” he said, “I knew they would not allow us to remain together in our own vessel, or we might easily have made our escape from them.”

I took this opportunity to enquire of him, whether the main-land offered any chance for escape; but he fully corroborated what I had already heard from the ca-ba-sa and others, that the difficulties were insurmountable; and that, even if we fell in with a man-of-war cruiser, we had but little chance of deliverance, as the British generally sink or destroy all piratical vessels they fall in with on the west coast of China,

and especially on the coast of Cochin-China, without even boarding them.

With such prospects as these, I turned to my bed for the last night but one on board of the lorch *Shunloi*. I opened my Bible, and prayed most fervently for deliverance. I put my whole trust in "the Giver of all good things," and I felt relief in doing so. I had faith that He would deliver me, though all worldly plans should fail.

I slept soundly that night, and awoke a little before daylight. It was very wet, and blowing a gale of wind from the westward. I therefore arranged my cabin, went to bed again, and read my Bible the greater portion of that day.

The morning after, the weather had moderated. At noon, a boat came alongside with the interpreter, to take me to my new post. I hastily packed up all my things, and took leave of my old crew, not without an inexpressible feeling of sorrow, as I thought I was parting from my only chance of escape; but obey I must, resistance was useless.

We were soon on board of a fine tymung, bristling with cannon all round her deck. My interpreter conducted me to a neat little cabin, in the after-part of the vessel, which, he said, had been purposely arranged and set apart for me; so that I should be alone sometimes, and happily left to my own thoughts. The crew were very civil and obliging, trying to serve me in every possible manner.

By positive orders from Ching Ah'ling, no woman was allowed even to visit any one of his vessels. If his men were inordinate in the use of opium, he did not allow them the company of females. In China, these two evils are generally in close alliance.

I found myself very well provided for. My food was certainly not cooked as a European desires it, but there was always plenty of fish, flesh, fowls, and rice.

No restraint whatever was put upon me ; I could go on shore and return when I chose, take a boat and go out when and where I pleased, go to bed and rise when I liked : in short I was made as comfortable as these semi-savages knew how to make me.

My interpreter, whose name was Ah'moi, spoke English fluently, having been educated at Singapore. He became very intimate with me ; and a short account of his history, *as he related it to me*, may not be altogether uninteresting to the reader here.

He was born at Singapore in the year 1832. His father, who was a general dealer, had two Malay prahus. At the age of twelve years, Ah'moi was sent on board one of these, bound to Penang. On her homeward-bound passage, she fell in with another prahu, smaller than herself, which his crew proposed to try to capture. He gave his consent to this, and, after a hard fight, they succeeded in taking her. He went on board of her ; and, whilst his crew were busy searching below, he saw an old man lying on the deck, and dying from the wounds he had received during the

action. Observing that he had something tied round his waist, he searched him, and found nine bars of gold tied up in an old silk scarf. He took the gold, and secreted it about his own person; and, fearing the man might revive, and inform his companions of it, he drew his knife, and put an end to him.

When he returned to Singapore, fearing that his father might become acquainted with this affair, by finding the treasure in his possession, he hid eight of the gold bars in the jungle. He sold one bar for two hundred and ninety rupees, went gambling, and in a few days lost the whole amount. Four more of his bars he spent in the same manner.

The father, becoming acquainted with his son's gambling propensity, desired to obtain some employment for him, where he would be kept more strictly than at his own home. He accordingly made application to have him admitted as a free pupil into the Missionary School, in which he succeeded. Ah'moi conducted himself with credit, and made rapid progress in his studies, till his sixteenth year. He left his remaining four bars of gold deposited in the same place as before, and occasionally visited them.

After he had been at this school three years and a half, he formed an acquaintance with a Malay woman of bad repute, who encouraged him to absent himself, and spend his time in her company. He now became careless in his studies, and was severely reprimanded by his teacher; but he continued to escape punishment

for his occasional absence, by pretending that his father was ill, and required his presence at home. At last he took up one of his gold bars, changed it for rupees, went to the house of his paramour, and commenced opium smoking, which he has continued to this day.

He stayed away from the school on this occasion nine days; during which time he had managed to get rid of three hundred and ten rupees. The master sent to his father's house, to enquire the reason of his long absence, and was informed that he had not been at home.

On his return, the principal of the establishment expelled him in the presence of the other students, upon which he went back to his father's house, where he received almost as cold treatment as at the school.

He took up the remainder of his gold bars, gambled, and kept company with his paramour, until his last cash was spent, and he found himself diseased and destitute. In this condition, he returned to his paternal roof, where he remained for a year and a half, penitent, and endeavouring to redeem his past character. He formed resolutions never to gamble any more; but to lead an honest and industrious life in future. His ill-gotten treasure had done him injury instead of good.

Ah'moi had made great progress during his stay at the Missionary School, and could speak English tolerably well at this time. Through his father's interest, he was appointed as interpreter and supercargo on board a British barque belonging to a

Chinese house at Singapore, and bound to Shanghae. There he was charged to sell a part of the cargo, from the proceeds of which he embezzled the sum of eight hundred dollars, and left the vessel.

He shortly afterwards joined the rebels, and was at the taking of the city of Shanghae. He served there under Ching Ah'ling, who was then a rebel chief. He remained with the insurgents about a year, meeting with various fortune; but whenever he had money, he gambled and smoked opium till it was spent.

Afterwards he joined Ah'pack's piratical fleet, then at Ningpo. The vessel which he entered, whilst on a cruise, was chased by a British man-of-war brig, and the pirates, to save themselves, ran her on shore; but, as she drew ten feet of water, they had to swim a great distance to save themselves. Many of them were drowned, and some were shot, in the attempt. Ah'moi, however, with thirteen others, managed to reach the shore in safety, and were all that remained alive out of ninety-seven persons.

Having begged his way across the country, to Foo-chow-foo, he obtained a passage to Hong-kong in a Portuguese lorcha. When he arrived there, he was not long out of employment, but joined another piratical tymung, which cruised a short distance outside of Hong-kong, lying in wait for junks bound to Canton.

Several prizes were captured and taken into Hie-chee-chin Bay; those who could pay a ransom were

allowed to proceed on their voyage again; but when the supercargo or owner could not pay what was demanded, the crew were put to torture, and the most barbarous means used to extort it; and if they failed, to use Ah'moi's own words—"we takee common sailor man first, and cuttee one head one day; then see'pose no can makee pay, must takee junk, makee burn; then no can pay, must takee allo piecee man, and kill him; so no got any man, can makee talk, what pidgin we makee do." At the expiration of two months, their tymung was laden with a general cargo, the fruits of plunder. When he returned to Hong-kong he was surprised to see a European come on board, and bargain for the cargo, which had to be sold below the market price, on account of the bags of sugar, baskets of dried fruit, &c., &c., having the names of the hongts to whom they properly belonged, and to whom they had been consigned, written on them in large Chinese characters. But the European appeared to be well acquainted with those matters. He spoke the Canton dialect of Chinese as well as any person on board the tymung, and went by the name of Sam-qui.

"I saw our supercargo," said Ah'moi, "pay him a fifth share of the ransoms that had been taken during our cruise, amounting to above two thousand dollars. I had the curiosity to ask one of our crew (who had belonged to the tymung a considerable time) whether this European had any share in the vessel,

and how it was that he received a portion of the ransoms. The man told me, that Sam-qui had *no* share in the vessel, but that he was the head man in Hong-kong, and that if he did not receive a cunshaw (or present) after we made a good cruise, he would have us taken and punished as pirates; but so long as he profited by our plunder, we could go and come in safety, and he would supply us with English guns and powder in exchange for a portion of our cargo, and assist us to sell the remainder *safely.*"

Ah'moi said, he had always been assured that Europeans were much averse to piracy, and that British men-of-war tried to suppress it; but since he witnessed this conduct in a European, who, he understood, had influence in Hong-kong, he has not half the dread he formerly had of being a pirate; for British men-of-war are all that pirates fear on the coast of China.

He remained fourteen months on board of this piratical tymung. The farthest place to which her cruise extended from Hong-kong was Cup-chi Point, distant about one hundred miles; her general places of resort were Bias and Ping-hoi Bays. She was seldom out longer than two months, before returning to Hong-kong, heavily laden with plundered merchandise. Sam-qui always received a fifth share of all specie or dollars that had been taken.

Ah'moi by this time had accumulated a small sum of money; and wishing to reform, and lead a more

honest life, "fearing that his sins would overtake him," and that he would pay the penalty by an untimely death, he left his companions, and, purchasing a fishing boat, he set up as a pilot to European vessels entering the harbour of Hong-kong, of which he had acquired a thorough knowledge during his connection with the pirates. He found a great many of his countrymen in opposition to him in this business; but being able to speak English and Malay well, he succeeded famously for four months; when an untoward circumstance occurred to him.

One of his competitors had been acquainted with him when he was in his previous occupation, and had bought two chests of tea from him, bearing the mark of the hong to whom they originally belonged; and, as he had them still in his possession, he threatened that if Ah'moi continued piloting in Hong-kong in opposition to him, he would prosecute him for piracy, and bring forward the two chests of tea in proof. This was certainly very cruel on the part of his opponent in business, and was partly, if not wholly, the cause of his again becoming a pirate.

If this narrative is true, he is in some measure to be pitied for the lawless life he now leads: I have related it as I received it from him; but I suppose some allowance must be made for the "deviation-from-truth propensities" of all his countrymen.

Ah'moi sold his boat for half the price he paid for it, gave up piloting, and hid himself from the sight of

his jealous opponent. He had not left this business a month, before he met with Ching Ah'ling in Hong-kong, who was fitting out two small tymungs for a piratical expedition to the coast of Cochin-China. Ah'moi joined him, and is now my interpreter and companion, serving in a fleet which has been increased to eight vessels, six of which were prizes, captured within the space of five months.

I hope the reader will excuse this imperfect account of my interpreter's adventures, during a period of eleven years. I have endeavoured to preserve the substance of his story in as clear a manner as possible; but I found considerable difficulty in converting his ungrammatical sentences into anything approaching to precision.

The Chinese who are best acquainted with the English language, construct their sentences in a manner peculiar to their own language, so that, if they were set down literally, they would be anything but intelligible. For example, if a Chinaman, who can speak what is termed “ Hong-kong English,” wished to see an article before he purchased it, he would say, “ You makee bring me, I can lookee see; s'pose nummer one, can makee by (buy), no can see, how can savey.” This peculiar construction he would consider grammatical, because it is in accordance with the Chinese syntax.

CHAPTER VII.

Visit from Ching Ah'ling.—Drilling the Crew of the Tymung.—
The Pirates set sail.—A Junk in sight.—Signal to Chase.—
Capture and Plunder of the Junk.—Treatment of those on
Board.—Another Chase.—Disappointment.—Return to Anchor.

ON the third morning after I had joined the tymung to which Ching Ah'ling had appointed me, he paid me a visit, to enquire how I was going on, and whether I was comfortable. His principal reason for visiting me, however, was to give me particular orders to drill my crew twice a day, and to practise them every one in a separate station, both at the guns and in working the vessel during action, which was what they had never been used to before.

He was in his full uniform as a mandarin of the third grade, having a blood red cornelian button on his cap, a yellow silk crape long dress, light blue silk pantaloons, tied below the knee, and fastening his white calico stockings there. He wore the usual clumsy Chinese shoes, with soles considerably more than an inch in thickness, white, and slightly turned up at the toes.

Ching Ah'ling was personally a handsome man, between thirty-five and forty years of age; with full features, and a slightly aquiline nose, which is rare with the Chinese; his face and hands were very white;

there was not the slightest colour in his cheeks, which, I suppose, was from his excessive use of opium. In stature he was above the general height of his countrymen, standing full five feet ten inches. His limbs and muscles were fully developed; and I should think he would be a powerful man, if he did not indulge in that destructive habit before referred to.

He did not remain long, and on taking leave of me, he told me to make myself as comfortable as I possibly could, and if I visited the shore at any time to go armed, as the natives were not to be trusted; that the country was infested with wild beasts, especially tigers, and that those animals would attack a white man, when they would let a native pass.

We remained eight days longer anchored in this harbour, during which time I commenced drilling my crew. I found it so difficult to remember their names that I had recourse to numbering them in Chinese, which I found much easier to recollect. At working each in a particular station, they were very awkward, and their stupidity was enough to provoke any man. Not for several days could I get half of them to remember to which gun they belonged; so that I was obliged to have their names written on paper, and pasted on the side of the gun to which I had told them off.

I cannot say whether the "cat" would have had any effect upon them; words were utterly useless. Latterly I became disgusted with them; they would talk and laugh all the time I was trying to drill them, and one

would pretend to show another what he did not know himself, so that they continued in the greatest confusion the whole time. I became quite tired of attempting to teach such a headstrong, impudent, and ignorant set of men, without being allowed to use means which would have made them obedient. When I took them into action afterwards, they entirely forgot their stations, and paid no attention to my orders, but fought (if it could be called fighting) in the greatest disorder. Sometimes four or five men were rushing together for one thing, and six or seven assisting at one man's duty.

On the eleventh morning after our capture, a small white flag was shown to me by Ah'moi, who told me it was the signal for all the fleet to weigh anchor and prepare for sea; it was hoisted at the mizen mast of Ching Ah'ling's tymung. We accordingly weighed, and, in company with the rest, passed out of Verela harbour (as I have named it) with a fresh north-east breeze blowing.

I soon found that the sailing capabilities of our vessel were none of the best; for, with all possible sail set, we could only keep a fifth-rate with the other vessels. Ching Ah'ling's tymung and three others kept a considerable distance ahead of us.

Shortly after noon, when we were south-east of Verela harbour about twenty miles, my attention was called to another flag hoisted on our chief's mizen mast, which Ah'moi informed me was an order to clear for action,

and to chase; this last signal flag was red, with a black border, angular shaped, and what is termed "fluked."

We were not yet far enough out to see the vessel we were ordered to chase; but in the lapse of half-an-hour, and with the aid of a telescope, I could just discern a craft in the horizon ahead of us, and distant, I should think, about twelve miles.

In another hour, we had gained upon her sufficiently to make out that she was a Chinese junk of some kind. I would much rather have made her out to be a man-of-war steamer; we were then so far out at sea, that there would have been little chance of any of our vessels escaping; and I might possibly have obtained my deliverance.

At two o'clock, p.m., the tymung farthest ahead was almost within range of the chase. I closely watched the movements of both as the distance between them was shortened, expecting every moment to see one or the other open fire; but the pursuer, fearing, perhaps, that the junk might prove more than a match for her, cautiously shortened sail, allowing two more vessels to come up.

I felt such a desire and curiosity to watch their movements, that I hardly took my eyes off them for a moment, wishing (I must own) to see a good fight between them. I should not have been the least sorry to have seen the pirates driven off. The junk, unable to out-sail our fleet, and closely pressed by three large

tymungs, rounded to, lowered her sails, and allowed them to run up alongside and take her, without a charge of powder being expended on either side. I felt quite disappointed at this quiet surrender.

We also were very soon up alongside of the prize. We lowered our boat, into which I jumped, and was quickly on board of her; but not till we had rescued two fine pigs that were swimming in the sea, after having leaped off the deck of the junk. Several more I saw struggling in the water; but they appeared to be of too little value to be cared for by the pirates, who would not go a boat's length out of their way to pick them up. They formed part of the freight, and were carried on deck, where they had been partitioned off in styes, until the pirates broke them down, caring little what became of the pigs. If we had wanted fifty of them we could have been accommodated now; but our men, more eager after things that were less cumbersome and of more value, and fearing they should be too late, jumped on board as soon as we touched the side, leaving me to make the boat fast.

I was not in such a violent hurry, knowing that if she were laden with gold or diamonds I should not benefit one cent by it. All that had brought me on board was curiosity, and a desire to witness the behaviour of the pirates towards the poor helpless creatures in the junk. After making the boat fast, I scrambled to the deck, (for it appears they offer no ac-

commodation ladders to such visitors,) where the most wanton waste of property presented itself to my view.

Passengers' boxes were broken open, and their contents plundered; while the rejected articles were lying about in oil, which was being passed up out of the fore hold, but so carelessly, that one-third of the jars containing it were broken, and consequently the contents were flowing all over the deck. On the main hatch were stowed a number of large bags of pea-nuts; the pirates, in order to get to the main hold, were heaving them overboard, and they were being picked up by fishermen, who, like vultures, had smelt the captured prey, and began to come around us; they had already saved a great many pigs, and were now loading their little vessels with anything they could get out of the water.

I have mentioned before, that they are on amicable terms with the pirates; the one assisting the other; and not unfrequently the pirates, when they have plundered a vessel to their satisfaction, give it up to be completely stripped by these fishermen, who generally set fire to it afterwards, destroying it, and every soul on board.

The junk had a number of Chinese passengers, who were being robbed of everything they possessed of any value, even to the clothing they had on them, and they were crying pitifully. There were two young women, under twenty years of age, lying on the deck in the filthy oil, and each held there by two of the pirates;

whilst another, with a long knife in his hand, was searching them. Their clothes were being taken off, to look for money, jewellery, or any other valuables, that might be secreted about their persons. Any portion of their dress that could not be removed easily was assisted by the knife, nor did they desist until they had entirely stripped the two females, who, after being released, caught up their fragments of clothes, and rushed below to hide themselves; but were quickly followed by others of the pirates, who, I doubt not, perpetrated worse crimes upon the unfortunate creatures. This was all being done in the sight of their husbands and children, who dared not for their lives offer the slightest opposition to these barbarians.

I went aft, where I found more of the robbers collected, turning everything upside down. There were no less than three idols or josses in the cabin of this junk, and large quantities of gilt paper, incense sticks, &c. One of the idols the pirates took a fancy to, and removed it with much reverence to one of their tymungs.

This junk had come from Yu-lin-kan, on the island of Hai-nan, with a cargo of salt, oil, and pigs; it had forty-two passengers on board, besides a crew of thirteen, and was bound to Saigon, in Cochin-China. The whole of these people's subsistence, consisting of rice and salt fish, was stowed in the cabin. The pirates, in order to search to the bottom of the vessel, were obliged to remove all the provisions; and, instead of laying the rice along the sides of the deck, which would have given

them room with very little extra trouble, they threw the greater part of it overboard; and as it sank quickly, the fishermen were unable to save much of it. This was a villainous and cruel act, which grieved me very much, as some of the passengers, taking me to be a chief, implored me to interfere in their behalf. I did so, and was insulted, as I had been before, when I interceded for my own crew. When enough was removed to make the search effectual, there were but six bags of rice remaining. The passage to Saigon, a distance of seven hundred miles, could not be made much under ten days at this season of the year (April), and there was not sufficient provision left to last them half that time; so that they would be compelled to run into some port in distress, and depend upon selling their vessel, for they would have nothing else left to sell, poor wretches!

I was very glad to see the pirates disappointed in their hopes. They found nothing in the bottom of the junk of any value at all, which grieved them much. By this time, all the oil had been removed on board of the tymungs; I do not know the exact quantity; but I have no doubt there were as many as 300 jars of it.

Before we had been in possession of this prize an hour, the chase flag was again hoisted on board of Ching Ah'ling's tymung, which had been lying to, about half-a-mile distant. We got into our boats, leaving the junk, crew, and passengers to their fate. We were all on board of our respective tymungs again, and in full sail, in less than a quarter-of-an-hour. I overhauled the

vessel we were ordered to chase, which was distant from us about seven miles, and found, by her rig, that she was a large Cochin-Chinese junk.

These vessels look very pretty at a distance, having three short masts, the fore-mast being considerably the shortest, and angular sails, with yards, which, when hoisted, become almost perpendicular with the mast, reaching almost the height of the mast above, carrying the peak of the sail up with it, and forming a right-angled triangle, the side to the mast being the base, the luff the hypotenuse, and the foot the perpendicular.

From the accounts I had heard of the Cochinese, I expected to see no resistance offered, as their Government do not allow trading vessels to carry any arms whatever. I was quite right in my judgment, for the foremost tymung ran right up alongside of her, and took her without firing a gun, just as they had taken the Hai-nan junk.

These cowardly surrenders did not lessen my dislike of piracy; on the contrary, they increased it. It appeared that might was right here. That here we were masters of the sea none appeared to dispute. We soon reached the new prize, and as soon heard that she was a "non-plus." She was from Turon, bound for Hainan, in ballast, and had nothing on board worth taking. The crew were naked, with the exception of a cloth bound round their waist. This vessel was allowed to proceed on her voyage again, with a caution, not to

come so poor another time, or she would not escape so easily.

It was now drawing towards sundown, and we made in for land again. By seven o'clock, p.m., we anchored in a little bay, about three miles to the north-west of the Three Kings' Islands, and about fifteen miles southward of our former anchorage.

CHAPTER VIII.

Pirate Fleet sets sail again.—Fookien Junk in sight.—Chase.—Desperate Defence of the Junk.—Its Capture.—Massacre of the Crew.—Plunder and Destruction of the Junk.—Return to Anchor.—Inattention to the Wounded.—Uneasiness at my Situation.—Resolve to resign it.

THE bay in which we now lay had no harbour; it was almost an open roadstead, being sheltered only from the north-east wind by a small island, standing about a quarter of a mile from the main-land. The north-eastern extremity of this island was perforated, when viewed from the east or west. It had a chimney on the top, smaller, but similar to the one seen at the back on entering Verela harbour. Stones, in form like a chimney, on the top of hills, appear to abound in this vicinity; there was another visible, on a hill inland, about seven miles northward of our present anchorage. They make excellent land-marks, and a person would have little difficulty in remembering the land hereabouts, after once seeing it.

During the time we remained in this bay, I continued to drill my crew, but with as little success as ever. All that they knew by this time was their sta-

tions, which they promised to keep, should they ever go into action under my command.

Early on the second morning of our stay here, the white flag was hoisted; we weighed, and stood out to sea again, as close as the north-east wind would allow us, on the port tack. We were allowed to take a second-rate in sailing this time, and to follow Ching Ah'ling's tymung.

We continued our course till nine o'clock; when one of my crew spied a vessel on our lee bow, standing to the southward. Our chief's tymung had not yet seen the stranger; and, not wishing to let him gain more distance than we could possibly help, we fired a lee gun, and altered our course, but immediately resumed it, when our signal was understood; and we had not long to wait before the chase flag was hoisted.

I always noticed that on board of Ching Ah'ling's tymung, they well overhauled a strange sail before hoisting the chase signal. In this case it was full ten minutes before the red flag was hoisted; as it would prove fatal to them to chase a man-of-war in mistake, which might be done, if regularity and caution were not maintained.

We now bore up, and made all possible sail after the stranger, who was full seven miles distant from us. I soon made her out be a large Fookien junk, which was likely to be well armed. I therefore had all the guns got ready, and shotted. I ordered the crew to their

stations ; for I expected a determined resistance to be made in this case. We soon gained sufficiently upon the junk to see that she also had guns. When we had shortened the distance between us to about eight hundred yards, I elevated the twelve-pounder swivel gun forward, aimed at her bows, fired, and the shot fell about one hundred yards short of her. As I expected, she quickly returned the fire, but short considerably, as her guns were of much smaller calibre than ours, and she used Chinese powder, which made a report more resembling a dry squib than gunpowder. Our swivel gun was again loaded, and I kept the same elevation, having shortened the distance by sailing ; (ah, how my crew were watching me !) I fired, and the shot struck the water again a little short of the mark, but rebounded, and went clean through the junk's bows. My crew shouted with delight to see me strike her at such a "long distance," as they called it ; and I had the greatest difficulty to keep them at their stations.

The next time, I depressed the gun a little ; but through a lurch or roll of the tymung, and from having no tubes or locks to the guns, but being obliged to fire with common priming and a slow match, the shot missed its mark. The next shot, within six hundred yards, struck her amidships, went through her, and must have killed some of her numerous crew. The action now became general ; we got six of our guns to bear upon her. Her fire was well directed, though weak. Two other tymungs were within range

of her, but on the opposite side to us; and, from their wide firing, and extreme elevation, some of their shots nearly struck us.

By this time, we had two men killed, and two others wounded. Our men became furious when they saw their companions fall by the fire of a Fookien junk, which they considered no more than a toy in comparison with their own vessels. There is always a feeling of jealousy and hatred between the Cantonese and Fookien men.

With my utmost endeavours, I could not keep my crew at their stations, nor would they listen to any of my commands; and sorely they suffered for it. They became so enraged at the opposition they encountered, that some of them actually left their guns, and jumped upon the rail of the tymung, shouting to the crew of the junk, that they would not spare one of their lives if they did not immediately surrender. They paid no attention to the threat, and, being only about seventy yards from us, they poured in a volley of gingal and matchlock shot, which cut down five more of our men.

The junk continued obstinately to defend herself to the last, though she had but little chance of escape from the overwhelming force opposed to her. I think, none of our shots had struck her below the water line; though her upper works were riddled through and through. It was not our wish to sink her, if we could in any way avoid it, as we expected she had a great deal of treasure on board, from making such a

determined resistance. She must have had a great many of her crew killed from the splinters; for I could see them flying about every time our grape shot pierced her sides.

I tried once more to call my crew to attention, but it was useless. They were all giving orders, and running about the deck like savages, sometimes working at one gun, and sometimes at another, just as it pleased themselves, and all in the greatest confusion.

We had now lost sixteen men in all, killed and wounded, through mismanagement; for if our tymung had been kept abeam of the junk, as I wished, instead of on her quarter, she could not have got one of her guns to bear upon us without changing her course, which would have proved fatal to her, for she would have been raked by the other tymungs immediately; but, as it was, she could use most of her guns against us with deadly effect.

We had been in action more than half-an-hour, and her fire was becoming very weak; only one gun and some gingals being used occasionally; the other guns, I suppose, were disabled, or her ammunition was getting scarce. My crew therefore called upon me to silence the remaining gun. I very reluctantly undertook to do it on account of their former behaviour, which plainly showed me that I was only required in a case of emergency.

They had been trying, for the last ten minutes, to silence this one gun, and had failed. I ordered the

swivel gun to be double shotted; and, in three rounds, made a gap in that side of the junk from which the gun had been firing.

When this was accomplished, we hoisted up stink-pots to each mast-head, and ran alongside the junk. The latter fired such a volley of gingal shot, that five more of our men fell; but it was now all over with her. We showered down a great quantity of stink-pots, which set fire to her sails. Our men jumped on board, with their knives and spears, during the confusion which this caused; and, with a frightful yell, commenced their work of butchery.

As I stood at the stern of our tymang, I heard the screams and pitiful cries of their victims, who now offered little or no-opposition to them. I felt a horror, at being compelled to aid such a savage race of beings; but I had only one other choice, which, as I have said before, was to meet certain death. A man will do almost anything for his life, especially if he has the slightest hope of the future. My conscience told me that I was doing wrong to assist these murderers, any more than I was actually compelled to; and that by continuing to drill and instruct them in a more improved manner of using their guns, and to station them on board their vessel so that they could, in a more effectual manner, destroy human life, and defend themselves in case of need, I was materially assisting them, however small a part of their discipline they learnt. I therefore resolved to discontinue it altogether.

The other tymungs now sent their crews in boats to board the junk, and her decks were crowded with the pirates. My tymung was made fast alongside of her ; but I was in no hurry to go on board myself, well knowing what a sickening sight I should see. At last my interpreter called to me to come on board, asking me if I was afraid the Chin-chew men, as he called them, would kill me. I answered that I had no fear of that, but was unwell, and preferred to keep watch where I was ; to which Ah'moi replied, " Oh ! the ca-ba-sa will take care of the vessel ; come on board, man, we have plenty of number one chow-chow here." After putting a quid of tobacco in my mouth, to prevent my stomach from taking offence at what my eyes might discover, I went on board ; and, oh, what a slaughter-house ! There were more than fifty bodies lying mangled on the deck, some without heads, some without arms or legs, others run through, and weltering in their gore ; in fact, the picture is too dreadful to describe. There had been no quarter given ; young and old were alike slain : they had not left one alive. This proved that the character I had previously heard of them was but too true. I know not what had induced them to save us, unless it was their want of men, and that our crew, being all Cantonese, could supply the place of those who had fallen in such frightful encounters as I had this day seen.

Nothing was allowed to be removed from the junk yet, as she was to be towed to the anchorage we had

left this morning. We were not permitted to remain on board long, a signal being hoisted by our admiral for the men to rejoin their vessels, with the exception of five out of each crew, who remained behind to heave the dead into the sea, and take charge of the prize. On our return, I observed all were searched, as they came on board, by the ca-ba-sa, for anything they might have brought away as their own share of the plunder.

Two tymungs were ordered to tow the junk, for her sails had been destroyed by stink-pots. We, being excused, on account of having stood the brunt of the action, made the best of our way towards the little bay again.

Nothing worth notice occurred during the remainder of this day, with the exception of preparing our dead (nine in number) for burial. They were sewed up in long white bags, and laid on the deck, ready to be sent on shore. I may here mention, that the Chinese have a great antipathy to be buried in the sea, as they believe that, in that case, the body and spirit are forever lost; but that, when they are buried on land, the spirit will be transformed at a period not far distant.

We had thirteen of our men severely wounded; some of them had their limbs shattered; but there were no surgeons or doctors to attend them; no kind of medicines, no ointments to dress their wounds. Their only remedy was a cotton rag to bind them up. Their suf-

ferings must have been dreadful, and increased by their want of cleanliness; for they never think of washing any wound, but allow it to remain in the same state from day to day, until inflammation sets in, followed by mortification and death, when often it was but a slight one, which plentiful ablutions of cold water might have cured. But the Chinese seem to have an antipathy to cleanliness, on all occasions, and in every habit of their life.

We anchored in the bay about eight o'clock, p.m. One of our men died of his wounds, and was taken on shore with the others to be buried, making ten killed out of our crew of one hundred and thirty-seven. The junk was also brought in and anchored.

The next morning at day-break, I went on board of her. The bodies of her crew had been buried in the sea, the decks washed, and everything put in comparative order again. What struck me especially was to see the terrific effect of our shot on her sides and deck. On the outside it had only made round holes the size of the shot; but on the inside it had torn off splinters many feet in length, and some of them half a foot thick, the junk's sides being made of soft deal wood. These splinters must have dreadfully mangled her unfortunate crew, for in the side which we had attacked I counted more than sixty shot holes.

Some of the gun carriages were torn, and shattered to pieces; and two guns were rendered useless, one

having its muzzle shot off, and another having a piece struck out of its side, below the transom, and down to the bore, which gave it the appearance of having burst. Some of our shot had glanced to the decks, and had ripped them up, or rather cut them across, for some feet in extent. Some had taken a more eccentric course; one, having hit a gun or some other hard substance, had split in halves, one half was found buried in the fore-mast, and the other half in the planking of the after cabin berths; so that they had taken diametrically opposite directions. More than half-a-ton of splinters were collected on the decks, to serve as fire-wood; many of them were covered with blood!

There was a strange mephitical smell on board which made me feel quite sick. I longed to leave the scene of such a frightful and, in part, cold-blooded massacre.

The junk mounted nine guns and three gingals; the guns varied in size from four to nine-pounders, but they were all very roughly cast, being of Chinese manufacture. The gingals were of brass, and much better made; they had the improvement of loading at the breech, there being a cavity about six inches long, down to the bore, which, when the cartridge is inserted, is filled again with an iron tompion, having a vent in it. When primed, the powder falls on the end of the cartridge, and in this way they are fired. The pirates removed them to their tymungs, besides a small quantity of Chinese powder and shot; and then opened the

hatches to discharge the cargo, as coolly as though it lawfully belonged to them, our clerk at the same time taking an account of it.

Among the junk's papers was found an Inventory of the Cargo, which Ah'moi interpreted to me, according to the Fookien names, as follows:—

	CHINESE NAME.	ENGLISH NAME.
142 Baskets	Cho-ah	Dates
230 "	Ang-chû-m koan	Red Prunes
42 "	Lai-ah koan	Dried Pears
124 Packages	Kum	" Oranges
48 Piculs	Ch-in-peh	Bark
220 Chests	Tai sim	Tea
85 Bags	Tau	Beans
35 "	Beh	Wheat
115 Baskets	Tung sung	Sugar candy
25 Packages	Si sóan	Silk thread
55 Bolts	Joah po	Grass cloth
1000 "	Ho-sóah	Umbrellas
50 Packages	Ka-see	Fans
40 Piculs	E yan	Lead
5 Chests	Opium	Opium
20 Bags	Chen (oh cheh)	Chinese cash.

The whole of the above was found correct, and was put on board of the smallest tymung, which had before received the oil from the Hai-nan junk; and which was shortly going up to Turon to sell it, that being the place where the pirates disposed of their plunder.

While the crews were discharging the cargo, some of the head men went to search the cabin, and I followed them. Under the berth occupied by the captain or supercargo, (as I should judge from its superior furniture,) they found three boxes of Sycee silver ingots, each box worth at least 3,000 dollars. They opened a large chest that was also in this berth, and found in

it two packages of gold leaf, and one small box containing gold bars, the value of which I should estimate as at least 8,000 dollars, making a total of 20,000 dollars in specie. With the opium, and the other freight, this junk could not have been worth much less than 50,000 dollars; a very handsome day's work indeed; but each thousand dollars had cost the pirates two men, as throughout the fleet there were more than one hundred men put "hors de combat." The whole of the specie was immediately guarded, and sent on board of Ching Ah'ling's tymung. I could hardly get a sight of it, they were so jealous of any person seeing it. I think, the men who removed it did not know what the boxes contained, unless they could tell by the weight.

When the junk had been stripped of everything movable, which, from the number of men employed, did not take long, they commenced cutting up the decks, sides, and stern, for firewood, it being rather a scarce commodity where we were, and only to be had at a high price, or with much labour, which pirates are seldom fond of.

The captured vessel was to be sunk the following morning, as the pirates had no further use for her; and in order to save her mainmast, which was a valuable spar, a rather novel appliance was used. Instead of lifting it with shears, they got three of the wooden water tanks, and plugged them securely, then made them fast to the mast, knocked away the chocks, and loosened the step; so that when the junk sank, the

tanks lifted the mast, and supported it. It was then towed to the shore, where it was left in the charge of some fishermen, who had a few huts near a small creek; which latter made a good harbour for the spar, to remain there until it should be required.

I ascertained that this junk had come from Chin-chew, a Chinese port about forty miles to the northward of Amoy, and was bound to Artien-ting in Cochin-China; that she had been thirteen days out before she was taken by *our fleet*. I am sorry to have to say *our*, and to include myself among such a band of robbers and murderers; but it was from compulsion, not from choice.

When I returned on board my *tymung*, I felt very low in spirit, partly, I suppose, from the dreadful deeds I had witnessed during the last two days. I thought, what a trifle may change the affairs of a man's life! what a small circumstance might have saved that crew from the frightful end they came to! had they altered their course but a half-point further to seaward, during the preceding day, they would have passed us at such a distance, that we could not have seen them; and consequently they would have run clear. But I knew it was useless to ruminate over these possibilities and probabilities; in my belief, the only belief for which I can find any true and sound foundation, it was Predestination. I was predestined to be taken by these pirates, and so were they; but they had the misfortune to belong to a province in China: and I believe the

Cantonese and the Fookienians bear a greater animosity towards each other than towards Europeans.

But as it was the will of the Almighty, I considered that I ought to be thankful for having been spared so mercifully as I had been ; and I prayed that He would still continue to protect me, and ultimately deliver me.

The fourth day since we anchored in this bay had arrived, and everything on board the vessels had become, as usual, quiet. Eleven of our men were suffering extreme pain from the inflamed state of their unsurgically-attended wounds, and there was little hope of many of them recovering. In fact, they might as well die at once, as lose the use of a limb ; for in China there are no asylums for the crippled, no hospitals for the sick, no workhouses for the destitute, nor any other charitable relief than the scanty pittance that may be sometimes received by the mendicant when he supplicates for charity from his hard-hearted and covetous countrymen, who daily allow their fellow-men to die in the streets from starvation, when they are unable to earn a livelihood by labour.

I have been horror-struck, whilst walking in the crowded cities of China, to see scores of beggars, cripples, and blind men, in the last stage of disease, asking for charity. I have sometimes seen a rich Chinaman, dressed in his silks and satins, and who spends at least five shillings a day upon his opium pipe, take from his purse one cash, a coin considerably less than the fourth part of a farthing, and give the poor sick and starving

beggar. Yet this man may be a tea or opium merchant, who never thinks of making less than a hundred per cent. profit, in all his dealings. He will think over this act of charity for the remainder of that day; and more than once ask himself if he could really afford to part with *so much*; he will tell his friends, it will become the table-talk that evening, and over an extra glass of sam-shew (Chinese gin) he may magnify it, by saying, that he had given the poor beggar half a dollar, though, if he really had, it would have broken his heart.

This day passed, and the next also, without my mustering the crew to drill. In the evening Ah'moi came to me, and asked me why I had neglected this duty, and had disobeyed Ching Ah'ling's orders. I told him I considered it entirely useless to drill men who would not obey my orders, nor attend to my instruction when it was likely to be of service to them, of which I had had an example in the late action; that I would rather not have the responsibility of their discipline fall upon me; that anything I was able to do to serve them I should be most willing to do; and that on the first opportunity I intended to acquaint Ching Ah'ling with my wish to resign the command he had given me. He appeared to listen to me very coldly, but made no remark. By saying this, though I knew it would be reported to the chief immediately, I relieved my conscience of a heavy burden, and prepared myself to face, as I thought, some new difficulties.

The following morning I went on board of Ching Ah'ling's ty-mung, for the purpose of seeing him, but I was disappointed; and I received very cold treatment from his crew, far different from what I had experienced on the former occasion. Ching Ah'ling sent me a message through my interpreter, to the effect that he did not wish me to remain in his fleet, if I could not attend to his orders; but that he would not force me to do the latter, if it was offensive to me. I begged very hard to see him, but he would not grant me an interview, so I returned, and was quickly followed by Ah'moi, who enquired whether I intended to drill the crew as usual. I replied, that I had never been a man-of-war's man, nor a soldier, and, therefore, had but little knowledge of drill; that I had taught them all I knew, and it now remained for them to practise it; that I had told them positively, during the last action, that I would never drill them again; that Englishmen were not generally in the habit of telling lies, or breaking their promises; that it was against my religion to break a resolution that I had called my God to witness, which I had done upon that occasion, and therefore I could not drill the crew any more; and that, as Ching Ah'ling had told me he did not wish me to remain in his fleet, I should be happy to leave at the first opportunity; that perhaps on their next cruise, they might take a junk bound to Hai-nan, or to Singapore, when, with the chief's permission, I should be most thankful for a passage in her. Ah'moi rejoined, "Oh! Ching

Ah'ling does not wish you to leave the fleet; but only to obey his orders."

When Ah'moi left me, he went and conversed with the crew, who commenced talking in broken English, on purpose that I might understand them. I heard various remarks made about their kindness towards me, and about my proud, independent conduct in return, which at once convinced me, that I had not made a bed of roses for myself by my resignation. But my conscience told me that I had acted rightly, and therefore I could put my trust in God, for whilst He protected me, I feared not what man could do unto me.

CHAPTER IX.

European Vessel passing at a distance.—Attempt to attract her Notice.—The Pirates forbid it.—The Vessel passes without observing us.—A Gale.—Hone-cohe Harbour.—Visit to a Cochinese Fishing Village.—Habits of the Fishermen.—Their Kindness to me.—Return on Board.—In Trouble from losing a Sandpan.

It was now the seventh morning of our lying in this bay. The white flag had been hoisted (the signal for departure); we were, accordingly, getting ready to proceed to sea on another cruise, when a European vessel was espied, coming down the coast; and, from the course she was steering, she would pass very close to where we were anchored, the bay being, as I said before, little better than the open sea.

Oh, I thought, as I watched her nearing us, if she should turn out to be a British man-of-war, and should capture us, what a happy deliverance it would be for me! I felt a strange sensation, as I viewed one of my own country-built vessels again. I would willingly have jumped into the water, and swum to her, if I had believed I could reach her.

As she continued her course, I saw that she would not pass within a mile and a half at least; and, to my great disappointment, I perceived she was not a ship.

of war, but a merchant barque, of about five hundred tons. To what nation she belonged I cannot say, as she had no colours hoisted; but, from her general appearance, I should think she was owned by some Chinese merchant, at Singapore; and that her unseaworthy condition caused her to hug the land on her passage down; most likely, she had on board no one who could navigate her out at sea.

The pirates were in great fear, lest she should bear down upon them, and take them; for they are always afraid of European vessels; but, in my opinion, they might much more easily have taken the barque. They were making every preparation for action, and I took advantage of their being engaged in loading their guns, hoisting stink-pots to the mast-heads, &c. I got a blue shirt, made it fast to a bamboo pole, and waved it two or three times as a signal to the vessel, when she was nearest to us. As the weather was fine, I doubt not, if she had seen the signal, and had been an English vessel, she would have sent a boat to enquire what it meant; she might very reasonably think there were some Europeans on board, who had been wrecked, and desired a passage to a European port; but she continued her course, taking no notice of us. I was greatly disappointed, as I thought I had lost a chance that might not occur again for a long time in this unfrequented part of the world.

The pirates, when they saw me signalling the "man-war-ship," as they called her, ran aft, where I was

standing, and would have run me through with their spears, had I not discontinued.

I had, prudently, dipped the blue shirt in the water whilst it was fast to the bamboo; and I told them it was not a signal at all, but that I only wished to dry the shirt, after washing it; so that, for this time, I got off with a good deal of "Tu-na-mah' Fanqui ah'," &c.* I was ordered to go below, and not show myself on deck again until the ship was out of sight.

Though this last act of mine may appear rash in the extreme to a person who has never been similarly situated, and as useless as the drowning man's catching at the floating straw; yet I am certain that no man, placed in the predicament that I was in, would allow the shadow of a chance of deliverance to pass unheeded, or without a trial. If I had permitted this vessel to pass without any attempt to communicate with her, I should have blamed myself afterwards; and it would have remained more heavily upon my mind than the ill-will which I perhaps had created.

My crew did not rightly know whether I intended to signal her or not; for as soon as she was out of sight, I again brought up the blue shirt to dry on the bamboo. They told me, that it was very wrong even to show myself on deck, when any European ship was in sight; for if I or my signal had been seen, a boat might have

* "Tu-na-mah' Fanqui ah'" is a disgusting Chinese oath, only used by the Cantonese. The meaning of "Fanqui" is, white devil!

been sent to ascertain what I was doing, which might have ended in the capture of the fleet. Ah! I thought, that is just what I wished above all things; but I did not care to tell them so, just then.

An hour afterwards we were all under weigh, and going to sea again in search of further plunder. We cruised out about twenty miles seaward, without sighting any vessel. Towards evening, as the weather looked threatening, we made in for the land again, and at eight o'clock, p.m., anchored in the bay we had left. The wind continued to increase all night, and early the next morning we all weighed, being compelled to seek for more secure anchorage, which we found about three miles to the southward of the Three Kings' Islands, in a narrow, but deep channel, at the entrance to Hone-cohe harbour, and opposite to a little Cochinese fishing village, which, at this time, I little thought was to be the scene of so many dangers and difficulties to me.

This day, 3rd of May, 1857, the wind blew a gale at south-west with thick drizzling rain, which entirely obscured the land, though we were little more than a mile from it. The following morning the weather had cleared up, and we all prepared to fill our tanks with fresh water, as it was plentiful at the village, and easily obtained. I went on shore in one of the boats. The people were very kind to me, and looked upon me with astonishment; I have no doubt that few, if any of them, had ever seen a European before.

They asked me into their huts, and offered me food; but everything was so filthy, I could not fancy it. They rolled for me little paper cigarettes to smoke, which is their customary way of using tobacco. They did not appear at all shy, but made themselves very familiar. They particularly wished to converse with me; and we conveyed our thoughts to each other by motions, as well as we could. They gave me some liquor, called by them "rue," which was very palatable, only rather too sweet.

The pirates behaved very ill to the fishermen, stealing their firewood, clothing, or anything of value they could find in their huts; so much so, that many of them came, and made motions to me, (taking me, I suppose, for a chief,) to get their property returned to them; but, not wishing to offend again, I could not interfere.

I made them understand as well as I could, that I had been taken captive; some of them seemed to recollect having seen the lorcha (which I described to them) the day she was captured. They remarked, that she had big guns, and must have killed many of the pirates during the action.

If I had had any knowledge of their language, I certainly would never have gone on board the pirate fleet again; especially as they treated me far differently from what I had been led to expect. They were kind and obliging in every way; whether it was on account of the presence of the fleet, or whether

their behaviour would have continued the same after the fleet had gone, I cannot say.

The only dislike I had of them was, from the extremely dirty state of their huts or houses, and of their persons, which is not equalled in any village or town in China that I have visited, though the latter are generally very filthy. All these villagers were swarming with every kind of vermin, and suffering from skin diseases of the most loathsome kind, principally brought on and aggravated by their want of cleanliness, though they have good wholesome water in abundance; which would relieve them more quickly and surely than the whole contents of an apothecary's shop.

I walked about a mile in rear of the village, accompanied by five of the natives, who quite willingly acted as my guides. They took me through a forest of mangrove trees, and I examined the bark, which appeared of good quality. I then passed through a field of ground-nuts, some of which they dug up, and showed me; they were the same as the pea-nut of China, only larger and better flavoured. A little farther on, I came upon an arm of the sea, and, ascending a hill, I could see that the village was situated on a small peninsula.

There were many large fishing junks in this little gulf, or arm of the sea; their size led me to suppose that there must be deep water in it, and in the channels leading to it; and if this is the case, it would

make as fine a harbour as any on the coast of China, to ride out a typhoon in. We went down to the beach, where we found numbers of fishermen making and mending their nets. They all left off work when they saw me, and appeared astonished to see a white man amongst them. No doubt they looked upon me as a strange being. They seemed quiet and harmless, but they became rather too inquisitive. They would stare at me for a quarter-of-an-hour at a time in foolish wonder. Everything I had about me appeared to them a great curiosity; my handkerchief, cap, and tobacco-pipe, were passed round the whole crowd, which had soon increased to more than fifty. Many of them were quite naked, while others wore a cloth round their waist, in the fashion of their country. As soon as they had examined my few articles, contrary to my expectations, they returned them all, without even asking me to give them anything. They then wished me to take off my trousers and shirt for them to examine; but of course this request was not granted, though, I dare say, they considered I had no more occasion to wear clothes than they had.

I saw no women anywhere. I heard they had all been sent into the interior, as soon as the fleet was seen entering the harbour; for, on former occasions, pirates had stolen many of their females, both young and old, and had carried them off in their vessels. These diabolical acts of robbery could not have been done by any of Ching Ah'ling's men, for no women were allowed

even to come, much less to be taken by force, on board his vessels.

I now motioned them to lead me back to the landing-place, which they willingly did; and for that day I bade adieu to the fishermen on this side of the peninsula. We soon reached the village again, and having about fifty Cochinese cash in my pocket, value about one penny, I gave them to my guides, who were very thankful for my present.

They pressed me very much to enter their huts again, and partake of some food; but I declined, thanking them for their kindness and attention. They would not let me go, however, until I had received something in return, as they said, for the cash I had given them; so they brought me some more of their rue, which I drank. This satisfied them, and I took my leave. I was just in time to get a passage off in one of the boats of the fleet, which was fortunate, as my boat had returned; and if I had had to hail one, the pirates might have been angry with me for giving them extra trouble.

During my passage, I could not help thinking of the extreme kindness of these villagers, and their unwillingness to accept anything from me without making some return. In this respect, they were very different from the Chinese, who always rob and impose upon a European as much as they can. Was it from fear? from religion? or from kindness? I could not account for it, unless it was from the latter cause.

It was almost dark before I reached my tymung; and, as soon as I got to the deck, I was met by Ah'moi, who asked me where I had been all day? and why I had left the boat in which I went on shore? When I told him, he said it was very dangerous to remain there so long, as the natives might take me and kill me. I replied, that I did not think there was much danger, as the natives had treated me very kindly, and appeared quite harmless. "Well," said Ah'moi, "you had better go, and stay with them altogether; for I don't think Ching Ah'ling wishes you to remain on board of his vessels, since you will not attend to his orders." I answered, that I certainly should not attend to the order he had given me in Verela Bay to drill my crew, come what would; but any other orders that he gave me I should be most happy to obey, if it lay in my power. He rejoined, that he should see about it, and sulkily left me. I saw plainly that I was to have very little more peace; that my troubles were about to increase instead of diminish; and that the sooner I settled the matter with Ching Ah'ling one way or the other, the better. The friendly treatment I had lately received on shore caused me to show a little more independence than I otherwise should have done, or than was quite prudent of me.

The morning after, I was desirous to see the chief, that I might ascertain how matters stood, and hear what chance he was willing to give me, under present circumstances, before I took any further step. I, ac-

cordingly, asked my interpreter whether I could take the boat and crew as usual; but he refused, saying that he had no boats to accommodate Europeans with. I told him that I wished to go on board, and see Ching Ah'ling particularly; and that I would be very much obliged to him, if he would let me have one for this time only. "Oh!" he said, "if you are so very much in want of a boat, take the small sandpan, and scull yourself on board; the distance is very short." Well, it certainly was short, for the chief's tymung was anchored about forty yards astern of us, but it proved too far for me to accomplish.

I may here explain, that the Chinese scull their sandpans, or boats, in a very peculiar manner. They have a piece of iron, somewhat in the shape of a large nail, which is fastened into the stern, and a socket cut in the scull rests on the head of this piece of iron, working on it like a pivot, with very little labour. They have a small "guy" on the upper end of the scull, which is fastened into the side of the sandpan; and a strain being kept on this "guy" with the scull prevents it from slipping off the head of the nail and assists in working the scull, which is very difficult for a person to use, if he is unaccustomed to it; it being so formed, as to be useless in propelling the boat, unless it is worked on the head of the nail.

I took the sandpan which Ah'moi had offered me, but as soon as I pushed off in it, I found I could neither move nor guide it in the direction I wished. A

strong south-west breeze was blowing, so that I fell to leeward rapidly, and passed by two tymungs, without being able to get alongside of either. The crews on board these vessels seemed delighted to see me in such a helpless predicament; they laughed heartily, but did not offer to give me any assistance. They appeared to care little whether I drifted out to sea, or on the shore, or what became of me. Fortune however favoured me a little; for the wind was setting me fast towards the shore, though at a very rocky part, and, with some difficulty, I managed to jump on a rock as soon as the boat touched.

There was a considerable swell here; the shore is formed of large masses of granite, and the land rises very high, and abruptly from the water, so that there is no beach, or place for a boat to land. My sandpan soon bilged against the rocks, and went to pieces; and all that I was able to save were the sculls. I had much difficulty in getting round to the village, sometimes having to scramble over granite blocks of immense size and height, at other times creeping through the apertures formed by their leaning against each other in their state of chaos. I at last arrived at an open space, where a few trees had found root, and afforded a little shade from the noon-day sun, which at this season of the year is very oppressive. I sat down under one of the trees, and considered what would be the best step to take now. To return on board again after losing the boat, I was afraid; and I was yet doubtful of the

sincerity of the natives. If I tried to hide myself among them, they might give me up to the pirates, and then I could expect no mercy; or if they did shelter me now, they might take my life when the fleet left the harbour. Certainly I had nothing to give them, nor could they gain anything by me, unless they kept me, and passed me overland to Canton, for the reward that was offered for the head of any European. I at last resolved to return on board, and wait until I had learnt more truly the character of these people.

Accordingly, I wandered about in search of a boat; but I could not get one, owing to the strong wind that was blowing, which also kept the boats of the fleet from coming to shore. I roamed about until evening; and, as I had not broken my fast all day, I was very hungry. I was now dependent for food upon the generosity of the natives, since I had no money to pay for any. I therefore went into the village; and, meeting a man whom I had seen yesterday, I made signs to him that I wanted something to eat, when he directly took me to a hut, and gave me a plentiful supper of red rice, fish, pea-nuts, and vegetables. The fish were very good; the red rice was very inferior, but I observed it was eaten by them all. I was very thankful, and would more willingly have lived among them altogether, if my food were inferior, than have gone again on board the piratical fleet.

The same man provided me with a mat and a couch at his hut to sleep upon; but what surprised me more

than all, he brought me an opium-pipe, and a little prepared opium in a limpet shell. I thanked him, but made him understand that I never used that drug, which appeared to astonish him exceedingly. I suppose he thought that, as a matter of course, all foreigners smoke opium. I told him that tobacco would be acceptable to me, which he furnished me with, and also paper to roll cigarettes. These people, like the Siamese and Malays, always smoke their tobacco in this way.

I lay down on my bed to smoke, and reflect on my rash attempt to see Ching Ah'ling this morning, on my failure, and the destruction of the boat. I had a certain dread and presentiment that he would punish me severely, but I made up my mind to face him, and take the consequences.

After a restless night, morning at last dawned. The weather had moderated, and I soon saw a boat from the fleet coming towards the shore; she did not belong to my tymung, but I obtained a passage in her.

CHAPTER X.

✓ (My Crew attack me.—I leap overboard, and swim for my Life.—
Wounded in the Thigh.—Rescued by the Fishermen.—Lodged
in a Joss-House.—Visit from some of my old Crew of the
Lorcha.—Chigoes.—Departure of the Fleet.—Hospitality of
the Natives.—Head-Man of the Village.—Assurance of Safety.

I WAS shortly alongside of my vessel; and as soon as I got to the deck, I saw men crouched between each gun. Before I had time to prepare myself, one called out "Tá, tá!" (strike, strike!) and lastly there arose the ominous words, "Faen-kwei shatao" (cut off the head of the white devil). About thirty men sprang out from their hiding places with spears and knives, and five of them made a rush at me, followed behind by the others. It was useless for me to oppose them unarmed; and it would be all over with me if they once got hold of me. I therefore jumped overboard, but even then I was not altogether out of their reach; for they got up some stone ballast, which consisted of sharp chips of granite, and pelted me whilst I was swimming. Several pieces hit me on the head, and cut me so severely, that I could feel the blood trickling down my face; but I managed to swim away from them, and reach another tymung, when I begged the crew to take me in, and

send me on shore, if they did not wish me to remain on board of their fleet; but no, they would not listen to me; they took their spears, and threatened to run me through if I came alongside. I got hold of, and rested across, their cables, still begging them to spare my life, and put me on shore, as it was more than a mile distant, and I was in doubt whether I could reach it; but they turned a deaf ear to all my entreaties; they motioned me to get off their cables, and commenced pelting me with stones, as my own crew had done previously. At last, from the severe blows I was receiving, I took to the risk of swimming. I was not fifty yards away, before they opened fire upon me from their muskets; but they shot very wide of their mark for a time. I could occasionally hear the whiz and splash of the balls as they hit the water; at last, a shot struck me in the thigh, but fortunately did not touch the bone or the leaders. It gave me but little pain at the time, and did not much impede my progress, though I must have lost a great deal of blood from all my wounds.

The pirates took no further notice of me now. The wind being against me, I made slow progress, and found great difficulty to keep up at all. I thought, once or twice, I should be obliged to give up from weakness and loss of blood; but I had my presence of mind still, and I knew that my only chance of life depended upon my exertions. I continued swimming, till I was within three hundred yards of the shore, when the natives saw

me struggling, and put off in a boat to my assistance. If they had not done so, I must certainly have been drowned, as I was completely exhausted.

As soon as they got me into their boat I fainted. They took me on shore, dressed my wounds, and carried me to a joss-house or heathen church, about a mile from the village, where they hid me from the pirates. About sun-down I came to my senses, but I did not know where I was. I enquired as well as I could of an old man who was present where I was; he made motions to me to keep myself still, that I was quite safe in this place, that the pirates had been on shore in search of me to kill me, &c. I could perceive that this was partly to frighten and keep me quiet, and to induce me to remain there. He set before me some eatables, but I had no appetite; fatigue, anxiety, and exposure had brought on a fever. The wound in my thigh was a severe flesh wound, and continued bleeding a little at times, especially when I walked about. The ball had passed into the thickest part of the thigh, and there lodged. The cuts on my head were not so severe, being merely scalp wounds; but, not being dressed properly, the hair had got into them, and they were inclined to fester and inflame. The old man recommended me to apply to them some of the white lime-like mixture which the Cochinese use with betel-nut; and, having nothing else, I tried it, and found great relief from it.

I very much wished to ascertain where I was located;

but, as soon as I made a movement towards the door, the old man came running after me, begging me to remain inside, out of sight. Just as it was getting dark, five men entered; and, not knowing at first who they were, or what might be their intentions, I made a rush to the door, to be ready either for resistance or escape; but, as soon as I got there, I met two of my former crew of the lorch, who had come on shore to enquire after me. The others were Cochinese, who had brought them to me when they were satisfied that no harm was intended me; but that, on the contrary, they had money and food, which they wished to give me. They had brought me two kids, containing pork, fish, and rice; and four thousand Cochinese cash; but I could not receive them without a tear coming to my eyes at their kindness. They were equally affected at seeing me in my present predicament; and, after observing me for a long time, one of them at last said, "Ah! Capitan, this very bad pidgin; I no can savey what thing tell you do. I think this shore man proper man; he no hurt you. I think by by, he can send you go Siam or Se-lak*; másákee †, more better stop here, than go make pirate pidgin; by by, you all proper again, I think." One of them asked me if I knew how to take a vessel to Singapore. I said I had no doubt that I should be able to do so, if I had the opportunity.

* "Se-lak," Chinese name for Singapore. The Cochinese call Singapore "Sen-chow-foo."

† That is, "Never mind."

They told me if I remained at the village a few days, they would try to get more men to join them in running away with their tymung; and then they would call in here, and take me in to navigate them to Singapore. I knew they had no intention of doing anything of the kind; but that they told me so, in order to pacify me a little. These men, though Cantonese, were far superior to their brethren the pirates. I had always found them very partial to me, during the time that I commanded them, and I was truly sorry to part from them now. I should have been almost happy, if they had stayed with me, and chanced what fortune we might have met with. I tried to persuade them to do so; but they said that, as they were Cantonese, and there were always so many of their countrymen who were pirates on the coast of Cochin-China, the Chinese authorities would decapitate them immediately, if they got hold of them; while they were sure to take care of me, and send me to some European settlement.

Though they were several times told by the natives, that they would have a difficulty to get off to their vessels, as it was a very dark night, yet they would not leave me until the head-man of the village, who was present, had promised to take every care of me. They said, if I were injured in any manner, they would avenge me by burning the village; and they took me for witness that they made him a present of five dollars to treat me kindly.

Their threat may have made the villagers more careful of me; but, from their general behaviour, I do not think it had any influence with them, for they appeared naturally civil and quiet in their disposition.

In the morning, I was much better; the fever had left me, and my wounds did not pain me much. I was now destitute of clothing, having only a pair of white trousers, and a shirt. My shoes, socks, jacket, and cap had all washed off whilst I was swimming. I suffered considerably from having to go about barefooted over the burning sands, and my head became scorched with the sun, which was very powerful, and nearly vertical.

The natives gave me a small towel to bind round my head, which protected it a little; but I had to keep it constantly wet, after their own custom, or it would become so hot as to be intolerable. This is the only article worn by them, and it serves them for a head-dress. Shoes they never use, their feet are neither crushed with leather, nor plagued with corns; but they suffer from something worse, from "chigoes," as they are called on the coast of Africa, little insects that get into the soles of their feet, whilst walking on the sands, and bury themselves under the skin, which causes a great deal of pain. I was soon troubled exceedingly by them, so much so that I could hardly walk about.

There was no restraint put upon my movements this morning; and, after I had eaten a basin of rice and a

little fish, I went out for a walk. I found that the house where I was lodged was situated on the side of a little valley; so I directed my footsteps to the top of the hill, which I reached with some difficulty, owing to the loose stony nature of the ground, and the soreness of my feet. There I had a good view of the bay and the village; and I found that I was about a mile distant from the latter place. I carefully scanned the bay, and also the little arm of the sea that runs up on the other side of the peninsula, as I could view both sides from where I stood; but not a vessel was to be seen anywhere, except a few fishing-boats. Ching Ah'ling and all his band had left, and now we must bid farewell to him. He is one of the oldest and most dreaded pirates on the west coast of China and Cochin-China. The last time I saw him was when he came on the deck of the tymung to which he had posted me.

I was very glad to see the little bay clear of these ruffians. I now felt more secure among the natives than while they remained; although everything that I possessed in the world was gone with them, except the clothes I had on me. I was poor indeed! One thing I wished for more than all the rest, it would have been the greatest consolation to me now, that was my Bible. I thought how happily I could have passed an hour under some of the shady trees near me, if I had had that book to comfort me. But, with all my losses, I remembered that my life had been miraculously spared,

and I considered myself a step nearer to deliverance from captivity. I thanked the Almighty that He had watched over me, and sent me assistance in the hour of need.

When I had descended the hill, I walked up towards the fishing village. As soon as the inhabitants saw me, they came to meet me, and invited me into their huts to have some food. The children did not show the least fear at my presence, but came and clung around me, and repeated their parents' invitations; so much so, that I entered one hut to satisfy them. They offered me rice and fish, which appeared to be their general food; but, as I had breakfasted before, I had no appetite now; they seemed slightly offended, as though I were too proud to eat with them. Even these poor ignorant semi-savages have very acute feelings; nor would they permit me to leave them, until I had drunk some of their rue, and smoked some of their paper cigars.

Many of them desired to see my wounds; and when they saw the one in my thigh, and I had made them understand that it was from a shot, they made a peculiar noise with their tongue, something resembling "whee-whist;" whether this was meant for disgust, or terror, or compassion for my sufferings, I cannot say; but the latter seemed to me the most likely, from the motions they made to one another.

They gave me some ointment, but I was afraid to

apply it. I let nature take her course, not from any fear that they wished to do me an injury, but from their want of knowledge of a European constitution.

While I remained in the hut, the village elder came in, and wished to say a great deal to me; but as neither of us understood each other's language, and as no interpreter was to be obtained, we had to make motions to each other, which are a very imperfect substitute for speech.

If I am obliged, in this narrative, to omit a great deal that occurred during my stay in Cochin-China which would be interesting to the reader, it is from my possessing at first not any, and latterly but an imperfect knowledge of their difficult language.

The elder, or head-man, whose name was Wai-bah, made me understand that it was his duty to send a written report to the authorities at Hone-cohe of my having become destitute, and dependent upon them for subsistence; and that I should have to remain here until he received an answer, which, he expected, would be in about fifteen days from this date; he therefore wished to know my name, and what nation I belonged to. When I told him, he said it was fortunate for me that I was a "Ho-mow-yan" (meaning an Englishman), for if I were a Frenchman I should most probably meet with bad treatment, as the King of Cochin-China is very indignant against the French, because they wish to invade and take pos-

session of his country; but, as it was, he assured me that I should be perfectly safe. He informed me that he had placed me at the joss-house, that I should be away from the natives, whose inquisitiveness might become troublesome to me if I remained at the village; that he had given orders to the keeper of the joss-house to treat me kindly in every way; that the natives were very poor just now, and had little to eat besides rice and fish, the pirates having carried off all their fowls and ducks, and many other things which were valuable to them; but that he would give me the same food as they ate themselves. I assured him that I was very thankful for his kindness; and that this was all I required, and even more than I could expect from them. He begged me not to go out after sun-set, nor to venture far away from the village, as the country was swarming with tigers; and that if anything should happen to me, after he had given information to the authorities at Hone-cohe, he would have to account for me.

He made me promise that, if the pirates came into the Bay again, I would not join them upon any consideration; but that I would allow him to send me where they could not find me. I made him understand that I should be very glad if he would do so, as I was afraid they would take my life, if they could get hold of me. I was much relieved at what he gave me to understand; and was convinced that I

had nothing to fear. I looked up to him as my benefactor. I felt as though the shackles had fallen from my limbs; and that the Almighty had heard my prayer, and given me friends in this distant, heathen country.

CHAPTER XL

Native Productions.—Snake-hunting.—Insects.—Native Women.—Their personal Ornaments.—Summoned before the Elders of the Village.—Their Dress.—Betel-nut chewing.—Black Teeth prized.—Want of an Interpreter.—Notice to prepare to leave the Village.

I REMAINED quite contented in the abode they had assigned me, taking my walks daily to the village, and across the peninsula, to see the fishermen, and spend an hour or two with them. They used this place, being a fine sandy beach, to spin twine, and to make and repair their fishing nets.

The land at this spot, and in the surrounding country, is of very uneven formation, which renders its cultivation difficult; it is only in the valleys that they can grow anything profitably. The hills are studded with masses of granite, and the soil is mixed with great quantities of it in a decomposed state, rendering it extremely arid and dry, especially during the summer months, and very unsuitable for the production of rice, the inferior quality of which I attribute to the aridity of the soil.

During the wet season I was told, that they can produce abundance of maize, rice, garlic, onions, peas, and sweet potatoes. Ground-nuts can be grown almost any-

where, and at all seasons of the year; they form an important article of food; when young, they are eaten as a substitute for vegetables, and, in very dry seasons, even for rice.

There are few trees on the peninsula, besides fruit trees; of the latter I saw the mango, the jack-fruit, the mulberry, the pine-apple, the laiche, and the geng-geng.

Some of the natives get their livelihood by hunting snakes, the skins of which when dried are used as a medicine. The flesh even of the most venomous kinds is prized as a great delicacy among the Cochinese. I have frequently seen them eating snakes fried in oil, with great gusto. The weapon they use to kill them with is a whip, with which they pursue them, and strike them across the body, which generally breaks the backbone, and their progress being thus stopped, they capture them.

It was now twenty-two days since I had escaped from the pirates. The weather was extremely hot, and the south-west monsoon had set in with light winds, and very sultry; the sun at meridian was vertical, and his rays so powerful that I considered it dangerous to walk out, except early in the morning, and late in the evening. The mosquitoes were in thousands, and larger than I had seen in any other country. At night I could not sleep for them.

Every man, from the Quong, or Governor, down to the beggar, was swarming with insects, whose name dis-

gusts a European. The Cochinese look upon them as a natural inheritance, and lawful tenants of their persons. They appeared quite surprised to see me have such an abhorrence of these filthy insects; nor would all my reason and advice tempt them to cleanse their bodies and clothes. They sometimes, on a hot day, take their clothes off in a sunny place, and rid themselves of some of the superfluous ones; but, even then, they disdain to destroy them; they merely throw them to the ground, for a neighbour who may not have his full complement!

Another circumstance happened at the fishing village, after the pirates had left, which I forgot to mention before, namely, the return of the women, who had been sent into the interior of the country. I should think there were more than two hundred in all, sometimes two or three to one hut. But such ugly creatures, and more dirty than the men, if possible! I was disgusted with them. I could not distinguish them by their dress, as they were habited similarly to their lords. They had their hair rolled up differently, with two or three brass pins stuck in it; and some of them had small pieces of brass wire for ear-rings. They were not so good-looking as the men, and not to be compared to the women of China. They all appeared to me to be of one age, or else old and young were equally ugly. Although some of the young men were quite naked in their presence, they did not appear abashed in the least.

No answer had been yet received from Hone-cohe, although twenty-six days had expired. I became impatient at this delay, as the climate here, endured in the native huts, was most trying to a European constitution; and it is wonderful that my health continued to remain so good as it did, during my long stay in this country, and in a destitute condition. I little thought at this time, that the summer, which had just commenced, would be ended, and that another summer would come, before I should be restored to freedom.

I think, if at this time I could have seen into the future, and known the sufferings I had before me, I should have sunk under the burden. It is a good thing for us sometimes not to know what is in store for us; for if we did, we should lose hope and faith, which are the greatest stimulants in dangers and sufferings.

On the thirty-second morning of my stay at this place, two native vessels arrived from Hone-cohe; one was an armed mandarin fast boat, the other a smaller vessel unarmed. A messenger soon arrived at my quarters to summon me to the village. I quickly attended to it, though I felt a certain dread, not being able altogether to assure myself as to the ultimate intentions of the natives. Another circumstance gave me considerable anxiety, namely, the hostilities between the British and Chinese authorities at Canton, and the reward of one hundred taels* of silver for the head of

* After the British had commenced hostilities against Canton city in 1856, the viceroy or governor, Yeh, offered a reward of one

any European, which was no inconsiderable amount to the poor Cochinese, who hardly see a piece of silver three times in their life, and who put such a store even upon brass, that they manufacture that metal into earrings, finger-rings, and other personal ornaments. During the eighteen months that I stayed in Cochin-China, I saw only three women (ladies, if I may be allowed to call them so, from the rank of their husbands) who wore apparently silver hair-pins and ornaments. The generality of them, although they seem particularly fond of such decorations, used brass, and sometimes even iron and wood. I felt certain that one hundred taels of pure silver would be a very tempting offer, and Canton was not more distant than the nearest European port. The monsoon, too, would favour their passing me to some port to the northward, from which they might easily convey me overland to that dreaded city, Canton.

Having made my way into the village, I was conducted to the house where I had first seen the head-

hundred taels of silver, equal to one hundred and thirty-three and one-third dollars, to any Chinaman who should deliver to him at Canton any European dead or alive. He also offered a reward of ten thousand taels of silver to any one who should destroy a vessel of war belonging to Her Britannic Majesty, besides promotion to the rank of mandarin of the third grade. For the admiral, the commander of the land forces, and the governor of Hong-kong, sums were offered varying from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars. Several attempts were made to destroy the *Comus* sloop of war, when she lay in the Canton river, by floating fire-junks down to her loaded with combustibles, which nearly succeeded.

man. He was there, seated between two elderly men, well dressed. They wore blue silk trousers, or rather pantaloons, something similar to the Chinese, only shorter, hardly reaching to their knees; and a light silk damask dress or overall, with long sleeves, and so transparent that their skin could be seen underneath. They had no shoes nor socks, but went barefooted in the fashion of the country. They had a long blue crape scarf wound round their heads like a turban, in the manner of the Fookien Chinese. Their hair was allowed to grow to a great length all over their heads, and was neatly bound up in a knot on the crown. They had a long piece of stout tape, to which was fastened a pouch for tobacco and paper for rolling cigars; another for a miniature flint and steel, and some touch-paper, or "punk;" another containing betel-nut and leaves, a knife to trim them with, a toothpick, and a small pair of tweezers, principally used to extract the superfluous hairs growing on the chin, as they have a great antipathy to beard; and last, but not least, a pouch to contain about fifty of their coins (cash). They are all thrown over the shoulders, being equally divided on each side, and rest against the elbows and sides, making no inconsiderable rattle, as they walk about. These ornaments partly denote rank in Cochin-China, as none but mandarins, and persons employed under the government, are allowed to wear them.

I paid my respects to them as I went in, and they

motioned me to sit down, which I could not easily do in their fashion, as they had no seats in the hut, but squatted on mats, with their knees a-kimbo, just as tailors sit in England. I preferred standing to being cramped up in this manner.

They offered me betel-nut to chew, "en-kow-ong," as they called it. When I declined it, they appeared quite surprised, and would not be satisfied that I did not use it; but asked to look at my teeth, and showed symptoms of disgust at their natural white colour, at the same time pointing to their own, which were as black as ebony. They chew this nauseous nut all day long, and only take it out of their mouths while they are eating.

They use a substance much resembling lime, made into a thick paste and spread upon a pepper leaf, in which they roll up a small piece of the betel-nut, then place the whole in the mouth, and chew it. It causes an unnatural flow of saliva in the mouth, which, mixing with the nut, turns red. They therefore continually spit large quantities of a liquid that has the appearance of blood, which is a disgusting sight to a person who is not in the habit of using it. I am not aware that it has any effect upon the nervous system; but it turns unnaturally black one of the greatest ornaments of the face, the teeth. Black teeth are with them an embellishment, rather than a disfigurement; they are coveted as much by them, as a good

head of hair is by the English ; and they are a necessary adjunct to opulence and respectability. I saw many young men whose teeth were completely decayed by chewing this corroding nut ; it seems to eat them away entirely, and destroy them in a few years. I noticed many of the natives with teeth so short that they scarcely protruded above the gums, which has a most loathsome appearance. Women and children alike chew the betel-nut.

When they found that I did not use it, they offered me paper cigars, which I gladly accepted ; but, when they gave me the materials, they were surprised that I could not roll them as neatly as they did themselves. They appear very ignorant of the customs of foreigners, and think that all nations have the same habits as themselves. They tried very hard to make me understand what they said to me ; but, not succeeding, they called me towards them, and shouted loudly in my ears, thinking this might make me comprehend them better. When they found all their efforts fail, they called for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote characters similar to Chinese ; they filled one side of a leaf, before handing it to me, and seemed surprised and annoyed that I could not understand, after the trouble they had been put to in writing so much. They would hardly credit at first, that I was not shamming ignorance, and asked me several characters separately. Finding all their endeavours ineffectual, they beckoned me to follow them out of the hut. They then pointed to the sun,

and motioned that when it had set, and risen again, I was to accompany them in their vessels to Hone-cohe; and, patting me on the shoulder, made me understand that I had nothing to fear, that they would give me plenty to eat, and treat me kindly, as I was a Ho-mow-yan, or Englishman; and that I was at liberty to go where I pleased till sun-rise the next morning.

CHAPTER XII.

Depression of Spirits at my Critical Position.—Last Visit to the Fishermen.—Parting Kindness of the Villagers.—Mandarin Boats.—Leave Coh-cah Bay for Hone-cohe.—Passage.—The Crew.—Their Arms.—Hone-cohe Bay.—Harbour and Shipping.—Town.—Astonishment of the Inhabitants at seeing a European.

HAVING taken leave of the two mandarins whom I introduced to the reader in the last chapter, I went into a temple close by, and lay down in the cool, much grieved that I had not been able to understand what they wished to communicate to me; for, from their motions and anxiety during their conversation, they appeared to me desirous to ascertain what I really was; and all that the villagers apparently knew about me was that I had swum on shore from piratical vessels. If this was all they could say in my favour, it might lead the authorities at Hone-cohe to suppose, that I was really a pirate myself; so that I still considered my situation very critical, through my inability to explain and defend myself. I felt much depressed at being compelled to leave this village; while, at a short distance off, there might be fishermen who saw me on board the lorcha, as she entered Verela Bay, before she was attacked and taken by the pirates, or might have

seen her engaged with them, and trying to make an escape from them. This was the only chance by which I could prove myself innocent of a crime, that is punished with death by the laws of all countries. The evidence of these fishermen, if I knew where to find them, would be sufficient to establish my innocence. Still, I thought, if they profess such friendship for the English, surely they will not take my life without allowing me an interpreter, to enable me to give some account of myself. Another circumstance that slightly favoured me was that the two men of my former crew, who visited me on the evening before the fleet left this bay, explained to the villagers how I, and themselves, had been taken captive, and the attempt which had been made on my life the day that I escaped from the pirates. Yet, on the whole, what a dreadful predicament I was placed in! Death seemed inevitable. The more I considered my situation, the more difficult and complicated it appeared.

In the cool of the evening, I went for my customary walk across the peninsula, to see the fishermen, whom I found, as usual, busily engaged with their nets. They all, apparently, had heard that I was to leave for Hone-cohe on the morrow. They made motions that I had nothing to fear at that place. I tried to make them understand that I wished to find any one who had seen the lorch before she was captured, but I could not succeed. I therefore took my

leave of them, feeling sorry that it was out of my power to recompense them in any way for their kind behaviour towards me.

I returned to the joss-house. It was to be the last night of my stay in this place, and I ought to have rejoiced at it; but I was uneasy, for I thought, from the behaviour of the two mandarins, that they had some doubt of my innocence. I knew, however, that the more quietly I behaved just now, the better; and I made up my mind to obey their orders as far as I possibly could.

A little before daybreak on the 12th June, 1857, being the thirty-third day of my stay at the fishing village of Coh-cah, I was awakened by two soldiers from the mandarin boats that were anchored in the bay. They told me to pack up my things, and accompany them. This was only the work of a minute, as I had nothing belonging to me besides a mat, which Wai-bah had given me, and a bundle of paper memorandums; which I had fortunately, though unintentionally, left at his house, on the morning I went off to the fleet, and the attempt was made upon my life. If they had been on board, I should have lost them, and a great deal of the first part of this narrative would have been incomplete. There was also a black lead pencil in the bundle, which I kept and made use of during my whole stay in the country, and which I would not have exchanged for

the best suit of clothes they could have given me, much as I was in want of them.

The old man who looked after the joss-house, and who had attended upon me while I was there, would not allow me to depart until I had taken a farewell breakfast; this being agreed upon by all parties, as the two strangers were also invited, he killed his only fowl, on which, together with fish and rice, we all made a very fair breakfast. He brought about a pound of tobacco, and paper, tied up together in a neat parcel, and would insist upon my accepting it. Well! such kindness as this really deserves reward, I thought; but I had nothing to give in return, except thanks. I think this poor, generous old man had stinted himself in order to supply me. It was like the widow's mite; he had given more than he could properly afford. He knew that I was very fond of tobacco, and that I had not the means to supply myself, and I have no doubt he thought that I might not fare so well where I was going, as I had under his care.

The soldiers conducted me to the hut where I had seen the two mandarins the preceding day; but this morning only Wai-bah, the head-man of the fishing village, was there. He made me understand that I was to accompany my guides to Hone-cohe in the smaller boat of the two. He enquired whether I was willing to go quietly, as the crew were unarmed, and

they did not wish to put any restraint upon me, if it could be avoided. Of course I was glad to be treated as a passenger, rather than as a prisoner; I therefore assured them, that they would have nothing to fear from my behaviour.

There was a breakfast laid out on a table, to which Wai-bah invited me; but when I told him I had already breakfasted, he, with a smile, gave me a cup full of rue, as much as to say, I would not refuse that. When he had finished his meal, he brought a small jar of rue, and made me a present of it, to use on the passage. I thanked him for his kindness, and took leave of him. When I got outside the hut, almost all the inhabitants of the village had collected, to bid me farewell. Some of the women came round me, and offered me little cups full of rue, but if I had taken them all, the two soldiers would have had to carry me to the boat, for I doubt whether I should have been able to carry myself thither.

The larger boat of the two was a fine vessel of about forty tons burden, very sharp about the bows, and, from external appearance, ought to sail well. She had three masts and sails, similar to those described in a former chapter. She carried three brass guns, apparently six-pounders, and very nicely cast; one of them was a long gun mounted on a swivel forward. She had ten sweep stentions on each side. I should think she was well adapted for revenue service, and that two such

vessels well-manned, would be more than a match for any tymung in Ching Ah'ling's fleet.

The smaller boat had no arms whatever to be seen; she was similar to the fishing boats, and I suppose was used as such at times. We had six men in the crew, and one master, who wore the distinctive badges of rank, namely, the tape and the pouches. Our master, or captain, was on board of the larger vessel as yet, receiving his orders, which being given to him, we weighed, and sailed out of Coh-cah Bay.

It was a splendid morning, and as there was but little wind, we had to apply the sweeps to give the boat steerage, in rounding a point upon which the tide was setting strongly. The sun had not yet risen, but the few clouds that were visible in the eastern sky showed, by their golden edges and chocolate-coloured sides, that he was approaching. The land and sea breezes were struggling for superiority, their attraction being counterpoised by the grand luminary. As we got further out there fell a dead calm. The sea became like a sheet of glass, unbroken by the slight swell that was setting into the bay. There was a little mist rising from the water, and every appearance in the atmosphere foreboded a hot and sultry day. After we had cleared the point, our crew discontinued sweeping, and the boat lay motionless, with the exception of a slight roll now and then, as the swell passed us. I could see the Three Kings' Islands. When I last saw them I was a captive on board of Ching Ah'ling's fleet. I was now bidding adieu

to a place which had been the scene of so many difficulties and dangers to me; and I had to thank the Almighty, that I had escaped from an ignominious death, at the hands of a cowardly race of beings, whom I detest for their treacherous and deceitful disposition.

The wind continued very light all day, and the heat of the sun was oppressive. The captain of the boat shared the little cabin with me; but the crew had to remain on the deck day and night, as there was no other accommodation for them, even in wet weather. Their only shelter is their mat, which answers also for their bed; in fine weather *they* lie upon the mat, in wet weather the *mat* lies upon them, or rather they protect themselves with it from both rain and sun. The heat appeared to have little effect upon them, but I was almost stifled; for the cabin was merely formed by semi-circular hoops, having a mat fastened over the top, and it afforded but a poor shelter against sun, wind, or rain. There was not sufficient room even to kneel under it; I had to crawl when I entered it, and then remain in a lying or crouching posture, so that I was very uncomfortable, and longed for the passage to be over.

The captain was a very kind man, and we soon became intimate; only the misfortune was, we could not understand each other except by making motions. He showed me his sword, which had once been a good one, but from age or neglect it had become eaten up with rust. It was of European manufacture; from the eagle

on the hilt, I should judge it to be French. They had a very peculiar kind of weapon for defence against native robbers, for it would be useless to say against pirates; it consisted of small bamboos, about two-and-a-half inches in diameter and about three feet long, filled with damp gunpowder; one of these, being fastened to a stick or pole about six feet long, is set on fire and thrust against the face, or any part of an enemy, who attempts to board them. These were all the arms they had on board, and this being a government boat, they were allowed to carry them; but, as I have mentioned before, no native trading vessel is allowed to carry any description of arms for protection.

When evening came on, we put into a little cove, about five miles to the southward of Coh-cah Bay; for that was all the distance we had been able to sail since morning. These boats only make day passages. As soon as we were anchored, the crew were sent on shore for water and firewood; they seldom carry more of these two articles than is sufficient for use during the day. The men soon returned with supplies; and, after getting supper, we retired to rest.

At daybreak the crew again went on shore for firewood and water; and, after we had breakfasted, we weighed, and went to sea again. About three o'clock, p.m., the wind having favoured us all the morning, we were in sight of Hone-cohe, which the captain pointed out to me.

Hone-cohe and Ong-ro harbours are at opposite ends

of the same bay, which forms one of the finest and safest ports in the world, being sheltered from the winds on all sides, and capable of accommodating any number of vessels of any draught of water, the soundings varying from five to fifteen fathoms. It is about eight miles in length from north to south, and five miles in breadth from east to west. In the centre, the bottom consists of sand and coral; but towards the shores, on the north and south sides, it is stiff mud and good holding ground. The lead is a safe guide on approaching, except on the western or main shore, where there is a dangerous coral ledge, about two miles off the land, not marked down in Horsburgh's chart of 1850. It extends about one-and-a-half mile, running parallel with the shore, and not more than a cable length broad; there are twelve and fifteen fathoms close up to it, but only one-and-a-half and two fathoms on it. I could see the coral quite plainly at the bottom. We soon passed over it into deep water on the other side; but, owing to a heavy ground swell setting over the reef, it was not found suitable anchorage for our small boat. We therefore made for Hone-cohe harbour, and, after sailing another mile, we hove in sight of it. There appeared to be many vessels of various sizes anchored there; one in particular drew my attention, she being entirely different in form and rig from any other. She had masts and yards similar to those of a European vessel, and at first view I took her to be some ship trading there,

or that had put in for repairs, as she had not top-gallant yards, nor masts on end. My heart beat, hoping she might turn out to be a stranger, when, of course, I should be able to obtain a passage in her to some European port ; but my hopes were soon blighted, by our captain making me understand that she belonged to the King of Cochin-China, and was navigated entirely by natives.

We passed close by her, and I was soon convinced that her hull had not been built under the supervision of Englishmen. She had formerly been a large junk, but had been cut down, and had false bulwarks built on her ; she was painted and rigged after European fashion, as well as the natives knew how to do it. Her rigging was very slovenly, and many of her shrouds and stays were placed wrong. She mounted ten guns, five on each side ; but they appeared to be in bad condition, as Chinese guns generally are, left to rust and honeycomb, without oil, paint, or anything else to preserve them ; I should have been afraid to fire either of them. There is a small redoubt at the south end of the harbour, with embrasures for seven guns ; but I did not see any guns in them.

The town, as seen from the water, seemed very little superior to the village of Coh-cah. The huts certainly were rather larger in size, and more numerous ; but the natives appeared to have little more knowledge of civilization and comfort.

We anchored close alongside of three mandarin fast

boats, similar in every respect to the two I have before described. They were, however, in my opinion, far superior, and more effective vessels of war than the king's ship. In their attempt to imitate European vessels, these people lose many good qualities appertaining to their own mode of construction.

We had not been anchored many minutes, before our deck was loaded with visitors, who had not been long in hearing of my arrival. Most of those who had taken the liberty to come and see me were soldiers from the mandarin boats close by, as our captain had gone on board of one of them to report my arrival. They were very civil to me, but, as usual, rather too inquisitive. They could not account for my having hair on my face, arms, and feet, when they had none; some of them would not be satisfied that it was natural, until they had examined it closely; and I think, if I had had sufficient patience, they would have examined every hair singly, and even counted the number!

It is really astonishing to see beings possessed of reason show so much amazement at such trifles. Even the difference between the colour of my eyes and of theirs formed a subject of much comment among them; nor were they satisfied after an hour's stare at me; so, when our captain returned, I begged him to ask some of them to leave the vessel, and give me room to breathe; for what with the heat of the sun, and their crowding round, not a breath of the little wind that was blowing could reach me. However, he found it

useless to ask them, he was obliged to order them away, and they attended to him rather sulkily. Some of them had the kindness to give me a handful of cigarettes for the satisfaction they had received.

I think if they had put me up as a public show, and charged five cash, equal to one farthing, a head, for permission to see me, I should have realized a handsome fortune in a few months' travelling through their populous cities. After most of these prying visitors had left our vessel, I tried to ascertain what orders our captain had received from the Commodore of the Fleet respecting me; but all that I could understand was that I must remain on board of the boat until the Quong* of Hone-cohe arrived, and gave orders for my removal.

At my request, the captain issued orders to the crew not to allow more than five visitors on board at one time; and by this means I escaped a recurrence of the annoyance of this morning, though the applicants for admission to see the *barbarian* rather increased than diminished, as the news of my arrival spread. My request was gladly complied with, by both our captain and crew; as I saw them receive many trifles from the favoured visitors, and even strike a bargain with some of them, before admitting them.

* The governor or chief magistrate of a city.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Commodore at Hone-cohe.—Not allowed to leave the Boat.—My Thigh-wound troublesome.—Taken before the Quong.—Cochinese Prisoners.—Court of Justice.—Reception by the Quong.—His Appearance.—Transferred to the care of a Mandarin.—Journey to Quong-foo.—Cochinese Travelling.—Hot Sand.—Lodging for the Night.

THE next morning, at about ten o'clock, the Commodore of the Cochin-Chinese fleet that was anchored in Hone-cohe harbour came to visit me. He was a hearty old man, nearly sixty years of age apparently. He was dressed like the two mandarins whom I saw at Coh-cah, with the exception of having a red scarf or turban on his head,—those at Coh-cah had blue. His hair was quite grey. He wore very handsome tape and pouches, the latter gilded, denoting his rank; and his attendants paid him great respect and reverence. He had rather a pleasing expression of countenance. My judgment of him was that he was honest from fear; generous to his superiors; a severe disciplinarian theoretically, but practically preferring his couch; fond of praise and admiration; sceptical in his opinions, not for his life would he wish to see the barbarous and uncivilized customs of his country revolutionized; fond of the outward form of religion, but not pious; averse to

foreigners, but not cruel, nor over-inquisitive; a great lover of womankind; indulgent to children, and fond of their company. I fancied I could read all this in his countenance; but how far I was right or wrong I cannot say. He took very little notice of me, and did not try to converse with me, as the other mandarins had done. He did not stay more than a quarter-of-an-hour, and when I saluted him as he was about to depart, he proudly returned the compliment.

When the Commodore had left, the visitors flocked round our boat more numerous than they had done yesterday, and our crew had the greatest difficulty to enforce the orders of their captain.

I had remained thirteen days, confined in my wretched quarters. I was not allowed to leave or to go on shore, until the Quong's pleasure respecting me was known. From this delay I fancied my position was more critical; although my captain daily assured me that I had nothing to fear from the authorities, who would sooner or later send me to Sen-chow-foo*. But no person can imagine my anxiety during this suspense. I was suffering in every way, bodily and mentally: nor could I feel satisfied that my life would be spared beyond a short period.

My thigh was inflamed; the shot being still in it, and irritating it. I had not so much as a piece of clean rag to bind it up with, nor any medicine or ointment

* Cochinese name for Singapore.

that I could apply to it, for the purpose of healing it. There was no convenience on board to wash myself. There was barely sufficient fresh water brought once a day for our consumption, during this dreadfully hot weather, and I could not apply salt water to my wound, the state of which began to affect my strong constitution, and caused a slight fever. I daily applied to our captain to order a larger supply of fresh water; but this was out of his power, as he obtained it from one of the mandarin boats, and both himself and our crew had strict orders not to leave me, lest I should try to make my escape.

Oh, how vividly it remains in my memory now, that, as I lay on my mat in great pain and anguish of mind, the two nights previous to leaving for the shore, I prayed most earnestly, that it might please the Almighty to take my spirit ere morning, that my sufferings might be at an end! for I would sooner have died any death, than have been decapitated by these heathens, which I felt assured was their ultimate intention.

Ah! dear reader, just consider what a dreadful state a man's mind must be in, to make such an awful request as this to his Maker. The most horrible monster, the most hideously deformed being, delights in its existence. Life is still acceptable to the condemned criminal, even if he is never to see daylight again, but to labour in darkness. The blind, the deaf and dumb, the cripple,—all cling to life; and though all the riches of

the world were offered, not one of them would make the exchange.

A stranger to the Chinese, of whom these natives are only a type, or a person who was not so well acquainted with their dispositions, and their universal hatred of Europeans, as myself, might have had faith in their assurances, and therefore his peace of mind would not have been disturbed by painful doubts. My judgment of them was certainly too harsh, but it was in accordance with their general treatment of foreigners, when they have them entirely at their mercy, and unknown to their governments. It was only my quiet and submissive conduct during my whole stay in this country that induced them to spare my life.

On the fourteenth morning after my arrival at Hone-cohe, the Quong gave orders for me to be brought before him. I was accordingly taken on shore, and with great difficulty reached the cluster of huts, where this functionary judged criminals. There were three other prisoners, waiting to be brought before him. Each of them had placed on his neck, or rather on his shoulders, two bamboos, about fourteen feet long, resembling a ladder, with four staves, one at each end, to fasten the bamboos together, and one at the back and front of the neck, to prevent the prisoner from slipping it off. This instrument is put on them, partly for punishment, and partly to prevent their escape; but it did not cause so much incon-

venience as the "yeah-cae" of China does. The latter consists of boards fastened together, about three feet square, with a small hole in the centre for the head, and shuts closely on to the neck. Being kept upon the prisoner day and night, he has great difficulty to sleep, except in a sitting or a standing posture; and he is obliged to feed himself like a dog, for he cannot put his hands to his mouth. But the Cochinese yeah-cae causes the prisoner little inconvenience, besides the weight of the bamboos upon his shoulders.

I was conducted to a large hut, which was used as a guard-room for soldiers. There were bamboo couches round the inside, which were used as beds. There were many spears, and curiously formed swords, in a stand in the centre of this hut. A very large drum was suspended to the roof, and a gong, upon which a sentry beat the hour, night and day.

I was told to rest myself on one of the couches until the Quong should arrive. The natives, as usual, were eager to see me, and soon crowded the hut to excess, but they were very kind to me, bringing me fruit and rue; the latter I was afraid to drink, lest it should increase the inflammation of my wound. They showed pity and compassion when they saw it, and some of them brought me pieces of rag to bind it up with, which I was very thankful for.

My captain was trying to make me understand that I should have to perform the kow-tow, or reverence,

before the Quong, which was three bows of the head to the ground, while kneeling on both knees, and with the hands clasped together over the head; he went through the motions to show me, and seemed to be much concerned about my making it properly. I was determined, if possible, to avoid paying this humiliating salute to a heathen; and though I had dread, my independent spirit still remained. At the expiration of an hour, a mandarin entered, with his pouches, &c., jingling at his elbows, and told the captain that the Quong was ready to see me. I was then conducted to a hut, about fifty yards square, and much higher than any of the others. About twenty feet in front of it, there was a large bamboo screen suspended, in the inside of which I was placed. A row of soldiers was drawn up along each side of the area, with their spears by their sides; and in front of each row were two fellows, with rattans in their hands, ready to administer corporal punishment to any person who should be condemned by the Quong to receive it.

In the centre of the hut was a large square platform, or stage, raised about three feet from the ground, and covered with a very handsome mat, on the top of which were two pieces of crimson cloth. On one of these sat the Quong, with his legs and feet bent under him, like a Buddhist idol. On the mat before him was the betelnut casket, which was of filigree silver, about the size of a small tea-caddy, of an oblong shape, and rounded at the top; it contained three divisions, one for the

betel-nut, one for the pepper-leaf, and a third for the lime. On a small tray were tobacco and paper cigars; and in a little brass bowl by his side was a piece of ignited charcoal, covered with white wood ashes, which cause it to remain lighted for a considerable time. Overhead hung a long piece of grass cloth, of the same width as the platform, to prevent any dirt falling thereon.

One part of the hut was roughly partitioned off, to the height of eight or nine feet, enclosing, as I was afterwards told, the sleeping apartment of the Quong, and that appropriated to his family and their attendants. -

There were about ten mandarins standing along on each side; most of them were dressed very gaudily. They were armed with a short sword, which had no sheath, but was merely thrust through a scarf which they wore round their waists. Their eyes were all stedfastly fixed upon me; but they neither spoke, nor made any motions to me. I appeared as yet to be quite under the charge of the captain, who now came up to me, and motioned me to perform the kow-tow; but I pretended not to understand him, so he left me.

I then uncovered my head, by taking off the rag which the Coh-cah fishermen had given me. The Quong now said something, upon which our captain ran forward, and performed the kow-tow. When he had risen again, the Quong beckoned me towards him, and ordered a mat to be brought for me to squat upon, after

his own fashion; but, not being able to manage this crumpling up of my limbs, I sat upon it, when the Quong burst out into a hearty laugh, and motioned me to remain seated in the manner that was comfortable to me.

He tried very hard to make me understand his language, but it was useless; he motioned me to show him my wound, which I did. He promised me bandages for it, and clothes, when I arrived at Kang-war-ting, which place I should start for in a few days; he assured me that I had nothing to fear, as I was a "Ho-mow-yan" (Englishman), but that, if I had been a Frenchman, he would not have assisted me at all.

He then called one of the mandarins, who, having performed the kow-tow, advanced, and the Quong gave me over to his charge, directing him to find me in food and shelter. He told me that I was to accompany this mandarin, who would see that my wants were attended to, until he had an opportunity to send me to Kang-war-ting, where I should be supplied with clothes, and taken care of, until there was an opportunity of sending me to a British port. I rose from the mat on which I was sitting, and was about to try to perform the kow-tow, but the Quong, perceiving my embarrassment and awkwardness, made me understand that he did not require of me anything that was not customary in my own country. He did not say this in a haughty way, as though he required the kow-tow to be performed in a proper manner, or not at all; but as though any salute that was usual for me to make to my

superiors would be sufficient, and even that was at my own option. I fancy he had sense enough to consider, that any salute, into the sentiment of which my heart did not enter, would constitute no salute at all.

The Quong was a handsome man, about thirty-five years of age; his face was a light copper colour; his features were round; he had rather a Roman nose, small lips and mouth; and a fine moustache gave a good-tempered and noble appearance to his countenance. He had a particularly bright, keen eye; and altogether I should take him to be a taciturn, determined, and energetic man.

He had on an elegant black silk dress, dark blue pyjamas, and a red crape turban, similar to the Commodore's. He was armed with a small rapier, and wore a fine collection of pouches, &c., some of which were silver-mounted. He had also a silver watch and chain in a pocket case at his side, which showed he appreciated European goods.

When I took leave of him, he gave me a string of cash, containing six hundred, value about one-seventh of a dollar, to purchase tobacco, rue, &c. I was very thankful for this; for, though of so small an intrinsic value, it would go a long way in the purchase of those articles in Cochin-China.

The mandarin, to whom I had been consigned, conducted me to his own house, which was about a quarter-of-a-mile from the Quong's court-house, or hut; and

even this short distance gave me great pain to walk. When I arrived, he provided me with a couch and mat. As he ordered a boy to attend upon me, I soon got water, and bathed my wound, which gave me great relief. He also gave me some native ointment, which I applied to it. I was more comfortable in this hut than I had been since I left the village of Coh-cah. The kind treatment I had received from the Quong made me feel more confident of ultimately gaining my freedom; and while my mind was easy, I scarcely felt my other sufferings.

I remained here nine days. I was in a miserable condition through not having a change of linen; for if I took my shirt off and washed it in the day time, I was covered with vermin again, as soon as I lay down on their couches.

It is astonishing how human beings can remain so dirty as these people are, without making any efforts to cleanse themselves. The only man I met with, who was even tolerably cleanly in his person and clothes, was the old Commodore whom I have mentioned before. I never saw any other native, the Quong included, who was not swarming with vermin.

The food they gave me here was red rice and fish, the same as the mandarin ate himself. I began to find that this food was not suitable for me, but I could obtain no other; meat of all kinds was dear and scarce; and I was getting very thin and weak from the sufferings and hardships that I was exposed to.

On the eighth morning of my stay at this place, I was told that I was to be removed to the city of Quong-foo, in the interior, about thirty-five miles from Hone-cohe. The mandarin, three soldiers, and myself, set out upon the journey accordingly.

When a Cochinese of rank and wealth travels, he has a number of soldiers or guards with him, who form a sort of commissariat, carrying all the provisions, clothes, money, &c., that will be required on the journey in large baskets suspended to bamboos, similar to the Chinese. The mandarin, under whose care I had been placed, wished to make me carry my rice, &c., but I soon informed him that my wound was so painful, and my body so weak, that I was doubtful whether I should be able to carry myself; so I was excused.

As soon as we got into the main street, hundreds of men, women, and children came running after us, to get a sight of the *barbarian*. I was glad when we got away from the town, and were clear of the rabble.

We walked along the beach towards Ong-ro harbour for about two miles, when we turned inland. The ground in the vicinity of Hone-cohe is not so hilly as at Coh-cah, or Verela; the soil, for three miles from the sea, is a loose white sand, and consequently vegetation is scorched up by the burning rays of a vertical sun. There is not a tree, a shrub, or even a blade of grass to be seen within three miles of

the town; there is nothing but a parched and barren plain.

I walked quite comfortably on the cool, damp beach; but as soon as I left it, my sufferings commenced. We had to cross some three miles of burning sand, as white as "drifted snow," and dazzling to the eyes. The soles of my feet had become a little hardened through being barefooted two months; but the burning sand was so loose that my feet sank in it, and were completely covered by it as far as the instep. After an hour's misery, we arrived on a more fertile soil; and, on examining my feet, I found them literally covered with small blisters up to the ankles.

We now walked along the edges of paddy fields, which appeared to want water very much. We next came to plantations of sugar canes, and our soldiers, being halted, helped themselves to some. I also got my share, and it proved very refreshing. Then occurred fields of the tea plant, which much resembled withy beds, only the plants were not so close together as withies generally grow. The second crop leaf was just beginning to show itself upon the plant; it was much larger and coarser than the Chinese, and not so well flavoured. It appears that the Cochinese do not understand its cultivation so well as the Chinese; for the soil here appeared as good and as rich as any I have seen in the province of Fookien in China.

I saw some fine fields of cotton, all in full bloom.

The soil and climate seem well adapted to its growth. The cotton grown in Cochin-China is superior to that of either China or India. It is much finer, of a more glossy nature, and quite a pearl white.

We walked about eleven miles inland this day; and all was highly cultivated, after the first three miles, the land being level and well watered. We passed three small rivers, running parallel to the sea; there were no bridges, but their shallowness allowed of their being easily forded.

We put up for the night at a house belonging to a mandarin, who was obliged to accommodate us, as soon as he saw our "chop" from the Quong of Hone-cohe. This habitation was worthy the name of a house, being substantially built of brick, and tiled, and far superior to any I had yet seen in Cochin-China. There was a strong wooden fence surrounding the whole premises, and much resembling what is called in Australia a kangaroo fence; it was to prevent tigers from breaking in.

I was glad to lie down to rest, for I was very tired, and should have slept soundly, though the mosquitoes were in thousands, had it not been for a sentry, who was beating taps on a large drum all night, in the apartment we slept in. I felt much inclined, several times, to beat the taps on his head: but I considered prudence the better part of reason, and therefore I put up with the annoyance without interference.

CHAPTER XIV.

Journey pursued.—Sugar Canes.—Jungle.—Hospitable Reception at a Native Inn.—Arrival at Quong-foo.—Silk and Cotton Manufactures.—Transferred to another Mandarin.—The Court-house.—Corporal Punishment.

WHEN morning dawned, we made preparations to proceed on our journey; and, after breakfasting, we started. I was very stiff, and my feet were very sore from the effects of the hot sands of yesterday; but I was resolved to keep up as long as I possibly could, being stimulated by the thought, that every step brought me so much nearer to deliverance and freedom.

For the first three miles we passed through highly cultivated country, with here and there a quiet little cottage. There were no direct roads, but merely tracks or footpaths between the fields, which were sometimes very circuitous; and, for every three miles we travelled, we did not make more than two miles on a straight course.

We passed some tea fields, which were similar to those I saw yesterday, besides numerous plantations of sugar canes, larger than any I had as yet seen, some of the canes being fully as thick as a man's arm, eight feet in height, and streaked with red. Our soldiers cut one, and I got about two feet of it for my share, which, I should think, did not weigh less than ten

pounds avoirdupois. It was very sweet, but not so juicy as the smaller ones. I was told that these canes yield more sugar in proportion, though not of such good quality. It was a little cool for the first three miles ; but, as soon as the sun had risen and absorbed the dew, it became unpleasantly hot again. After we had walked about five miles, the appearance of the country began to change ; it became more hilly and sandy.

We now passed through plantations of betel and cocoa-nut trees. The former are something similar to the cocoa-nut tree, but they do not grow so tall. The nuts grow in bunches, which burst out of the side of the tree, just below the top leaves, much resembling the misletoe. The tree has no branches, being only an herbaceous stem, about forty or fifty feet in height, with a few large leaves on the top. Our men soon got a bunch of the green betel-nuts, which are considered preferable to the dried nuts for chewing.

They seemed to help themselves along the road to anything they required, as though they had a perfect right to it ; and I could not help laughing to see one of our men, who was trying to cut one of the large sugar canes with his rusty sword, but, not being able to accomplish it, he went and called the owner, who lived in a hut close by, to bring his hook, and cut it for him ; and then the soldier would not accept it, until the man had peeled it, and divided it into equal portions for each of us.

The farther we travelled, the worse the road became ; and I was beginning to fear that I might have another burning sandy plain to cross to-day, as the sun was now high in the zenith.

After we had passed through some three miles of cocoa and betel-nut plantations, we came to a thick jungle, and loose sandy ground, through which a road was cleared, some three hundred yards broad, to enable the traveller to see a tiger, or any other wild beast, before he came close upon him. In the day-time a tiger will retreat to the jungle if he sees a man approaching ; nor will he attack him unless he can spring direct upon him. The footpath was in the centre of this cleared space, so that we could see one hundred and fifty yards on either side of us.

We had no shelter whatever from the sun, in passing through it, nor could a breath of wind reach us, as the scrub rose high on each side of us. I was in great pain, and could with difficulty keep up with the others. The mandarin, observing how I was suffering, promised to rest at the first house we should come to.

It was now mid-day, and we were entering upon a vast plain, with a cottage here and there, and thousands of acres of rice and paddy fields.

The first house we came to was a sort of inn for travellers ; we entered, and showed our chop, which appeared to be as good as a bank note, for we were at once made welcome, and provided with the necessary articles for cooking our food. I had little appetite, I

felt more inclined for rest, and was very glad to lie down on a bench under a cool verandah.

The hostess, for a Cochinese, was an uncommonly kind and feeling woman, and when our mandarin told her of my condition, she would not hear of our travelling any farther that day, but made us welcome in her house; and was very much struck with the appearance of a Ho-mow-yan (an Englishman), who, she had always been told, was a savage, unsightly being in the extreme. She gave me some ointment for my wound, and, boiling some herbs, made a lotion for my blistered feet, which gave me great relief. She brought me some mangoes and other fruit, which were very fine, and altogether treated me as though I had been her own son.

The next morning early we started again; and I was twice the man I was yesterday, thanks to my kind hostess. We soon crossed the plain, which was about six miles broad, and came to another jungle, similar to the one we passed through yesterday. We were now getting closer to our journey's end, and the mandarin told me that by sunset we should reach Quong-foo. I accordingly exerted myself as much as possible; for the land was very hilly, and sandy, and the paths were bad to walk upon.

About three o'clock, p.m., we were on the top of a high hill, from which I was shown the city, about three miles distant.

Quong-foo is about a quarter of a mile square, and

is situated in an extensive and well-cultivated plain. It is surrounded by a high mud wall or embankment, with a ditch round the outside, in which there is water only in the wet season. There are six entrances to the city, formed by high stone archways, in which are massive wooden gates, which are opened at sunrise, and closed at sunset: and no person can enter or leave the place before or after that time. There is a long guard-room inside each gateway, with about thirty soldiers in each.

On my arrival, I was taken to one of these guard-rooms, to wait until our mandarin had reported our arrival, and given in his chop, which only remained good for the journey. I waited about an hour, during which time hundreds of the inhabitants came to see me; but they were kind and civil to me. When our mandarin returned, he conducted me to a small house in the eastern part of the city, which was to be my quarters for the present.

Every house (and most of them were detached) had full three times as much ground as it stood upon, laid out as a garden, with a hedge fence enclosing it, and forming the borders of the streets, which were broad and clean. There was no stench, no collection of dirt, or pools of stagnant water, as in the narrow streets of the crowded cities of China; everything was kept in good wholesome order.

A great deal of silk is produced in Quong-foo, which is principally manufactured into crapes; but

they are very coarse, and not equal to those of China. A great deal of cotton is woven, but of very narrow width, and extremely coarse from the same cause, namely, the yarn being badly spun, and the machines too weak.

On the second day after my arrival here, our mandarin and the two soldiers left again for Hone-cohe, as they had no longer the charge of me. I was given over to another mandarin, a Canton-man by birth, who was to provide for me until an opportunity offered to send me to the city of Kang-war-ting.

My new master being a Cantonese, I could converse with him a little, and he gave me some information concerning the country round about. He told me that I had been brought to Quong-foo, because the Quong of Hone-cohe was afraid that some vessels might put into that port, and I might make my escape, or might be demanded, and, in either case, he would have considerable trouble, as a report had been sent to the King of Cochin-China, and, if anything should happen to me before an answer was received, the Quong would be held responsible for me. He assured me that I had nothing to fear; that I should be sent to Kang-war-ting in a few days, where I should be kindly treated; and that, when an order was received from the King, I should be restored to my own country again.

This gave me confidence. I was sorry now that I had remained as long as I did on board of the

tymung. I was willing to suffer any privations, as long as I felt sure of life and ultimate deliverance.

During the time I stayed at Quong-foo, I was allowed to walk about anywhere inside the walls, accompanied by a soldier; but I was not allowed to pass the gates.

There were only two large buildings in the city worthy of notice; one was the Quong's court-house, the other a Buddhist temple. They had a "sing-song," or theatre, in front of this temple, while I was there; the performance and costumes of the actors were similar to those of China.

The Quong's court-house is a large oblong building, nearly two hundred feet in length; the lower part, built of brick, supported large round wooden pillars, on which the roof rested; the space between the pillars was planked, and painted red. In the centre was a large platform raised four feet from the ground, on which the Quong squatted, to try all prisoners; at each end of the building were compartments partitioned off for excise offices, where all the government papers and accounts were kept. More than fifty clerks were employed in these offices. What took my attention here most of all was a flag-staff, erected in the space in front of the building, with a topmast, and rigged like a European flag-staff.

Corporal punishment is very common in Cochin-China; and a mandarin of the lowest rank has power to flog those who are under him, for any trifling

Cochin-China; which would contain the necessary instructions for my deliverance to my own government. So that I guessed it would yet be some considerable time before I obtained my liberty; and I had still some slight misgivings that the hostilities with the British might influence the authorities here in deciding whether they would return me to my own government, or send me prisoner to Canton.

On the thirty-sixth morning of my stay, the long expected order arrived, for my removal to the city of Kang-war-ting, the capital of Bin-kang, and where the chief Quong, or Governor, of that province resided.

Two days after this I bade farewell to Quong-foo and its inhabitants, and was on the way back to Hone-cohe. A strange mandarin and two soldiers accompanied me, being my usual escort in this country. It was, by my account, the 11th of July, 1857, when I left, but whether my reckoning is correct, I cannot say, as I had entirely forgotten the day of the week, and almost the day of the month, through not having an almanack, and there being no observance of the Sabbath in this country.

I felt high in spirits at being removed from the lonely quarters I had occupied so long; expecting, I should soon be delivered up to my countrymen again. I little thought at this time, that another July would come before I should see the face of a European, or hear a word of my mother tongue spoken.

On my return to Hone-cohe, we took the route by

which I had come ; and about three o'clock, p.m., on the first day's journey, we arrived at the inn kept by the good woman who had been so kind to me on my way to Quong-foo.

I proposed to our mandarin, that we should enter the inn, and rest awhile, as I was acquainted with the hostess, and wished to bid her farewell before I left this part of the country ; this he granted. The hostess was there to welcome me, and would have made a hundred enquiries, had I been able to speak the language. However, I could comprehend a little of what she said, as I had picked up many words ; and I knew she was asking where I was going, and how my wound was, which our mandarin told her. She brought me a quantity of fruit from her own garden, some rue and tobacco ; and, as there was a verandah round the house, I sat down there, and made myself quite at home again, under her kind auspices. She wanted us to remain at her house for the night, and offered us the best apartment free of charge ; but, as our mandarin had positive orders to reach Hone-cohe in two days, we could not stay ; so, after an hour's rest, we prepared to start again, and offered payment for what we had had. She would not receive anything from us, but brought me a string of about five hundred cash, which she said she had collected from some other travellers, who were in the inn, for the purpose of assisting me. She forced me to accept it, though I several times refused, not wishing to impose too much upon her good-nature and

generosity, which I never found equalled anywhere in this country. Having thanked her for all her kindness, I took my farewell of her.

We now entered the jungle, which was about five miles through; and our mandarin begged me to exert myself as much as possible, in order to pass through it before sunset, as it would be very dangerous to be there after dusk, for in all probability we should be attacked by tigers. We got through it, and walked two miles farther before sun-down. We lodged for the night at a small hut in a sugar plantation. The man to whom it belonged did not appear very willing at first to accommodate us; but, as soon as our mandarin showed him a chop from the Quong of Quong-foo, he made no more objections, which shows the power that a government passport has with the inhabitants in Cochin-China. Any stranger having a chop can, after sunset, demand shelter for the night at any house he may think fit, free of charge.

After getting our supper, we lay down to rest, and I slept soundly, there being no beating of drums in this hut; that nuisance is only carried on in mandarin stations.

At daylight we set forward again. We passed by the same tea plantations, which were now in full leaf. The leaves were much larger than any I had ever seen in China, being as large as those of the ash tree in England; the Chinese tea leaf is not a third of this size.

The cotton was just beginning to form on the plants, and looked very beautiful.

About two o'clock, p.m., we arrived at the dreaded sandy plain, extending to the beach of Hone-cohe ; but, thank God, the weather favoured me this day. There was a thunderstorm gathering in the western sky, which effectually shaded the burning rays of the sun ; and I passed over the dazzling sand without that scorching pain which I had experienced on my first journey. We soon arrived at the beach, and the sight of the blue sea was cheering to me ; it appeared to carry liberty upon its breast. I looked upon the wide waste of water, which lies in one unbroken mass, from this heathen country to my own native land, though nearly twenty thousand miles separate them.

I soon reached Hone-cohe, and was taken to a small hut, there to wait until some vessel was going to Quong-nam, the port I should have to land at, it being the nearest to the city of Kang-war-ting.

I waited here four days, and no passage could be found for me ; so the Quong ordered one of the small government boats to be in readiness to receive me. I was, accordingly, taken on board ; and, after a delay of two days more, I bade farewell to Hone-cohe for the second time.

After we got clear of the harbour, we had a strong south-west breeze ; so much so, that our little boat was frequently gunwale under to it. I was afraid, two or three times, that she would capsize, as our captain gave no orders to reduce sail ; in fact, I soon

learnt that the sails were made in such a manner that they could not reef them or shorten them in any way, and that they must either carry all or none. They cannot take in a sail on one mast without taking them in on all the others, as the boat would not steer if any one was taken in. After a short time, I could see that there was little danger in carrying the whole sails, as long as the sea was tolerably smooth ; for they are so formed, that in a strong wind the boat lies over so far, and the yards give slightly, that the wind blows out of the sail again, or rather over it, and then the vessel rights itself. Sometimes they carry an outrigger on the weather side, on which a mah sits, to counteract the effect of the wind, and prevent her from going over too far.

At sunset we anchored in a little cove, as we had done during the passage from Coh-cah. The crew went on shore for water and firewood ; and, after getting supper, we turned in to rest.

In the morning, after we had breakfasted, we weighed, and went to sea. We had a strong south-west breeze again to-day, and at nine o'clock, a.m., sighted the Pyramid Islands, three in number. These islands look very pretty in the distance, being completely formed in the shape which their name indicates ; but one is larger than another in the ratio of two to one ; the second being twice the size of the first, and the third twice the size of the second.

I kept an anxious look-out for any ship that might heave in sight; and I was sorry, as we rounded by Shala Island, to make up the bay, that I could not see one. I am not certain what might have been the consequence, if one had neared us at that time, and our captain had not complied with my wishes by sailing out to her. The chance of immediate liberation would have been preferable, in spite of the risk I might have incurred by taking charge of the boat myself, for I think I could have mastered all on board, and steered out to the vessel. But no ship hove in sight, and therefore my plans were all useless. We quietly sailed up the bay, and a little before sun-down we anchored in the harbour of Quong-nam, or, as it is called in Horsburgh's charts, Nhiatrang. It is not near so secure as Hone-cohe, being merely a channel or strait, between the island, called by the natives Timuir-cham, and the main-land. It is open to the south-east and north-east, and consequently a heavy swell sets into it when the wind is strong from either of those quarters.

The natives told me, that during the north-east monsoon the only safe place to anchor in was the river, which is too shallow to admit a vessel of any size; so that, during all seasons of the year, the port of Quong-nam is hardly worthy the name of a harbour.

The town very much resembles Hone-cohe, when viewed from the water; but it can easily be distin-

guished from the latter place by a row of large cocoa-nut trees, growing in the sand in front.

There were a great number of native vessels, all small, in the harbour and in the river; one was a Chin-chew junk, some of the crew of which came to see me as soon as they heard I had arrived, and from them I got some information about this place; for I was able to speak their dialect of Chinese better than any other. They told me that they had come from Foo-chow-foo four months ago; that they had been trading on the coast of Cochin-China ever since; that they were going up to Turon in a week or so, to load with sugar for Singapore. I asked them if they would be willing to give me a passage to Singapore; but they told me, that it might cost them more than their vessel was worth, to take me on board without an order from the Quong, and a chop from the city of Kang-war-ting, and that even then they might have trouble with me when they arrived at Turon, as no Europeans are allowed even to enter that port.

With all these excuses, I could plainly see that they were not willing to take me. I therefore did not press them, for, if I had gone with them to Turon, I should have run a great risk of being again taken by Ching Ah'ling's fleet, as they always kept a sharp look-out for all Chinese junks passing in sight of them; and I could expect no mercy if I were again taken by them, so I thought it was best for me to remain where I was for the present.

Next morning I was taken on shore, and conducted to a small hut, similar to the one I had occupied at Hone-cohe, and equally as dirty.

The soil on which the town of Quong-nam is situated is like that of Hone-cohe, being a loose white sand. Inside the huts there are no floorings laid, nothing but this sand, which, together with filth, causes the natives to suffer severely from cutaneous diseases; I hardly saw a man who was not suffering from them more or less. Ophthalmia attacks many of them; they attribute the cause to a small fly, which breeds in the sand. Some were quite blind, while others were much disfigured, from the effects of this insect, which appears to consume the muscles of the eye and eyelids, causing great pain, and ending frequently in total loss of sight. I am speaking entirely from native report. I must leave the workings of this fearful insect to be more truly explained by our "medical faculty," whenever it may come under their observation. The only remedy which I saw the natives use was a green tobacco leaf, kept damp over the eyes.

On the second morning after my arrival here, I was taken before the Quong, who held his court in a large hut, just behind a small fort, which had embrasures for five guns, but, like most other forts which I saw in Cochin-China, the guns were wanting.

The natives told me that a Chinese piratical squadron had anchored off this town some two years ago, levying a heavy ransom on the inhabitants, which they were unable to pay; that, in consequence, the pirates plun-

dered and set fire to the place, carrying away the guns out of the fort, three of which were brass; and that for this reason the houses at the ports are never built as substantially as in the cities of the interior.

The difference in the buildings away from the sea-coast I had noticed myself; as there were nothing but huts in either Coh-cah, Hone-cohe, or Quong-nam, while in Quong-foo I saw many good and substantial houses; this makes the story of the destruction of their town by pirates credible.

The hut where the Quong held his court was surrounded with a bamboo fence, enclosing about half an acre of ground, where all persons, sentenced by the Quong to be flogged, are tied down, and receive their punishment under his observance. I was conducted inside of this yard, where I had to wait for his arrival. There was no waiting-room, outhouse, verandah, or any place where I could remain under shelter from the burning rays of a vertical sun. It was now about eleven o'clock, a.m. My sufferings this day were hardly equalled the day I crossed the burning sands, on my walk to Quong-foo; my head and body suffered this time, instead of my feet. How I escaped from being sun-struck I cannot say. There was not a breath of air stirring; and as I looked over the sand in the distance, I could see a kind of trembling vapour rising, similar to what can be seen rising above the flames of a furnace, and caused by the heat. My feet were, happily, protected from the heat of the sand by a collection

of pine-apple and banana peeling, and other rubbish, which had been thrown there.

I was almost frantic. I asked my captain, under whose charge I was as yet, to allow me to go to some place for shelter until the Quong should arrive; but he said, I could not be let out, after once entering the yard, without seeing the Quong. I went to the gates to try to get out; but I found a sentry there, who refused to let me pass.

All the natives who were there in company with me had large conical hats, about three feet in circumference, filled in the inside with a bamboo frame, which kept the upper part of the hat full six inches above the crown of the head, and afforded them considerable shelter from the sun.

It was now nearly two o'clock, p.m., and I had hitherto borne this torture without a murmur; but as the Quong had not yet made his appearance, I was determined to show these natives that I would not endure it any longer, without making an effort to relieve myself. There were plenty of sheltered places where I could have waited. I expected to be treated at least in a reasonable manner, and not exposed to unnecessary suffering.

I again went to the captain, and remonstrated, but he affected not to understand me; I accordingly walked to the further end of the yard, scaled the fence, and let myself down on the outside. As soon as he saw what I had done, he came running after me, begging

me to return; but, as he was on the opposite side, it was my turn to affect not to understand; he called to the sentry to stop me, but the man only laughed at him.

I walked away as fast as I could towards some cocoa-nut trees, and there sat down in the shade. My captain soon came to me. I told him positively that I would not stir from the place where I was until the Quong arrived. Finding all his persuasions useless, he sat down beside me; and we remained here until four o'clock, p.m., when the Quong arrived, and I accompanied him back to the court-house.

I was ushered into a large room, in the centre of which was a raised platform, on which was a dirty old man, full sixty years of age, squatted on his hams. His legs, which were curiously curled together, were disproportionately long, and more resembling a grasshopper's, when compared with the other portions of his body. He was chewing betel-nut voraciously, and at intervals smoking a paper cigar, which was turned as red as blood, from absorbing a portion of the saliva. He did not seem to have a tooth in his head. He was vociferating in a harsh, guttural jargon, which appeared to come from his stomach; he gave emphasis to his words by a stiff movement of his body backwards and forwards; he seemed to have a hinge in his spine, and nowhere else. His eyes sank into his head; he had high cheek bones, and broad nostrils; the bridge of his nose was level with his face, and had peculiar blue streaks across it. His

cheeks fell in against his gums, puffing out whenever he spoke ; altogether he was the most hideous being I had seen in this country.

And this was the Quong, the chief magistrate of Quong-nam. I should think they could not have picked out a more suitable person to fill that important post ; for his very appearance was sufficient to strike terror into the minds of the poor Cochinese under his control. He evidently considered me far beneath his notice. I was very glad when my captain had finished talking with him, and led me away again.

I was conducted back to the hut, and he gave me over to the charge of another mandarin. He then took his leave of me, and told me that I should be taken to the city of Kang-war-ting in a few days.

This was the fifth mandarin under whose charge I had been placed. He proved to be a very kind and feeling man, and we soon became intimate.

I felt very unwell that evening, from my exposure to the sun. I informed the mandarin of this, and he said it was very wrong of the captain ; and that if I had told the Quong of it he would most likely have flogged him. "What," I said, "flogged the captain because he had caused a Ho-mow-yan, a *barbarian*, pain ! why, I should not have thought, from the Quong's appearance, that he possessed one spark of humanity."

"You are mistaken," said the mandarin ; "I had

some conversation with him, before he came to the court and saw you; he recommended me particularly to take care of you; for, if anything should happen to you while under his jurisdiction, he would be held accountable for it. He told me to give you good food and shelter as long as you remained under my charge."

The next morning, the mandarin told me that I was to accompany him a short distance from Quong-nam into the interior, where I should remain for a few days; so, after taking breakfast, we set out together, but without the usual escort of soldiers. It appeared that they were afraid to keep me many days at any port, for reasons before explained.

As soon as we had passed through the town,—which does not deserve the name, being only composed of clusters of huts here and there, having no regular streets, but paths and thoroughfares everywhere,—we came to a wet sandy plain, that is evidently flooded at high spring tides by the sea, which entirely prevents its being cultivated. It was about two miles broad; and having crossed it, we came to the rising ground, on which was a scanty vegetation, consisting of sweet potatoes, ground-nuts, &c.

The land here was divided into small fields, or lots, by mounds thrown up, on the top of which were foot-paths; these were the only roads through the cultivated parts of the country. They were innumerable, and a person travelling here, unless well acquainted,

might take a dozen wrong paths in an hour. I think I made turnings, zigzags, angles, and semi-circles, which, had they been traced, would have formed the letters of my name, during our walk over three miles.

We now took a turn to the north ; and, after walking about two miles farther, we came to a grove of mango trees, under one of which we halted. The mandarin, who was an athletic and active man, climbed one of them, and soon tossed down a dozen of fine mangoes, as large as swan's eggs, of a beautiful yellow colour, and most delicious flavour. Nature has been bountiful in her gifts to this country, for every description of tropical fruit grows here to perfection.

After having a feast of mangoes, we went on, and soon reached a cottage, which the mandarin told me was his, and was to be my quarters for the present. It was situated on the side of a little brook, the water of which ran as clear as crystal, splashing and whirling onward, and glistening in the sunbeam. The cottage was surrounded by large trees, which afforded good shelter from the sun. There was only the ground floor, containing four apartments, and a small cook-house detached. The latter is not a very common appendage to Cochinese houses or cottages, though it is most essential, for the use of chimneys is not known here ; and as the fires are always made loose upon the earth, generally in the apartment in which they live and sleep, the smoke must destroy their clothing and

other articles (if they have any), and also be injurious to their health. Besides, the temperature of the climate, even in winter, never requires the aid of fire for comfort; and, during ten months of the year, in their close houses, it is a nuisance.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mandarin's Family.—Chinese Dislike of Europeans.—Visit from Cochinese Gentlemen —Cochinese Postman.—Set out for Kang-war-ting.—Bad Roads.—Mandarin Station.—Mosquitoes.—Natural Productions of the Country.—Spices.—Fruit.—Curiosity of the Inhabitants.—Kang-war-ting.—Population.—Quong's Palace.

As soon as I entered the cottage, the mandarin introduced me to an old woman, who evidently (from the likeness she bore to him) was his mother; she did not seem at all afraid, or discommoded at my presence. I have no doubt, she thought that her extreme age, full seventy, would protect her from any possibility of my falling in love with her: but there was another female, who seemed to think that the Ho-mow-yan would not prove insensible to her charms. She was mistaken, however, in her self-conceit, and, although she was the mandarin's wife, I must own that I had not seen a more ugly and dirty being of the female sex between Hong-kong and Quong-nam. Notwithstanding this young lady's bashfulness, she was not afraid to make a sortie now and then across the farther end of the room, to get a sly peep at the *barbarian* intruder.

The mandarin appeared highly amused at his wife's

timidity; but, wishing to make me as comfortable as possible in his little home, he desired to put an end to any fear that might exist in any member of his family; so, with a little coaxing and persuasion, his wife soon joined us, and became friendly. His son, a fine boy about six years old, came and sat beside me, rolling paper cigars for me; and I was made more at home than I had been since I left the *lorcha Shunloi*. I was almost sorry when the time came for me to leave.

Although these people had probably never seen a European before; yet they did not exhibit such excessive fear at the sight as the Chinese do. Even at Amoy and Shanghae, in a street where a dozen Europeans may pass daily, I have been struck with the symptoms of terror, or detestation, shown by the generality of the inhabitants of all classes at the sight of a foreigner. I have seen women, as soon as they observed me approaching, rush into their houses, with their screaming children clinging to them, and slam to their doors.

The children were excited to fear, by seeing their mothers' timidity and bustle. They are taught by their parents, from their infancy, or as soon as they can distinguish a foreigner, to detest, but to fear him, "with all their heart, with all their mind; with all their soul, and with all their strength;" to plunder, rob, and cheat him in every possible manner, and at every available opportunity, which is considered not a vice, but a virtue. This is a portion of the Chinese

catechism, or at least the principle on which, at the British ports, Chinese children are bred up, who, in all probability, will have dealings with foreigners at some future day.

But as China and the Chinese do not form the subject of this book, I hope the reader will excuse my trespassing upon his time, while drawing a comparison between the people of two countries so closely allied: so I return to my narrative. I must here own that there were places in Cochin-China, which came under my observation, where the Cochinese evinced as much fear, and antipathy towards foreigners, as the Chinese do.

Where I was staying now, in the interior of the province of Bin-kang, I may say that the natives were in their primitive state, bodily and mentally; and the only aversion they have towards a foreigner is caused by the strangeness of his appearance, when compared with themselves, and by the dislike which their religious persuasion causes them, or the belief that they are superior to any other people. In the other parts of this country, where the natives abhor Europeans, it is very much owing to the attacks made upon them by the French, and to the prowess and triumph of the foreign sword. This shows, that by force of arms we can never make man love his fellow-creature.

On the third morning of my abode here, three Cochinese gentlemen, very richly dressed, visited me. They all wore handsome embossed silk dresses of a

dark blue colour, and black silk crape pyjamas; their turbans were also of the same material. They had not the tape and pouches, the badges of authority; they were civilians, not holding any appointment under the government. Their feet were bare, forming a bad contrast with their rich and expensive habiliments, and appeared to me to have a stingy appearance.

They were very civil and polite to me; but their inquisitiveness would have overreached the bounds of decency, had I permitted it. I was obliged to become harsh, to confine them to a reasonable examination of my person. I think, to have satisfied them, I should have had to undergo a surgical examination before them. They were, like all other Cochinese, much astonished at any physical difference between me and themselves.

They brought me presents of fruit, and were quite friendly to me. As they owned that they had never seen a European before, I thought their inquisitiveness was excusable, and I attributed it to their ignorance of foreign manners and customs.

At this time, I usually took a short walk, morning and evening, and frequently bathed, and washed my clothes, in the little brook, which runs past the cottage.

These ablutions were abjured by the mandarin, who, I am sorry to say, like the rest of his countrymen, did not believe in the use of water for these purposes. This was the only thing that I had reason to complain of, in regard to him, for in every other respect he proved to

be a generous and charitable man, not only towards me, but towards his own countrymen; for, during the eighteen days I remained with him, I did not see one of his men tied down and flogged, as I had at all the other mandarin premises I had stopped at.

The cottage was in a vast plain, divided into small fields, surrounded by earthen mounds or embankments, and growing mostly the same kinds of vegetables and plants as I saw on my walk from Quong-nam hither.

On the seventeenth morning of my stay here, being the 5th of August by my account, a postman, or carrier (I suppose I must call him), arrived from Quong-nam. This man was the very picture of Cochinese gentility and elegance. In his person he was short, but very stout; his face was so sunbaked, that his eyes seemed considerably lighter than his face, and they were so small, that they looked like currants in a suet dumpling. He wore a jacket of equivocal hue, owing to the dirt. His pyjamas would not have required much more grease to have rendered them water-proof.

The letter-bag which he carried was a peculiar article in form and appearance; it was of an oblong shape, with a long slit in the middle, the letters being carried at each end. On the outside of this bag there were curiously embossed hieroglyphics, inlaid with black dirt and grease in a novel and tasteful manner.

A Chinese private gentleman is not ordinarily considered to be a model of cleanliness. It is difficult, in

England, to find dirtier subjects for inspection than the "tramps" in a low lodging-house; but for dirt, surpassing ten thousand times anything I had yet seen, commend me to my Cochinese postman.

This man entered the cottage, made a low bow to the mandarin, and handed him a letter, curiously bound round with a red paper band; and I soon heard that it was my "route" for Kang-war-ting, and that I should start for that city the next morning.

At the appointed time I took leave of all the kind people at the cottage, except the mandarin, and two of his soldiers, who accompanied me. The sky was overcast, but no rain fell that day, and I travelled with more ease than I had done before, though I had no shoes to my feet, and my wound was not yet healed.

We shaped our course at first nearly west, and farther into the interior. After crossing the plain called by the natives Kiew-pun, we came to very hilly, uncultivated ground, but producing teak trees of immense size and height, and grown as straight as an arrow. There were many other kinds of trees, some large and some small; their foliage was quite strange to me, and, as I am not a naturalist, I cannot give their names; but there was as large and as well grown timber as I had ever seen in any other country.

We now descended into a valley, at the bottom of which was a little brook, the water of which was much discoloured by the recent rains; its size would lead me to think, that during the dry season there was no water

in it. As usual, there was no bridge over it, and we had to ford it.

This day I found out that the Cochinese were good walkers, for during the whole day we only rested once, for about half-an-hour. Most of the way was very hilly, and the roads were rough ; but, notwithstanding, we walked full thirty miles. The two soldiers who were with us had to carry all our provisions and culinary utensils, besides the mandarin's clothing, &c. When we put up for the night, at a mandarin station, they did not appear the least tired, but set to, and cooked the supper for us.

The house we stopped at was like a great barn, being large and lofty ; and in the inside there were twenty wooden beds, purposely fitted up for travellers. As soon as I entered, I could hear what sort of a night's rest I was to expect, from the buzz of mosquitoes under the roof, which was quite deafening ; and after supper, when I lay down to sleep, they commenced an attack upon me, descending upon my face and hands as thick as rain, which kept me employed at slapping my face, and each time killing two or three. I had little rest, after my long walk, for I found the bare boards very hard, and I had nothing whatever to cover me from these troublesome insects. At daylight, they all left me, and went buzzing under the roof again, and I could then have slept in peace, but it was time to be on the road.

With great reluctance I got up, for I felt more tired now than I did the previous evening.

I was glad to hear that I had not more than ten miles to walk this day, before we reached the city of Kang-war-ting.

After leaving the mandarin station, in about an hour, we came to cultivated land again. Tea plants were being reared in many fields; the embankments were planted, some with mulberry trees, banana, and plantains, others with bamboo; the latter, growing to a great height and size, looked very pretty, with their small ash-like leaves on slender twigs, bowing gracefully in the wind.

We now came to a road about eight feet broad, with fields and gardens on each side. There were a few cottages here and there along the road-side.

There were many fields of cotton, sweet potatoes, rice, peas, and a few of sugar canes, beans, ground-nuts, and maize (or Indian corn). Of spices there were cinnamon, mace, cloves, nutmegs, and pepper; the latter growing like scarlet-runners, and stuck in a similar manner. The pepper-corn grows in bunches like young grapes. There were also small plantations of betel-nut, and cocoa-nuts. The borders of the fields were planted with various descriptions of trees and stems. Every house or cottage had a garden attached to it, producing the most beautiful and delicious fruits; some species were only in bloom,

others had the fruit just forming, so that there is a continued supply nearly all the year round.

Of all the countries, east or west, north or south, that I have ever visited, none excel Cochin-China in the production of fruit; the soil and climate appear admirably adapted to its growth and perfection. The island of Java is considered the fruit garden of the East; but I think its productions cannot surpass those of Cochin-China, in quantity or quality. Among the various kinds that came under my observation and taste were the jack fruit, called by the natives meat, a species of bread fruit, which has a fragrant smell and a rich taste. It sometimes grows to an immense size; some I have seen weighing one hundred pounds each. It is the production of a small tree, about the size of a pear tree, to which it is attached by a hollow stem, resembling that of the banana; it is covered with a tough green skin, with blunt prickles on the outside. The edible fruit is in divisions four or five inches long, and one-and-a-half inch thick, of a bright yellow colour, something resembling the pineapple, but not so crisp; it is soft and flabby. In the centre of each division is a kernel, three inches long, and larger than the fruit that surrounds it. The kernels are dried in the sun, and preserved till winter, when they are planted in moist ground for about fifteen days, and just as they take root, and sprout out, they are dug up again, washed and boiled; their taste is very good, something between a yam and an

artichoke, but superior to either. The jack fruit is very plentiful in most parts of Cochin-China, and frequently grows wild; it is much esteemed by the natives.

The durian is also plentiful, and considered very good by those who can master the disagreeable smell attending it, which, to my nasal organs, resembles exploded gunpowder. I have heard it remarked, that if a person accustomed to this fruit enters a room where it is being eaten, he must partake of some, or its smell will cause him to vomit. It is of an oval shape, nearly the size of a cocoa-nut, and has a rough prickly skin.

The ram-boo-tan is about the size of a large apple, and has a very delicious, sub-acid flavour; it is very wholesome and refreshing in this climate. With its juice the natives anoint themselves, to prevent mosquitoes from biting them; I tried the antidote myself, but found it of no service.

There are also the custard apple, doe-koe, nam-nam, pomplemoos (or large orange); the last is rather acrimonious, and not so choice as the common orange, which is in great abundance. I have bought oranges at one cash, or less than the seventeenth part of a farthing each, in the city of Kang-war-ting.

There are several species of gourd, besides the cocoa-nut, banana, plantains*, mangoes, geng-geng, laiches,

* Of those fruits that are spoken of in the plural there are more than one species.

nectarines, grapes, pears, plums, limes, lemons, mulberry, citron, pomegranate, dates, prunes, guava, peach, persimmon, quince, arbutus, and raspberry; but the most delicious of all is the man-gus-tan, a small round fruit, not too sweet, but extremely agreeable to the taste, and always esteemed a great delicacy.

We now passed through a small village, and the inhabitants came running out of their houses to get a sight of the Ho-mow-yan. A boy about sixteen years of age, quite naked, followed us out of the village, and then ran before us, calling at every house he came to, for more than a mile along the road, to tell the inmates that I was passing. I was quite amused to see him take so much trouble to procure satisfaction for his neighbours; for he had to be quick in his movements, to keep ahead of us; as we did not travel at a much less rate than four miles an hour.

About nine o'clock, a.m., we reached Kang-war-ting. We had no view of it before we came close upon it, as it lies in an extensive plain, and is surrounded by fruit and other trees.

I was quite disappointed at its appearance. I expected to see a fine large city, it being the capital of the province of Bin-kang, and the residence of the chief Quong, or Governor. It may be rather larger, but in every other respect it resembles the city of Quong-foo. It is surrounded by a mud embankment and ditch. The fortifications have been a little more cared for, as there are bastions and curtains in com-

manding positions, but there were no guns mounted, nor embrasures for any, the ramparts being plain.

I entered by a low arched gateway. The houses were of greater size than those at Quong-foo, most of them being detached; the larger ones were built of brick, with tiled roofs, the smaller were of mud, and thatched with banana leaves. There many were large buildings, mostly having gardens in front of them, and some all round them, fenced off with hedge-rows, the base of which formed the borders of the streets, which were broad, and overgrown with grass and weeds, showing there was but little traffic along them, and that only from foot passengers, as there was a little foot-path worn in the centre.

The city appeared clean and healthy; there was no accumulation of dirt or rubbish anywhere; which showed that it was not over-crowded with inhabitants. I think, there could not be more than two thousand inhabitants; there were only about two hundred houses of all kinds, though it was a walled town, nearly a mile square. Full two-thirds of the area consisted of gardens, streets, and waste ground.

It is hardly credible how thinly peopled the Chinese inland cities are; from what cause I cannot say, as some of their sea-port towns are as over-populated and crowded as those of China.

There were some large trees growing in Kang-war-ting, which afforded some shelter from the sun. I also noticed a flag-staff, like the one I saw at Quong-foo,

and a very large building close to it, with four immense trees in front, much resembling beech trees. My mandarin told me, that this building was the Quong's palace, where we had to go, to report our arrival. When we arrived at the entrance, we were stopped by two soldiers, who took our chop, and conducted us to a waiting-room.

CHAPTER XVII.

Uneasiness as to my Fate.—Lodged in the Prison.—Treatment of Criminals.—The Governor of the Prison.—Opium Smoking.—Life in the Prison.—Flogging.

It was four months since I had escaped from the pirates at Coh-cah Bay, and had become dependent upon these people for support. They had removed me here from five different places, and I was now more than thirty miles in the interior of the country. I had been brought here, they said, to await an order from their King, as to what they were to do with me, and I was naturally uneasy, not so much at the delay, as from my uncertainty of their ultimate intentions.

I was kept waiting about two hours at the Quong's palace, during which time numbers of the inhabitants came to see me; but I had got accustomed to their prying eyes, and I took little notice of them.

When my mandarin returned, he brought a chop from the Quong, ordering me to be supplied with food and lodging. I accompanied him to a large building at the eastern part of the city. This was the prison! It was in two blocks, and built of brick, tiled, and surrounded by a bamboo fence twelve feet high. At each corner there was a box erected on four bamboos, in

which a sentry sat, to give alarm if any prisoner tried to effect his escape.

I entered this prison with a sad heart, and trembling step. I entered, as I thought, my last home. Words cannot express my feelings, when I saw numbers of men fettered with strong iron chains, jingling about their bodies. A chain is fastened to a large ring, rivetted on their necks, and extending down to their waist, where there is a small ring, with two branches of chain, reaching to their ancles, where it is linked to other rings, rivetted to those joints. The whole weighs about ten pounds, and is very clumsily made. The weight of it, upon the upper ring, causes it to cut into the flesh at the back of the neck, and form dreadful sores on that part, as well as at the ancles; I saw many of the prisoners suffering in this manner.

I expected to have a chain put upon me; I asked my mandarin about it. He laughed, and gave me to understand, that I was not to be confined as a *prisoner*, but merely lodged here for safety, as the natives were very ill-disposed, and the Quong was afraid to send me to a private lodging; that he had ordered me to be accommodated in the house of the governor of the prison, there to remain until the tai-som-bar-li, or grand chop, arrived; that in a few days I should be supplied with clothes, and any other necessaries I required; that I was to make myself quite happy, and not to be the least afraid.

This quieted my mind in a great measure; but I

did not fancy being placed in a prison, under any circumstances. How glad I should have been to have remained at the mandarin's cottage, instead of being brought to this filthy hole.

It almost brought tears to my eyes when I bade adieu to the mandarin, who left the city the next morning. He saw my grief, and assured me I had nothing to fear; that I should soon be sent to Singapore, or some other European settlement. He gave me a string of six hundred cash, took leave of me, and I never saw him again.

My quarters were anything but comfortable. The governor's cottage, which was just inside the prison gates, had but one room, about ten feet square, and, besides the governor and myself, there were twelve soldiers to find accommodation in it. These men were, without any exaggeration, the most loathsome and infectious set of ragamuffins that I had ever seen. They were not worthy of the name of sweeps; for a more dirty, ragged, worse-smelling animal, even in the brute creation, could not be found between Canton and St. Petersburg.

There was one considerable inconvenience that I was subject to during my stay in this over-crowded room; for though it is pleasant in an hotel, in a cold country, to have your bed warmed, it is a different matter when the warming-pan is a Cochinese soldier, greasy, and swarming with all kinds of vermin.

I know that I am sinning grievously against good

manners, in barely hinting at such things; but I might as well try to write a book on Venice without mentioning the canals, or on China without saying anything about tea, as to chronicle Cochinese manners and customs without touching, ever so delicately, on the topic of their domestic animalculæ. There is a little animal friendly to man, and signifying, I have been given to understand, love, whose existence is very properly ignored in the select circles of refined Europeans, but which is as familiar in good society in Cochin-China, as the lively flea is at Pera.

The governor of the prison was a Canton-man by birth. It appears, that the Cochinese government generally choose these men to fill situations where severity is required, and truly this man was severe, and even brutal, for he kept the rattan going on the unfortunate prisoners' hides, from sunrise to sunset, and for the most trivial offences.

He was kind and civil to me, and would often laugh and joke, because I tried to keep myself clean. He told me that he would like to keep himself clean, but he had long ago found it impossible, among so many filthy brutes as he was here obliged to live with. This may be truth, for the Cantonese are not generally considered a dirty race of people, particularly in their persons. He was a tall man, about thirty-five years of age, with bronze complexion, and good features, though rather stern; his limbs were large and well-formed;

and he had the appearance of being a powerful man. He wore the tape and pouches slung over his shoulders. He used to sit on a couch, in the middle of the cottage floor, and there award the daily punishment to the poor prisoners, of whom there were more than two hundred; about twenty of them were flogged daily, on the average.

The prisoners had free access to every part of the jail. They were allowed to follow their trade, which was chiefly making baskets, or other fancy wicker-work, of bamboo or rattan. The bamboo was supplied to them gratuitously, but the rattan they had to purchase for themselves; and each was allowed to dispose of his own work as he thought fit, in a small bazaar within the precincts of the jail. Some of them could turn out very handsome work; but it sold at a very small price, as wicker-work of all descriptions is plentiful and very cheap in this city. A few of them made fans, umbrellas, or embroidery.

The prisoners were only allowed fifteen pounds of red rice per month each, which would hardly keep them from starving, if they did not earn something by their labour; so that each of them cost the government not more than one cent, or one half-penny, per day, for his support. From the produce of their labour, they could procure sufficient food, besides tobacco, oil, grog, and some of them even opium.

The latter article was prohibited under pain of

death to any person who was found dealing in it, or smoking it; and imprisonment for life to any persons found with the drug in their possession. The latter penalty had been incurred by several of them, yet they found means and opportunity, even in the jail, to satisfy their vicious appetites; well knowing at the same time that their heads would pay the penalty, if they were detected again. But such is the direful influence of this drug, that when a person has once become ensnared by its fascination into a permanent habit of smoking it, it no longer becomes a pleasure, but a necessity; and unless he can procure daily a certain quantity, the most violent spasms, numbness of the whole body, painful watering of the eyes, headache, loss of appetite, and general debility ensue, and continue to increase in acuteness as long as the victim is unable to satisfy his craving. Then, how can we be surprised to hear of these poor, ignorant semi-savages risking any penalty to relieve themselves from such torture.

There was no limitation put upon their hours of work; they might attend to it day and night, if they chose. They had to muster twice a day, morning and evening, in the prison-yard, to see that they were all present; they were merely counted, and then dismissed.

Some prisoners, who had been confined here many years, were allowed more privileges; they could parti-

tion off a portion of the premises for themselves, and have their families with them; but the dreadful chain was their greatest terror and annoyance, next to the rattan: the former they could never get rid of, and the latter they were always subject to. Many of them would hold the chain up to me imploringly, and tell me how many months, how many years, they had been fettered with it. One, a respectable-looking old man, full sixty years of age, who had an apartment to himself and family, was very friendly with me; he used to beg me to come and spend an hour with him. His wife was much younger than himself, and he had two children here with him.

He told me he had been twenty-two years confined in this jail for a political offence, on suspicion of being a rebel. He said that the prisoners were committed for no specified time, but during the Quong's pleasure, and for various crimes; that the only means of getting their freedom was by a petition to the Quong in writing, which must be recommended by the governor of the prison and two other mandarins; that he had sent eighty-four petitions, but all to no purpose; he expected he was here for life.

He was much respected by all the other prisoners, and by the governor. He was excused mustering, and had got the rings of his chain made so large that he could slip it off and on when he chose.

He asked me how the Tai-ping-wangites (the insur-

gents in China) succeeded; and whether the English still kept Singapore. He appeared well acquainted with many places out of this country, as Siam, Singapore, and Canton.

He told me that if the authorities wished to send me to Singapore they would not send me by water (fearing pirates), but overland to the city of Yar-ding-ting (Saigon), where there might be some British vessels trading. He was the best-informed native I had conversed with. He spoke the Fookien dialect of Chinese well, and therefore I was at home with him.

He seemed to be pretty well off, for he employed three of the prisoners at wicker-work, and bought largely of what was made in the jail, which he used to send to a better market than Kang-war-ting. Although he had little chance of ever gaining his liberty again, he was not tired of making money; and when I spoke to him on this subject, the old man burst into tears, pointed to his two children, and said, "If I am a prisoner, my children are not; I must make some provision for them."

Flogging! flogging! this word is not sufficiently harsh to express the punishment that these poor wretches are subjected to. The way they are beaten, both openly and privately, is revolting and abominable. For instance, I have seen a prisoner pegged down in the manner before stated, and receive fifty cuts with a rattan, the end of which was split into four parts, each

blow raising four cuticular wheals as large as your little finger; and, before he has received his complement, the split rattan will divide these pustules, and the blood will flow. He receives this severe punishment for having caused too much smoke whilst cooking his rice, or for having passed the cottage-door without bowing to the mandarin. The next, or perhaps the same day, he receives fifty or one hundred cuts for some other trifling offence, and across the old wounds. The flesh having inflamed and become more tender, it is literally flaked away by the rattan. The body has now become numb, the man has fainted, and when he has received his complement he has to be carried to his litter. He is consequently disabled for some time; he has to exist upon his half-pound of rice per day, as he is unable to earn anything by his labour. What is worse is, that his wounds not being dressed, and the few rags which he has on him not sufficient to cover his nakedness, the insects, aided by the excessive heat of the weather, cause corruption to set in, and it becomes offensive to approach him. There were thirteen persons suffering in this manner, more or less, when I became an inmate of the prison, three of whom shortly afterwards died.

The twelve soldiers doing duty here were not flogged with the split rattan, but they were punished very severely. I have seen the governor beating, cuffing across the face, pulling by the hair, and kicking, every

one of them, perhaps for allowing a prisoner to bring in a gill of grog from the market, or for allowing him to carry away a little water from the well to wash his wounds with. This latter offence would be sufficient to cause all the six soldiers who were on sentry, and in different parts of the prison, to be scourged as slaves of slaves, which they are, and as dogs, which they ought not to be.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Quong of Kang-war-ting.—Interview.—Sale of a Wife.—
 Summoned to the Quong's Palace.—A Cochinese speaking
 English.—The Quong alleviates my Condition.

I HAD been twenty-seven long days confined in this horrid place. Though I suffered no harshness from any one, yet my being confined in such miserable quarters, obliged to associate with the lowest scum of the city population, not allowed to pass the prison gates, nor even to relieve nature, unless accompanied by a soldier, annoyed me. My food had been rice and salt fish, both of very inferior quality. My wound had not yet healed; I had no change of clothes, my only shirt and pair of trousers were falling off me in rags; and altogether, both bodily and mentally, I suffered extremely. Though I received no ill-treatment, the confinement was as great a punishment to me as to those who were fettered in chains, and were daily liable to the lash.

On the morning of the 4th of September, I was conducted from the prison by the governor and two soldiers to the Quong's palace.

On our way thither we had to pass some stalls, where women sold fruit and rue. The governor opened

his heart, and treated me to two cups of that spirit, "to give me courage before the Quong," as he said.

We entered by the same gate that I had passed through one month before with the kind mandarin who had brought me to the city.

I was taken to a waiting-room, and in half-an-hour the Quong arrived, carried in a cot by four men. He alighted, and took his position on a large raised platform, in an open room. In appearance he was much like the Quong at Hone-cohe.

The soldiers now stood in two rows, with their long bamboo spears upright in the air, opposite the gates, to the number of about one hundred. As soon as I was called, a mat was placed in front, and the soldiers lined each side of the room.

I sat down on the mat, as comfortably as I possibly could, taking no notice of any one; presently the governor of the prison came to me, and told me to perform the kow-tow, as that was the Quong before me on the platform. I told him that I was not able to kneel. The Quong, seeing me motion to my wound, ordered the governor to leave me, and I could understand that he did not require that compliment from me.

He then said something to me, but not being able to understand him properly, I made no answer, fearing I might make some mistake. Upon this he commenced talking with the governor and other mandarins who were present, and I was soon removed because there was no interpreter.

I was led back to the waiting-room, where I was soon joined by the governor, who took me back to the dreaded prison, but not without some more rue. The women gave me some fruit, and begged him to let me visit their stalls daily, as they said they had plenty of customers when I was there; and as to a few cups of rue, and a little fruit, they would always be glad to give them to me.

I was anxious to know what the Quong had said respecting me; I accordingly got the old prisoner, who could speak Chinese, to ask the governor. The old man was also anxious to hear the news, and he willingly acted as my interpreter.

I heard that the Quong had asked me what countryman I was, and where I wished to go; but finding that I could not understand him, he had given orders for an interpreter to be found, and that I must remain in the prison until then. He had directed the governor to furnish me with a suit of clothes, and to treat me kindly.

I asked the old man if he would be my interpreter before the Quong; he consented; and I induced him to ask the governor to recommend him, which he did, and in four days brought answer, that the Quong would not see the old man upon any consideration. I was very sorry to hear this, as I thought, if he were my interpreter, it might induce the Quong to have mercy upon him, and that I should be able to get away from my miserable quarters sooner; now, I did not know how

long I was doomed to remain, not only in painful suspense, but in abject misery.

About nine days after this, I was supplied with a white cotton dress and pyjamas like those worn by the natives, and a new cloth to bind round my head, as a substitute for a cap; but no shoes of any kind could be obtained.

A most melancholy affair occurred in the jail about this time, that of a prisoner selling his wife.

It appears that this man had been committed four years ago, for having stolen a bag of white rice; and his sentence was, as usual, to remain in prison till further orders.

After he had been here about twelve months, he got permission (through good conduct) to have his wife and family with him. He had three children, two girls and a boy, whose ages varied from two to six years.

His family had not joined him more than six months, when he sold the eldest, a girl six years of age, for fifty thousand cash, or about thirteen dollars. Six months after this, he sold the youngest, a little girl three years of age, for twenty thousand cash, or about five dollars. One year after this, he sold his little boy, five years of age, for the small sum of seventeen thousand cash, or a little more than four dollars; and now he was about to sell his wife. She was a good-looking Cochineese woman, about twenty-seven years of age. He had been married to her, after the Cochineese form, by buying her, ten years ago.

I was present when the poor woman was brought out; she was crying bitterly; and, when her husband spoke to her, she appeared to turn from him with disgust. I pitied her, not merely for her present trouble, but for what she must have suffered on being separated from her children. The day had now arrived when she too must be sold, and for what? not to enable her husband to procure the necessaries of life, but to satisfy his unnatural desire to obtain opium.

Well! to end this mournful affair. The poor woman was handed over to three savage-looking men, one of them receiving a paper, or bill of sale, signed by the husband. They also received a bundle of her clothes; and, after paying the purchase-money, they led her away. She was sold for 80,000 cash, or about twenty dollars.

It would be sickening to describe all the shocking scenes I saw during my long stay in this prison. The *Newgate Calendar*, with all its horrors, would seem mild in comparison with them.

November 9th, 1857. I had now been confined in this filthy place upwards of three months. I had lived on rice and fish for more than six months, and had become very weak and emaciated. My body was covered with painful boils and blains: and altogether I was in a most miserable condition. On this day, the Quong sent for me, as an interpreter had been obtained. I left the prison under the same escort as I had done two months previously. I passed the same

fruit and rue stalls, and the governor gave me two cups of that liquor, as he had done on the former occasion; which, unpalatable as it was, acted as a pleasant stimulant to my weakened stomach.

I was conducted to the same waiting-room at the Quong's palace; and while there, a Cochinese, very handsomely dressed, came and spoke to me. His first words were, "How-de-do, Sir?" they quite amazed me, for they were the first English words I had heard spoken in this country. I hardly knew how to answer him; my tongue seemed tied, not having spoken a word of my native language for so long. I looked at the man; I could hardly credit that one of *his* race could speak English. He asked me what countryman I was; and, as soon as I told him that I was an Englishman, he asked leave of the governor of the prison to take me to his house until the Quong should arrive; which being granted, I accompanied him to a neat house, about a quarter of a mile from the Quong's palace.

He took me into a room, and showed me many things he had brought away from Singapore, to sell in this country, such as knives, swords, muskets, and dozens of metal tea-pots; the latter, worth about one-and-a-half dollar each, he said, "found a ready sale here for ten dollars each." He had also drilling, serge, flannel, broad cloth, calico, linen, and hundreds of pocket handkerchiefs.

He informed me that, generally, he realized two

hundred per cent. here upon European goods, when he sold them for cash ; but when he exchanged them for the produce of the country, and took the latter to Singapore, his profit amounted to four hundred per cent.

He told me he was a native of this city ; but he had been taken to Singapore when very young, and had received his education there, so that he spoke but imperfectly the language of his own country.

He said that he had that morning seen the Quong, who informed him, that he knew nothing about me, only, some fishermen had stated, that they saw me swim on shore at Coh-cah, from a piratical fleet that had taken my vessel, or lorcha, which was then among the fleet ; that he was quite satisfied that I had no connection, willingly, with the pirates, from evidence he had received from other fishermen ; but that he had not yet been able to send an account of me to the King, as he could not truly ascertain my name and nation, which had caused him to send for him to act as interpreter.

It gave me satisfaction to know that the Quong had not been misled in his judgment of my connection with the pirates ; but, on the other hand, it gave me no little concern to hear that no report had yet been sent to the King of Cochin-China respecting me, after being told so many times by mandarins, in whom I thought I could place dependence, that there had been one sent, and that I should have to wait at this city only a short time, before an answer was received, and

an order to restore me to my own country again. Now, I heard that all their statements were false; that this had yet to be done, and that it would be a long while before I should get my liberty; it also showed me how little even those in authority knew about the affairs of their government.

I gave my interpreter, whose name was Kong-whu, a short account of my misfortunes, and the length of time I had already been in the country. I begged him to ask the Quong to allow me to be removed from the prison to some private lodging, and to be allowed a little liberty; as I expected I should have to wait some considerable time before orders were received from the King.

Kong-whu said he would do his best for me. He added that I should certainly have to remain in this city until an order was received from the King to remove me; but he would try to get me a little liberty, if I had conducted myself properly, and the governor of the prison gave me a good character.

After partaking of a glass of brandy, and some English biscuit, we returned to the Quong's palace. By the time we reached it, the Quong had arrived; and a mat, as usual, had been placed for me to sit upon. I dropped upon one knee, and made a very polite bow to the Quong, which he acknowledged by a nod of the head, and a wave of the hand; he then turned to Kong-whu, and desired him to ask what countryman I was. As soon as he was informed that I was

an Englishman, he smiled, and looked very good-humoured. He ordered some cakes and tea to be given me, and sent me some betel-nut and paper cigars, from his own tureen.

He then enquired where I wished to be sent. I answered, to Singapore; knowing that the monsoon, at that season of the year, would favour a vessel going there, though it might be more distant than Hong-kong. He said I should be sent there as soon as he had acquainted the King, and received an answer.

He asked, if I wished to stay in this country; and whether I was a seaman, and understood how to rig, steer, and navigate a ship. I told him that I should be happy to enter into his service, but that I must go to Singapore first, to buy clothes and other necessaries, which could not be procured in this country. In truth, though I did not think fit to let the Quong know it, all that I desired was to reach some European port; and then, however high wages he might offer me, they would never induce me to return to Cochin-China, where I should at all times be in his power, and he could (if he thought fit) pay me off with the rattan, in lieu of dollars. Under present circumstances, it was the wisest policy to offer to serve him, in any way he desired; and therefore I did not refuse to do so conditionally.

He then wished to know if I had been treated kindly, and had received sufficient food during my stay in the city and elsewhere.

I said, that I had received enough, but that it was not of the description I had been accustomed to; and the want of proper food had brought on sickness, which I was suffering from now. I bared my arms and legs, and showed him how they were covered with boils and sores; which I attributed to living upon nothing but red rice and salt fish since my landing at the village of Coh-cah, six month since; I had tasted animal food but once during that time. The Quong immediately gave orders to supply me with the latter as often as it could be procured.

I took this opportunity to tell him what a filthy state the prison was in, and how close had been my confinement there. I begged him to allow me to be kept at private lodgings in the city for the remainder of the time I should remain here, assuring him that I would conduct myself well; and if I committed anything amiss, I should be quite willing to be again confined in the prison as a punishment. He said I was not placed there for having committed myself in any way, nor was he afraid that I should try to make my escape; but it was because he feared the inhabitants might hurt me. He could not allow me to be removed for that reason; but he had no objection to my taking a walk every day in the city, or for a short distance outside; but I must be accompanied by a soldier, for fear of losing myself, or meeting with some injury; and I must obey the soldier's orders in every respect. One thing in particular I must promise him,

if he granted me this privilege; it was, that I would never follow any female, or speak to any, or enter any house where a female was. Of course I undertook to abide strictly by all his injunctions, and thanked him earnestly for his kindness.

He promised to give me some more clothes, and told me that there would shortly be horse races outside the city, and a theatre would be opened, both of which I might attend.

He then enquired if I knew whether the French intended to invade the country; and whether the English government would send the Cochinese assistance, if they asked for it.

I answered, that I was not aware that the French intended to invade Cochin-China; all that I had heard was, that they wanted Turon Bay, and the island of Koh-tron; that I did not think they had any intention of invading the whole country; that I could not see how the English could assist the Cochinese, since there was no treaty, offensive and defensive, signed between them; and that, knowing their own weakness and inability to resist a foreign force, I was surprised they had not followed the example of their neighbours, the Siamese, and submitted themselves to the protection of a power like Great Britain, which at the present day is irresistible, as she has the sovereignty of the seas, and fears no other nation in the world; and, therefore, under her protection, Cochin-China would not have been threatened with foreign invasion.

The Quong asked me if they could now conclude a treaty of that description; and whether England would protect them in that case.

I replied, that no treaty which could be made now with any nation would protect them; all the treaties they could make now would be for commercial benefit only, and not for defence; that, since France had commenced hostilities against them, the best thing they could do was to come to an agreement with her as soon as possible, and then they would have to make fewer concessions; for if she had to force a settlement, she would choose her own terms, which would probably be ten times heavier than they were at the present time; that it was useless for the Cochinese to resist such a power; that as for signing treaties at the eleventh hour, that was impossible, for they could not expect another nation would rush into war to save them, or merely to negotiate a treaty with them. It was an unfortunate affair, and I was very sorry for them.

The Quong then remarked that they were very friendly with Great Britain; that British men-of-war often visited their coast, to destroy pirates, for which they were very thankful; that the British had more than once restored to their own country Cochinese subjects who were in distress in their ports; that the King of Cochin-China had given orders to protect and support all Englishmen, and to send him an account of any who might be wrecked or become destitute on their coasts; that they sent junks to Singapore every

year, to trade with the English, and they were always treated in a friendly manner.

After a little more conversation, they brought me pen, ink, and paper, to make out an acknowledgment for the clothing I had received, and also a statement that I had been treated kindly during my stay in the country, which I wrote out, and gave them. I was then conducted back to the prison.

I felt much more reconciled after this interview with the Quong ; for I knew, by the answers I received, that Kong-whu interpreted faithfully.

CHAPTER XIX.

Allowed to walk in the City.—Buildings.—Cultivation and Use of Hemp.—Weaving.—Sugar Cane.—Rice.—Native Dress.—Arms.—A Puzzle to the Natives.

THE prisoners were very anxious to hear how I had succeeded; they looked upon me as one of themselves, and confined for an indefinite period. They were much surprised to hear that I had obtained permission to walk out once a day; but they appeared glad, and I think there was not one who did not wish to see me free; for I had always been kind to them, and had often interceded for them, to get them spared the rattan, which made them respect and like me.

Two mornings after this, I took a walk round the city, accompanied by a soldier. He took me to the elephant stables; there were seven large elephants, one of which was almost white, and the keeper told me it was nearly fifteen thousand days old, which would make the animal more than forty years of age. They count their own age, and reckon their periods, by days, instead of years; for instance, the old prisoner had told me, that he had been in this jail more than eight thousand days, or about twenty-two years.

I visited the public granary. It is the largest build-

ing in the city, being more than three hundred yards long by one hundred broad, and fifty feet high. I was told that there were more than two hundred thousand piculs of rice in it. Part of it is used as an arsenal, where arms, ammunition, and other warlike stores are kept. I counted one hundred and thirty-two large guns on the outside, under a long verandah, mounted on very clumsy wooden carriages without wheels. They varied in size, from four to twelve-pounders; but they were in such bad preservation that I should consider them unfit for use.

The next day I went outside the city, and bathed in a stream on the eastern side.

The land was well cultivated for miles around. I noticed a species of hemp, growing in many fields where the soil was rich; it is propagated by seeds. It resembles other varieties of the plantain kind, but its fruit is much smaller, although edible. The fibre is derived from the stem, and the plant attains the height of fifteen or twenty feet. The usual mode of preparing the hemp is to cut off the stem near the ground, before or just when the fruit is ripe. It is then eight or ten feet long below the leaves, where it is again cut. The outer coating is then stripped off, until the fibres or cellular parts are seen, when it undergoes the process of rotting; and, after being well dried in houses or sheds, it is prepared for market by assorting it, a task which is performed by the women and children.

The coarser part of the hemp is manufactured into

rope and mats, while the finer is woven with their silk, which forms an adulteration, that requires a good judge to detect.

I visited some cottages, where I saw people weaving, principally cotton goods, and of very narrow width, not more than thirteen or fifteen inches, very coarse, and the yarn badly spun. The yarn is woven while wet. They use a shuttle similar to Europeans. The greater portion of their machine is made of bamboo, and is very clumsy. They showed me a crape-weaving machine, which had a great complication of parts, and they appeared very proud of it.

I also saw them weaving flowered silk and damask goods. They change the thread with splints of hard wood, having numerous holes through which the thread passes.

Some of the cottages were substantially built, but were untidy and dirty in the inside. The inmates appeared very industrious, especially the women. I saw few idle.

The sugar cane thrives well, in all parts of the country. It is planted after the French fashion, by sticking the piece diagonally in the ground. I suppose they have been taught this fashion by the Catholic priests; for when I asked them who taught them, they crossed themselves after the Catholic manner. Some, however, finding the cane had suffered in times of drought, have adopted other modes. It comes to perfection in a year, and they seldom have two crops from

the same piece of land, unless the season is very favourable.

There are many kinds of cane cultivated, but that grown around Saigon is considered the best. It is a small red variety, growing from four to five feet high, and not thicker than the thumb.

The manufacture of the sugar, I was told, was in the hands of a few capitalists, who, by making advances, secure the whole crop from those who are employed to raise it, and bring it to market. Two or three Chinese merchants in Singapore contract for large quantities of it; and, although the best sugar is produced, it is very difficult to procure a single pound of it in the country; only the blackest and the refuse can be obtained retail in any port of Cochin-China.

The production on which the inhabitants most depend for food and profit is rice; of this they have several kinds, which the natives distinguish by their size, and the shape of the grain, viz., the bargaille, marlarququi, bontot-cabayo, lirandi, lirnam-bang, lemuyo, bo-lo, and tangi. The five latter are upland varieties, and the first three are aquatic. They each have their peculiar uses. The bargaille is the early variety: the lemuyo is also an early sort, ripening in about four months from planting, from which circumstance it derives its name; it is raised exclusively on the uplands. Although much esteemed, it is not extensively cultivated, as the birds and insects destroy the greater portion of the crop.

The bo-lo is very much prized, and used for making sweet and fancy dishes. It is given to infants, in substitute for their mother's milk; it becomes exceedingly glutinous, for which reason it is used in making whitewash, which, they say, it causes to become of a brilliant white, and to withstand the weather. There is also a variety of this last species, which is used as food for horses, and is said to be a preventive and remedy against worms.

The rice fields are laid out in squares, and surrounded by embankments, to retain the water of the rains or streams. When the ground is saturated, a seed bed is generally planted in one corner of the field, in which the rice is sown by hand, about the month of May. The heavy rains take place in July and part of August, when the fields are ploughed, and are soon filled with water. The young plants are about this time taken from the seed beds, their roots and tops trimmed, and then planted in the field, by making holes in the mud with the fingers, and placing three or four sprouts in each of them. In this tedious labour the poor women are employed, whilst the men are lounging in their houses, or under the shade of trees.

The harvest for the aquatic rice begins in January. It is reaped with small sickles, peculiar to the country, called yataw. To the side of these a small stick is fastened, by which they are held, and the blades of

rice forced upon it and cut one by one; men, women, and children, all take a part in this toilsome operation.

The upland rice requires much more care and labour. The land must be ploughed three or four times, and all the tuft and lumps well broken up by the harrow. During its growth, it must be weeded two or three times to save the crop from being choked. The seed is sown by hand in the month of May, and is harvested in November. It is never reaped, in consequence of the grain not adhering to the ear, but is pulled up by the roots. If it were gathered in any other way, the loss by transportation on the backs of buffaloes and horses, without any covering to the sheaf, would be so great as to dissipate a great portion of it.

It appears almost incredible, that any people can remain in ignorance of the way to prevent so wasteful a manner of harvesting. It is said, that not unfrequently a third part of the crop is lost in consequence of the scarcity of labourers; while those who are disengaged will refuse to work, unless they receive one-third, and even one-half of the produce, to be delivered free of charge at their homes. This the planters are obliged to give, or lose the whole. Unless the harvest is a good one, reapers are unwilling to engage even on these terms, and the entire crop is lost!

They are supported while they are at work by the

planter, who is during that time exposed to great vexations; they being for the most part composed of the idle and vicious of the population, who go about the country to seek this employment, which affords a livelihood to the poorer classes; the different periods at which the varieties of rice are planted and gathered keeping them in work during a great portion of the year.

After it is harvested, there are different modes of treating it. Some of the planters take it home, where it is laid in heaps, and left until it is desirable to separate it from the straw; when it is trodden out by men and women with their bare feet, who for this operation usually receive one-sixth of the rice. Others stack it in a green and wet state, which subjects it to heat, and gives it a dark colour, and an unpleasant taste and smell. This rice is generally kept for home consumption, and seldom exported; it was on this kind that I lived.

The crop of both the upland and aquatic rice is usually from forty to seventy for one, on old land; but on that which is newly-cleared the yield is much more considerable. This is not the only advantage in planting new lands; the saving in labour is equally great, for all that is required is to plough it once, then make a hole with the fingers, and put three or four grains into it. The upland rice needs but little water, and is never irrigated.

The planter in Cochin-China is always enabled to

secure plenty of manure; for vegetation is so luxuriant, that by pulling up the weeds and laying them with earth, a good stock is quickly obtained with which to cover his fields. Thus, although the growth is so rank as to cause him labour, yet in this tropical climate the decay is equally rapid, which tends to make his labour more successful.

I saw many schools for children: the manner of teaching is similar to that of the Chinese; the children singing, and gabbling their lessons over, make a continual, deafening noise.

Many of the natives were dressed in European goods, such as drillings, calicoes, and serge. I could distinguish them occasionally by the letters and marks, which, as they so seldom wash their clothes, remain on them until they are worn out. Some of them had made dresses out of canvas, which evidently had been saved from the wreck of some vessel, for one jacket had "main topmast studding sail" marked right across the back. Many of the soldiers wore red serge jackets and drill pyjamas.

At each of the six gates to the city, inside, there was a guard-room, capable of holding one hundred men. There were large stands of arms in each, consisting of spears, bows, swords, bamboo shields, and old French flint muskets. There were about one hundred of the latter at each guard-room, which would make six hundred stand of muskets that I saw; besides those kept in reserve in the arsenal. It rather surprised me,

to see so many European arms in a city, and in a country that is not open to trade with European nations.

Most of the muskets were useless, having the springs broken, or some other part of the lock damaged. They oil them outside now and then; but they appeared not to know the craft or nature of a screw. They had been attempting to take the locks off some, and had hammered out the screws, as they would do a nail; consequently, they had not been able to put them together again properly. I did not show them how to clean them, as they appeared very suspicious, when I took one out of the rack; so I left them alone in their glory. It is astonishing, how beings endowed with reason can be so dull of apprehension in such simple matters, but it is not more strange than true; for they cannot comprehend the most simple thing that is foreign to them. For instance, a Cochinese showed me a pocket-knife, while I was at Kang-war-ting; he told me he got it out of the wreck of a European vessel, and had been for years studying what it was, but never could find out. I held the knife in his view, and opened the three blades which it contained, though with some difficulty, from the rust about it; and to see that man's foolish amazement was amusing. He was almost afraid to take hold of it again; so I shut it, and gave it back to him; and then, do you think he could open the blades? No, not one of them, to save his life. By this time there was a considerable crowd

gathered round us; the knife was passed to some twenty of them, and they were all equally clever; not one of them could open it. They pressed it, hammered it, looked at it, and then at me, and there was such a jabber amongst them! I could hear Ho-mow-yan very often uttered by them. Presently it was brought to me again, to give them another lesson; and I showed the owner as many as half-a-dozen times. I think he at last found out the secret. For three successive days he troubled me with that knife; but after that time, I saw no more of him.

I continued my walks daily; but I saw little worth notice, beyond what I have already mentioned. Among the natural productions, the bamboo and rattan claim a particular notice; from their great utility, they enter into almost everything. Of the former, their houses are built, including the frames, floors, sides, and roofs; fences are made of the same material, as well as articles of general household furniture, including chairs, tables, bedsteads, couches, brooms, lamps, fire-blowers or bellows, stands, boxes, and baskets for oil and water. The rattan is a general substitute for rope of every description; and the two combined are used to construct rafts for crossing rivers, as well as in the formation of bridges, and for various other purposes.

CHAPTER XX.

Handsome Allowance granted me by the Quong.—Kang-war-ting Horse Races—Elephant Race.—Foot Racing—Archery.—The Theatre.—Order from the King of Cochin-China to forward me to Singapore.—The Quong's Kindness on my Departure.

CHRISTMAS came, and a miserable one it was for me. Ah! I thought, how the good people in England were feasting that day; but there was nothing for me, besides my usual meagre food.

No order had as yet been received from the King respecting me; but still I had hopes that I should some day, not very far distant, see the face of my countrymen again.

A few days after, the Quong gave orders that I should be paid one hundred cash per day, to purchase fruit or any other little necessary I might require, over and above my daily rice and fish, and, accordingly, every morning the governor of the prison gave me that amount.

I now became a regular customer to the fruit and rue stalls. Sometimes I used to indulge myself a little in the latter article; and really it was excusable, as it was done to "drive dull thoughts away;" but withal, I kept myself decent and quiet.

I enjoyed myself much more after the Quong had made me this handsome allowance; I had always plenty of tobacco, rue, and fruit, which were very cheap. I could get a pint of that spirit for twenty cash; so that one hundred cash per day was ample for all my requirements, exclusive of food; and the natives never tried to impose upon my ignorance.

On the 8th of February, 1858, the Kang-war-ting horse races came off, on a fine little course, about a quarter of a mile from the west gate of the city, surrounded by plantations of fruit-trees of every description. There were the lime, pumelo, mango, orange, laiche, geng-geng, meat, and the bunga-lali,—which bears a peculiar fruit, somewhat resembling a pear, only the inside is full of seeds, and is not pleasant to the taste; it is very plentiful, and is said by the natives to cure fevers.

The preparation for the races is made, every May, after the European fashion. There were posts and ropes round a portion of the course, and a grand stand for the Quong and others of the nobility. There were two other smaller stands, and any number of rue and fruit stalls lining the course. There was a diversity of amusement to come off, besides horse racing.

Archery had no small part in the day's sport. Some of the targets were effigies of men stuffed with straw; others were of a circular form, made of paper pasted to bamboo hoops. These targets were for a peculiar kind of archery, consisting of a bow, with a small cup

in the string, in which a clay marble is placed, and projected with considerable force and precision.

The commencement was a race of twelve horses, or rather ponies; for, however great were the prizes for competition, the rivalship had not caused them to improve the breed of their cattle; a more meagre, dwarfish, crippled, puny lot of horses, I never before beheld. Chinese horses are bad enough, but these were ten times worse; and I think the best mode the Quong or the King could adopt to improve them would be, to have races twice or thrice a year, and give prizes to be run for, that would pay the natives to buy foreign horses, and mix the breed.

Well, these twelve animals started; but with all their whips, rattans, spurs, and shouting, they could not get more than a very slow canter out of the best of them. I pitied the poor beasts; they looked far more in want of a feed of corn, than fit to run a race.

Rice is the only corn they give their cattle, which will never put spirited blood into man or beast; of that I had the most decided proof in my own condition; for I was as much to be compared to an Englishman in physical strength, as their horses were to be compared to English horses.

They made two or three more trials, but it was "no go;" I could have run faster myself, weak as I was. The poor brutes broke down before they got half-way round the course; and, out of the twelve that started,

only three managed to come in anything at all like "racers."

The next was an elephant race, which amused me much. They were certainly much swifter than the horses, though they only walked; but what tremendous steps they took! They shook the ground for one hundred yards round, as with the shock of an earthquake, every time their enormous feet came into contact with it; and with their trunks pointing straight out, like the bowsprit of a ship, their ears and tails distended, there was something grand, but still very clumsy, about their gait. They had handsome cars, with four men in each, on their backs, and two men on each side to lead them. There was a great dispute which should come in first; and, the space being rather narrow for seven of these enormous animals to run abreast, those who got in front determined to keep there, and they appeared to know what game they were at; for they did not exactly race, but heavily and clumsily, yet quickly, dodged each other across the course; and, after a most amusing race, or shuffle, the large white one came in first, amid peals of laughter and applause.

The next was a foot race, between twenty men. They started remarkably well, only they did not hold their arms and hands high enough; but they ran very nimbly. Then there was a race between ten boys. These ran also very well, and came in evenly.

When the racing was over, the archery commenced

with bow and arrow. The shooting was very bad indeed, not one arrow out of five striking the target anywhere, though only fifty yards distant. They wished me to try ; but, not being used to it, and fearing I might make worse practice than they had done, I respectfully declined.

The next competition was with the cup, marble, and bow. This they managed far better than the arrow, the marbles whistling through the target, and many of them close to the centre.

The course was not so crowded with spectators as I had expected ; but, when the racing was over, and the archery commenced, which appeared not to absorb so much of their attention, they crowded around me ; so much so, that, with the heat of the day, it became quite unpleasant ; and, therefore, as all that was worth seeing was over, I returned to the city, much entertained with the day's sport.

When the festivities, which only lasted one day, were over, the theatre was opened for free admission, which I attended. It is a large building of an oblong shape, about three hundred yards distant from the Quong's palace, and inside the city. There are two remarkably large trees standing majestically at either end of it, and affording considerable shelter from the sun. The theatre was very plain, not being walled in on either side, and having only a mud wall at each end. The roof, which was of great size, covering an area of some five thousand square feet, rests upon huge

wooden pillars, and is supported by immense beams, which show the fine growth of native timber. Inside, on the end walls, were hieroglyphics and antediluvian-looking animals, painted in glaring colours. To the beams were suspended long strips of red paper, with gilt edges, and Chinese characters on them, bearing the names of the principal mandarins present.

There was a great concourse of spectators, both inside and out. The sides, being open, afforded a view to many who could not be accommodated inside. The Quong was there, squatted on a raised platform, in front of the actors, with a small drum before him, supported in a diagonal position, on which he would strike a tap every time any part of the performance pleased him; which also was a signal for his purse-bearer to throw a small string of about twenty cash to the actors. To my taste, this spoiled the effect of the piece; for every time the cash fell among them there would be a silence, and the next moment a scramble for the money; and it fell so frequently, as almost to keep time with the discordant music in the orchestra.

The actors were engaged by the day, and in this manner received their payment, the amount of which entirely depended upon the approbation of the Quong, and the number of times he encored them by tapping his drum. I could see many of them paid far more attention to the drum than they did to their performance; though I suppose the amount thrown to them is equally divided. Sometimes the string on

which the cash was tied unluckily broke, and the money flew in all directions ; by which some of the bystanders profited, not being honourable enough to hand it up to the poor actors.

I was but little amused with the performance, as I could not understand the language. All that took my fancy was their grotesque attitudes, and gaudy attire. They were very richly dressed in silks and satins, embroidered with gold.

The music was on a par with the acting, the instruments consisting of drums, flutes, flageolets, banjos, and gongs, which made the most discordant sounds, without either time or tune, that ever met the ear of man ; so much so, that after watching and hearing them for about an hour, it became painful to me to remain any longer.

On the 20th March, I was summoned before the Quong again ; and, without the usual escort of two soldiers, I was accompanied only by the governor of the prison. After waiting a short time in the ante-room, I was taken before his highness in the usual style. Kong-whu was also there, and interpreted to me the glad tidings that the long promised and much longer expected tai-som-bar-li, or grand chop from the King, had arrived, and with it an order to send me to Singapore as soon as possible.

The Quong said there was no convenience to send me to Singapore by water ; but, if I could walk well, he would send me overland to the city of Yar-ding-ting

(Saigon), where there might be some European ships trading; and that whatever amount might be asked for my passage to that port would be paid by the government at Yar-ding-ting, as he had orders from the King of Cochin-China to that effect.

He then made me a present of the following articles, viz., two jackets, and two pairs of pyjamas, quite new, one of silk and one of cotton; two silk sashes; two silk crape turbans, one blue and one black; besides a piece of silk about ten yards in length, and five thousand cash for pocket money.

He added that he would be happy to provide me with shoes, but none could be procured in the city; he hoped that my feet would not become sore, and impede my walking. He kindly asked if my wound was well. I was happy to say it was, although the shot was still in it.

He then told me that he hoped, as soon as I arrived at Singapore, I would tell the British government that I had been taken care of during my stay in the country, which I promised faithfully to do. He said that he should always be happy to treat Englishmen kindly, especially those who conducted themselves as well as I had done. He was aware that I had had a long stay in this country, and under the most trying circumstances; he knew that my food and lodging had not been the same as Europeans are accustomed to; but he had provided for me as well as his *poor* country could afford; that I had been protected from injury

during the time I remained under his care; and therefore, he considered he had done his duty, and wished me a safe and pleasant journey to Yar-ding-ting, and from thence to Singapore.

CHAPTER XXI.

Removal from the Prison.—The King's Order to forward me to Singapore.—Leave Kang-war-ting.—Appearance of the Country.—Party of wandering Malays.—Tiger-snaring.—The Sea-side.—Sufferings on the Journey.—Rest at a Station.—Healing of my Wound.—Journey continued.—Remarkable Ruins.—Plain of Toa-tai-ting.

THE next morning at daylight, I was removed to the guard-room at the east gate, there to remain until the guides were obtained, and the chops made out for my journey. The first thing I did after my removal was to walk to the river outside the city, wash myself thoroughly, and put on a suit of my new clothes, and oh, how comfortable I felt by this transition!

I remained several days at this guard-room; but I was quite contented, and looking forward to the march to Yar-ding-ting with much pleasure. There was no restraint whatever put upon my movements; I could go out and walk about without my usual attendant.

On the 19th of April, the chops were made out. They were written on two large sheets of white paper, in red Chinese characters, and bore the seal of the Quong, or Governor, of the province of Bin-kang. They contained an account of my destitution, and the time I had remained in the country, together with the

order from the King to forward me to Singapore, &c. These papers were addressed to the Quong of Toa-tai-ting, in the province of Camraing, being the next province to Bin-kang. At Toa-tai-ting I should change guides, and be passed on to the next province by the Quong of Toa-tai-ting.

My guides also arrived this morning, consisting of a mandarin and three soldiers. The soldiers were heavily laden for the journey, having our provisions for fifteen days, carried in cylindrical baskets suspended on bamboos.

We slept that night at the guard-room; and early the next morning I bade farewell to the city of Kang-war-ting. I never felt more happy in all my life than I did that morning.

We left by the east gate, and turned to the westward. After walking about two miles, we stopped at a little cottage, belonging to the mandarin who commanded our little party; and, as he was not fully prepared for the march, we had to wait here until the next morning.

At break of day, we started again, and travelled in about a south-western direction.

For the first five miles, we passed through well cultivated land, being the plains of Kang-war. Afterwards we came to more hilly ground, uncultivated, but studded with some of the largest timber I had ever seen, mostly teak.

We here met about one hundred wandering Malays,

many of them females, and all very scantily dressed; the males only wearing a cloth or maro round the waist, and the females a sarong, the upper portion of their bodies being quite bare, and in colour as black as the negroes of Africa.

These wandering tribes get their living chiefly by begging; they are said to be extremely lazy, and seldom seek for any employment, but lead a life similar to that of the Gipsies in England. They are looked down upon by the Cochinese, and treated with contempt. In some parts of Cochin-China, and in Cambodia, they have small villages, and live in the meanest and lowest of huts. They eat lizards and other reptiles, which abound in some parts of this country. They may sometimes be seen in canoes, on the rivers, fishing; but they seldom pursue this vocation at sea.

Many of them obtain their livelihood by tiger-catching; the skin of this animal being valuable. They use a novel mode of ensnaring these savage beasts. Two Malays generally go in company, and travel over many parts of the country. Those who follow this business regularly have chops, or permits, from the Quong of Saigon, allowing them to build a hut for their use in any place they think fit. The hut is built on the top of four bamboos, from fifteen to twenty feet high; and, as a tiger cannot climb these, the two men can remain in it, and watch their snares in safety.

The snare consists of large leaves, or sometimes

pieces of paper about six inches square, covered on one side with a substance of the same nature as bird-lime, and containing a poison, the smallest particle of which, getting into the animal's eyes, causes instant and total blindness. They are laid about thickly, with the bird-limed side upwards, in the track of a tiger; and as surely as the animal puts his paw on one of the treacherous leaves, he becomes a victim; for, finding it stick to his foot, he shakes it, by which means other leaves adhere to it; he then probably rubs his paw over his head, in the attempt to rid himself of these leafy encumbrances, but they stick to his head and face; he then perhaps rolls himself on the ground, when he becomes fairly covered; and while scratching and rubbing himself to get free, some of the poisonous bird-lime gets into his eyes and blinds him. He growls and roars in his agony, and this is the signal for his captors to come and dispatch him. The Malays then skin the animal, and take any parts of his body that may be valuable. They leave the carcass, well strewed with more leaves, as a bait for other tigers. Other animals, and birds also, they ensnare in the same manner.

We walked through dense forests for about seven miles. The wood was cleared for about one hundred yards on each side of our path. There was very little underwood or jungle, but there were some of the largest, straightest, and tallest trees that I had seen in any country. There was timber enough here to build

a navy, and nearly the whole of it was teak, which I consider second in quality to none but British oak. If it were cut and sold, it would pay the ransom of a nation.

We next came to open country, partly cultivated. Groves of orange trees lined each side of our path. I saw pepper plants growing in many fields, besides nutmegs and cinnamon trees; the latter very large and coarse. The Cochinese allow their cinnamon to grow too large before they strip it. The bark is often from an eighth to a quarter-of-an-inch in thickness, and very large, more resembling tanner's bark than cinnamon, and not of good flavour, being hot and acrid to the taste. This valuable spice is very plentiful and cheap in this country. The natives make but little use of it, except as an article of export. The Chinese often load their junks entirely with it; but they use it only as a medicine.

We lodged for the night at a small cottage by the road side, and free of charge, as I had done on my journey to Quong-nam.

At daylight the next morning, we resumed our journey. After walking about six miles, we came to a valley between two large mountains, which stood at right angles to our path.

The ground was very bare and sterile, the granite rocks protruding in many places. There was a scanty pasture here and there, but I did not observe any cattle grazing. The valley was about eight miles long, and there was not a house to be seen anywhere.

My guides walked at a brisk pace, and I felt a great deal of throbbing pain in my old wound, which was threatening to become troublesome to me again. My feet also were very sore, from the roughness and heat of the ground; however, I was determined to keep up as long as I possibly could, for my spirits were exhilarated by the thought of liberty.

Our course was nearly south-west, being direct for Singapore; and, so long as we travelled in that direction, I felt confident that the Quong had not deceived me, by trying to march me unknowingly to Canton. I could judge of the direction we were travelling by the sun.

After we had passed through this lonesome valley, and were about to emerge again into inhabited country, which I could tell by the distant bark of dogs, we came to a small village, where we rested at a rue and fruit stall for an hour; and, after taking a glass or two of that liquor, I felt much refreshed.

We made another start; and, after walking a mile or two, we passed some paddy and rice fields well flooded, the embankments of which formed our path; they were very wet and slippery, and made walking irksome. Farther on, we met with groves of orange trees, which extended about three miles. Then we came to a dazzling white, loose sand, almost as hot as that of Hone-cohe.

I could hear the sea not far distant, and I longed to reach it. At length it opened to our view—the clear,

blue, majestic sea! The dampness of the beach afforded relief to my scalded feet.

There were many small Cochinese fishing boats on the water, and a few large trading junks beating up against the north-east monsoon, which (though it was the middle of April) had not yet changed.

We walked along the beach for about seven miles, until we came to a promontory, when we turned inland to cut across it. It was now drawing towards evening; and, as we came to a small cottage, we took up our quarters for the night.

At daybreak, we set out, and journeyed along the beach again for about nine miles, when we came to another promontory, and cut across it in the same manner as before.

After walking some distance farther, I began to be fatigued. Though my body was weak, my heart was strong; and I had kept up, the last day, only by supernatural exertion. The mandarin asked me what was amiss, that I fell behind the rest of the party. I told him, and begged for a rest. I showed him my wound, which had turned almost of a purple colour, and would evidently burst out again soon. He seemed sorry for me, but begged me to try to keep up with them, as they only had provisions with them for the number of days in which we were supposed to reach Toa-tai-ting.

I promised to continue walking, while I possibly could. He endeavoured to cheer up my spirits as well

as he could. We made another start, but at a slower pace.

Eight miles farther on we turned inland. The ground was overgrown with low shrubs, mostly of a prickly nature, something resembling the broom of the north of England; and only by keeping directly on the worn path was a person barefooted able to travel.

It was frightful to see this prickly undergrowth on each side of the path, and in some places overhanging it. It scratched my legs so severely, that the blood trickled down in many places, though it appeared to take no effect upon the thick skins of my companions. They must have thought me a very effeminate man, to suffer from so many things, which did not even inconvenience them. This reflection stimulated me to bear them without complaint, if possible.

When we had cleared this path, we came to more fertile soil, where there were many cottages with gardens to them; at one of which we stayed for the night.

At daylight we pursued our way. I was very stiff, and in considerable pain, worse, if possible, than I was the last evening; but I had made up my mind not to succumb to mental depression, or any other affliction. I resolved to go forward, until nature itself should yield; for I was on the march to liberty! How I held out so long as I did, I know not; for believe me, reader, I was in such agony that day, that I was hardly conscious of walking at all.

I am unable to give any description of the country we went through that day; all that I can recollect is that we travelled inland.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, we came to a mandarin station, consisting of a large dwelling-house and several out-houses, for the accommodation of travellers, all walled in, like the one I have described on my journey to Quong-foo; the only difference being that, at each corner of the wall inside, there was a rampart, with a gun mounted on it, for the protection of the premises.

Here we rested for the night; and as soon as the master of the house heard that I had arrived, he sent for me. When he saw that I was lame, he enquired the reason, which our mandarin explained to him. He desired to see my wound; and he kindly gave me some bark to make a lotion for it.

He then examined our grand chop from the Quong of Kang-war-ting, and when he had read it, he would not hear of my continuing the journey until I was better, promising to supply the wants of our party during the time.

Oh, what joy it gave me to hear this kind offer! I need hardly say that it was gladly accepted by all parties; for our mandarin had been afraid that we should be compelled to wait at some place until I was better, and that our provisions would be expended before we reached our destination. This was the only inconvenience that a delay would have caused; but

now, with this generous and humane man's offer, a week's delay was of no consequence to us.

I used the medicinal bark, as the mandarin had directed me; in two days afterwards, my wound burst, and the shot came out. It proved to be a small bullet, made of a mixed metal of a poisonous nature. It left a ghastly opening, some inches deep, in the thickest part of my thigh; but as I continued to apply the lotion to it, it soon began to fill up, and heal rapidly; and in ten days I was so far recovered as to be able to proceed again.

After leaving the station about a mile, we came to a grove of mango trees. The fruit was in a green state, but still it was a temptation to our soldiers, who cut down some of it by throwing stones into the trees. They reserved them to eat with our salt fish, their sourness in this state affording a relish to salt provisions; and I have no doubt they are wholesome when used in moderation.

The Cochinese are very fond of eating fruit with fish, salt or fresh; I have often observed them eating pine-apples, tamarinds, oranges, mangoes, and many other kinds, with their fish and rice. They use salt instead of sugar to give a relish to sour or bitter fruit.

We then entered upon an open plain, full thirty miles broad. On the opposite side was visible a chain of very high mountains, which, from their distance, appeared of a dark blue colour. There was a remarkably high peak of a sugar-loaf form,

well defined against the clear sky. My guides called it Ti-muer-tow.

In the centre of the plain were extensive ruins, covering two or three acres of ground. I cannot imagine what they could be, for the form, substance, and architecture, were quite different from any building I had seen in the country. There was a square tower in the centre, the top of which had fallen, but what remained was full fifty feet high. The walls in some places were from ten to fifteen feet thick, and entirely built of red brick. The sides were much overgrown with ivy. My guides pointed out these ruins to me, long before we reached them; they called them Scarp, the meaning of which I do not know. There was not a house of any description, within miles of them. The plain did not appear to be cultivated in any part, though the soil appeared fertile, being of a rich red loam. Numbers of large vultures rested on the decayed walls and on the branches of a few low trees which stood near. These birds did not appear to be afraid at our approach; for they would hardly fly out of the trees, when we passed underneath them. Some of them were fast asleep, as though they had overgorged themselves on some carcase, which had fallen a prey to them in this lonely and desolate place. Several of these birds stood more than three feet high; their plumage was light brown and black; they had large bills, curved like an eagle's.

It was almost sundown before we reached the oppo-

site side of this plain, where there was a small village, and a brook running past it. We stayed at a little cottage for the night.

Early the next morning, we went through the village, which was about a quarter-of-a-mile long, and was called by our guides Poe-ah. We then entered a small valley, through which a rapid stream ran in a southerly direction. We crossed it on a bamboo bridge, built only for the accommodation of foot passengers, and passed out at the south-west corner of the valley, between two huge blocks of mountains. From thence our path led over undulating moorland, broken by low hills, covered with granite rocks, to another village; which is beautifully surrounded by plantations of betel-nut, mango, and other fruit trees, and well stocked with many kinds of birds, especially wood-pigeons, jays, and magpies. The two latter kept up an incessant chatter as we approached, but were silent again as soon as we had gone by, thus showing their antipathy to strangers. The villagers were mostly employed, the men weaving, and the women spinning cotton; some were working in their gardens, and few appeared to be idle.

We then skirted a very fertile valley, cultivated, I suppose, by the inhabitants of this village. There was rice growing in many fields; and men were irrigating them with pumps, made of bamboo, and worked by the feet after the manner of a treadmill. The water was obtained from the small brook that we had

crossed, and which had wound its course round into this valley.

We now came to a forest of large timber, clothing the sides of the mountains which were in sight yesterday; and, owing to the height of the trees, I could not distinguish the sugar-loaf peak to-day.

After walking about five miles through it, we again arrived at the welcome sea-beach, which was lined with immense and almost perpendicular sand cliffs, down which we had to scramble, sometimes sinking up to the thighs in the loose sand. I and the mandarin, steadying ourselves by the aid of a few shrubs, reached the bottom in safety; but our soldiers, with their baskets and bamboos, were unable to follow us, and had to walk along the top of the cliff, over a rough, prickly ground, for about four miles, until the cliff had dwindled away.

A few miles forward we came to a hut here and there, which were mostly rue and fruit stalls, for the benefit of passengers; at one of these we remained that night.

In the morning, we continued along the beach, and met a few passengers now and then. About midday, we turned inland, to cut across a promontory; on the other side of which was a small fishing village, called Mok-kong, where we rested for an hour, and had some refreshment. Many of the natives came to see me; among them was a Canton man, who told me he had resided here five years, carrying on the business of rope-

making. He cautioned me to be on my guard against treacherousness on the part of the Cochinese, and not to place any dependence on them. I informed him that, if it had not been for the protection of these natives, the Cantonese would have taken my life at Coh-cah. This seemed to surprise him; and, when I explained to him the facts of the case, and how kindly I had been treated by the Cochinese, he did not say any more against them, but slunk away, like a dog with his tail between his legs, and with his pride cut down an inch or two. I suppose, he thought of showing off a little, by talking in that way before the natives, who are simple enough to put up with the astute bearing, and the bullying, proud, conceited ignorance of a few Cantonese that have taken shelter among them;—men who, if they returned to their native land, would forfeit their heads to the executioner for the crimes they have committed!

We proceeded along the beach again, which here appeared to be quite a highway, by the number of passengers we met. Most of them were carrying open baskets suspended to bamboos, Chinese fashion, with various wares in them, which, it appeared, they had purchased at some mart not far ahead of us. I therefore expected to reach some large town before night.

Many of them were carrying European goods, such as calicoes, drillings, &c. I enquired where these people came from. My mandarin told me, they had come from Toa-tai-ting, or the port of Mui-Guio, where

most likely one of the king's ships had arrived from Singapore, as these goods were brought to Cochin-China only by them; and that we should reach Toa-tai-ting before night.

This was welcome news to me, for another day or two's rest (which I was sure of, since the Cochinese never hurry themselves in doing anything) would be good for my wound, which was not yet quite healed.

We now turned inland, and walked for a mile and a half over a peat soil or bog, which shook each time we put foot to the ground. The Cochinese seem not to know how to make use of it for fuel. Whether it is fit for that purpose, or not, I cannot say, as it was not cut into anywhere. The appearance of the surface, the vegetation, and the trembling motion, reminded me of the peat bogs I had walked over in the counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland, when I was a school-boy, sixteen years ago.

After this we arrived at cultivated ground, watered by numerous small streams. Rice was growing here in abundance, besides sugar canes, and in some fields, coffee. We soon reached a village, every house in which had a small garden around it, growing many kinds of fruit trees, especially the meat, laiches, and pine-apples. We did not halt at any house here, as we wished to get to Toa-tai-ting before dark.

The paths now were broader, and paved with peculiar rough red stones, which were very painful to walk upon. They led up a long, but gentle ascent; and

when we reached the summit, the vast plain of Toa-tai-ting opened to our view, extending as far as we could see in the north and westerly direction. Several rivers could be distinctly traced in their winding courses through it; they did not appear larger to the eye than they do when traced on a map. Trees could not be distinguished from shrubs, so great was our elevation. Where we stood, we had a complete bird's eye view of the plain, and the extent could not have been less than one hundred miles in circumference.

We were now emerging from a table land, bounded by a ridge of not very high mountains on the north-east side, as our ascent had not been more than one mile; but the opposite side, which skirted the plain, appeared much more lofty; for a rapid descent lay before us, for full two miles, ere we reached the bottom.

At the foot of the mountains, we came to a broad deep stream of fresh water, over which was a very clumsily-made, old, and tottering bridge, which shook so violently, when we passed over it, that I was almost afraid it would give way before we reached the opposite bank. It was built of square timber, six inches in thickness and about twenty feet long, the ends resting on a thwart piece, supported on three piles. There was no railing, or anything along the sides of the bridge, to prevent a person from falling off, if he made a false step. It was three feet broad, being six timbers abreast. These were not mortised or bolted in any way, but fastened in a peculiar manner with bamboo

lashings. Thirteen of these spans crossed the river. When passengers meet on this narrow bridge one is obliged to stand sideways, to allow the other to pass. I heard there are often fatal quarrels on the point of precedence, that generally end in one or both parties being precipitated into the river, which is very rapid; and, as the banks are perpendicular, they must swim a mile, or drown, before they can extricate themselves.

CHAPTER XXII.

Toa-tai-ting.—Reception there.—The Prison.—Criminal Torture.
 —Food of the People.—Tea.—Cochinese Language.—Chinese
 Dialects.—The Cochinese Numerals.

THE city of Toa-tai-ting is in the north-east corner of the plain, with a mud embankment round it, and is not more than half-a-mile square. There appeared to be but few houses inside, but the suburbs extended for miles round. A large river ran past its western side, which emptied itself into the sea. The latter could be seen, about fifteen miles distant. A high promontory stretched out about seven miles from the north-eastern extremity of the plain. It is a continuation of the line of mountains which border the table land, and is known by the name of Cape or Point Kega.

I was not near enough to the bay to see if there were any good harbours; but I should judge there were by the number of native vessels, large and small, sailing there.

Mount Tai-cou, towering to a great height, stood to the north-east of us, distant about eight miles.

From the plain, our path lay through groves of betel and cocoa-nut trees, with cottages here and there. At one of these we halted, while our mandarin went to

the city, to report our arrival. Numbers of the natives came to see me, and crowded the cottage to suffocation; so that the owner closed his doors, to save his furniture from being broken by them. This act enraged the mob outside, who set up a most demoniac yell, and threatened to demolish the house, if the doors were not thrown open; and they commenced pelting them with large stones.

I began to think my situation was critical, between the two parties; as the owner of the cottage tried to persuade me to leave his premises, and I was not certain whether the people wished to injure me or not. I had no protection but the three soldiers, who were more frightened than I was; for, being strangers here themselves, they could expect no favour from an enraged mob, especially as they were my guides. The doors soon yielded to the incessant battering, one being split to pieces, and the natives came pouring into the cottage again; but as soon as they had burst open the doors, they became quiet. Many of them seated themselves beside me, and made me small presents of fruit, rue, and tobacco; while others stood round, and stared at me; but all of them had a smile on their countenance, and assured me of their friendship; though they cursed and threatened the owner of the cottage.

Some of them were very respectably dressed, and were very civil to me, offering to pay for any refreshment I required. They told me all they wanted was to

look at me, as they had never seen an Englishman before.

In about an hour, our mandarin returned; and it gave me considerable relief to see him, as I knew, with the grand chop in his possession, he could afford me protection, in case the natives changed their disposition towards me. He told me that we should have to remain at the cottage that night, and the next morning go into the city. Being very tired, I was glad to retire to rest immediately after supper.

In the morning, after breakfast, I was conducted to the city, and taken to a large building just inside the west gate, and close to the prison, which I knew by the jingling of the chains on the inmates as they walked about inside.

A mandarin was here to receive me, very handsomely dressed in Cochinese costume. He pointed me out a bamboo couch in the room, which I was to sleep upon; and, after examining our chop, he saw that the articles which the Quong of Kang-war-ting had given me were correctly delivered to me by my guides, who had charge of them, besides three thousand cash that remained of my money; the whole of which he handed over to me, and told me to take care of them, as there were many thieves about, who would soon steal them. I thanked him for his caution; and, when he had assigned me to the charge of an old man with orders to supply me with food, he left me.

The mandarin who had accompanied me from Kang-

war-ting now took his leave; but, from his kindness and attention to me during the journey, I could not allow him to depart without making him some small present, as an acknowledgment. I therefore gave him one thousand cash; which I considered I could spare from what remained of the money that the Quong of Kang-war-ting had given me. He appeared very thankful to me for this small donation; and, I have no doubt, it had a more beneficial effect, and raised me higher in the estimation of the natives, than twice the amount spent in an ordinary way.

The internal arrangements of this city were much the same as those of Kang-war-ting, or Quong-nam, there being about two-thirds of the area taken up as gardens and roads, and one-third only built upon. It is surrounded by a mud embankment, about fifteen feet high, and of immense thickness. There were no guns mounted on the ramparts.

In the centre of the city was a square building, with a flag-staff in front of it, rigged in European style, and having a topmast. This was the residence of the Quong.

Opposite the house where I was located was the jail, surrounded by a bamboo fence. I could often hear the poor prisoners howling whilst being flogged; which punishment appeared to be administered as frequently as at Kang-war-ting.

On the third day after my arrival, two natives had been arrested, on suspicion of having stolen ten

thousand cash, besides four suits of clothing, and pawned them. The evidence against them was the pawn-tickets being found in their possession. The prisoners declared they had bought them from a stranger; nor could the pawnbroker, when examined, identify either of the men as being the person who pledged the clothes at his house. But the evidence was considered sufficient to condemn them to the torture, in order to force them to confess that they were guilty of the crime; and in the latter case they were sure to be decapitated. These two prisoners, one fifty and the other seventeen years of age, were father and son.

About ten o'clock, a.m., the old man, who looked after the house I was staying at, pointed to the bamboo fence surrounding the prison, as a place where I could go and witness the horrid process.

It is strange that natives should be willing for foreigners to witness the barbarous punishment which they shrink from, and abhor to see themselves; but I have been invited to do so more than once; and my opinion of it has been asked for afterwards. When I denounced it as being wicked and cruel in the extreme, they generally coincided with me.

I think the Cochinese wish for reform in the laws of their country, and in the mode of administering them, more than any other nation. A democratical government is what they desire, and their agitators are those natives who have been educated at Singapore, who have

seen the internal arrangements and discipline of a British jail, and who have heard of such a thing as trial by jury. These are the individuals who are trying very hard to alter the laws, and who impress upon the minds of their countrymen, that absolute power, placed in the hands of any one man, is corrupt and vicious; and that nothing is so morally degrading to the subjects of any country as to allow even a monarch to have uncontrolled power over the lives and property of his people.

Though this may seem inconsistent with what I have previously said of the Cochinese, it is not less true; for among them there are two classes of people, the reverse of each other in their compass of natural intellect. The one, though I cannot call them clever, are shrewd, cunning, sagacious, and acrimonious; the other class are simple. The latter are governed entirely by the former; knowledge is considered the greatest treasure they can possess; school-masters and teachers take precedence of all other trades, and are respected by the whole nation.

The Cochinese have a secret society, a kind of freemasonry, the principles of which are said to be extremely hostile to the government, and to the reigning dynasty.

But to return to my narrative. I went to see these two unfortunate men tortured. They were led out with the yeah-cae round their necks. The young man was crying bitterly, for he knew that the flower of his

youth would be withered ere sunset. He knew that his strong and active limbs, which now bore him easily and firmly along, would be this day so crippled, that walking would either be an impossibility, or cause him such pain as to be worse than decrepit old age; that his youth's blood, flowing freely in his veins, must this day be swealed by red hot irons; that he had to undergo excruciating torments, yea, the pains of hell! And all this was only on suspicion of having committed a crime, of which perhaps he was innocent! What must this poor young man's feelings have been! His punishment was far heavier than the old man's, who knew that, in the ordinary course of nature, he could not live many years to bear his sufferings. I pitied the young man, I pitied them both.

They were bound hand and foot, and pegged to the ground with strong pegs, in the same manner as I have before described, preparatory to being flogged.

In front, squatted on a platform, was the judge, a mandarin of high rank, with four other mandarins and a Buddhist priest around him. These were to see that the torture was performed effectually.

To the right was a small smith's forge, with a fire lighted, and blown by bellows in the shape of a square box, having an air-tight slide in the inside, which worked by the hand like a piston, forcing out air through two square holes in the side against the fire.

By the side of each prisoner stood four soldiers; two at the head, and two at the feet. To the left were

twelve soldiers drawn up in line, holding long spears mounted on bamboo poles.

The torturer was a cadaverous-looking man, with a scoundrel-looking aspect, a hook nose, tall, and ghastly lean! He was dressed in fawn-coloured clothes, and had a black sugar-loaf hat on his head. By his side stood two satellites, dressed in similar clothing, and dangling heavy chains, pincers, long irons, and other instruments of torture, in their hands; looking as if they had been selected for these offices on account of their hideous and forbidding aspect.

At a word from the mandarin who was on the platform, the twelve soldiers came to the charge with their spears. The torturers ran to the forge, with two pairs of tongs having broad ends, like those used to press women's hair, only much larger, and capable of retaining the heat a long time. These were placed in the forge, and the two boys or satellites commenced blowing the fire with the box bellows.

A procession came forward, consisting of a Buddhist priest, with some incense sticks burning in his hands, accompanied by three low mandarins. The priest, after admonishing the prisoners, asked them if they would confess their crime. The young man cried pitifully, begging for mercy. The old man said nothing, nor showed any emotion whatever; he knew well enough it was useless. Presently the three mandarins and the priest left them, and returned to the judge, who called out again loudly; when the soldiers who stood by the

prisoners stripped them of their nethermost garments, and laid their extremities bare. The judge gave another order, and four soldiers with rattans ran on each side of the prisoners. The judge then called out "y-tan," and the soldiers commenced flogging them most barbarously. One stood at the head, on the right hand side, and one at the feet on the left side, two to each prisoner, their rattans converging across the posteriors of the poor wretches.

The young man cried bitterly for mercy; but the old man only groaned in his agony. The flogging was so severe, that in a few moments the flesh rose in pustules, which soon burst, from other and repeated blows. Each of them received about one hundred lashes, when the judge called out to cease. The priest and three mandarins came forward, in the same manner as before, to ask them to confess; but by this time the young man had become insensible. The old man denied the crime still. The procession returned to the judge, who called out again; when two soldiers ran forward, each with a pair of scissors, and cropped off the prisoners' hair. This being finished, the judge gave another order; when the torturers ran to them with the red hot tongs; the priest and two mandarins came also, the former with a small cup full of some spirit, a few drops of which he spilt on the hot irons, and then waved his hands to the judge, who gave the final order, when the two satellites seized the red hot pincers, flourished them in their hands, sprang forward, and

clasped them firmly on the thickest part of the left thigh of each prisoner. The muscles trembled with pain all over their bodies, both groaned fearfully, and at intervals gave a loud shriek. The flesh swealed with the heat of the irons, and a blue steamy smoke arose, attended with a low crackling, or rather fizzing noise, causing a very offensive odour.

During the time the irons were kept on their thighs, the priest twice went up to them, to ask them to confess their crime; but only the old man was sensible, and he took no notice of the priest. The latter, each time he approached them, dropped some liquor on the tongs, and on the burnt flesh of the prisoners. When the irons had been on about two minutes, they were taken off, and oh, what a disgusting sight the wounds were! They were full six inches in diameter, and half an inch deep, black, white, and red in places, from which blood and water were running. I could not bear to watch this inhuman proceeding any longer; for what I had already witnessed made me feel ill.

While I remained in this city, I was not allowed to pass the gates; and the old man who catered for me was very reluctant to allow me to leave the house, even for a walk; therefore I contented myself indoors, under a promise that I should proceed on my journey in a few days.

Night was the worst time to pass away; for a temperature above 100° , with clouds of mosquitoes, and pediculous couches, were not favourable to sound

sleep. The only bed-clothes I had, was a mat; and my legs, feet, hands, and face, were bare. I at last gave up resistance in sheer despair, and allowed the mosquitoes, and other insects (if I may use the metaphorical expression), the free run of a domain, which they readily appropriated to their own separate use and benefit, till morning.

Close to my quarters was a stall, kept by a Cochinese woman, who sold p^rue, fruit, cakes, and jerked beef, or as it is sometimes called charqui,—that is, lean beef cut into slices and partly dried in the sun, then hung for ten days, by which time it turns high, and is unpleasant to the taste and smell. The Cochinese are very fond of it in this half putrid state, when frizzled on a skewer over a slow fire, and eat it as a relish to their liquor. My appetite for animal food compelled me to partake of it daily, for I could not obtain beef in any other state; and it was preferable to fat pork, in this hot climate. I have no doubt it is wholesome; for it is very tender and easy of digestion.

In Toa-tai-ting, the natives drink little tea, it being scarce and dear; they use as a substitute the decoction of a native bark, which is taken by the middle classes after each meal. While I was here, I paid five hundred cash, or nearly eight-pence, for an elli-ong, rather more than an ounce, of Chinese tea.

The Cochinese language contains many words similar to the Canton dialect of Chinese; but these are all supplementary and foreign; for instance, elli-ong

(ounce) is a Canton word, but made use of by the Cochinese generally. The etymology and syntax of the Cochinese language are quite original, and distinct from any other ; though Malay, Siamese, and Chinese words are used. There are various dialects of it, but the principle does not vary to any extent ; all Cochinese can understand each other ; while the Chinese have as many dialects of their difficult language as they have characters to express it. I have found in many parts of China, and especially in the province of Fookien, the people of one village unable to understand the people of another, though only living a few miles apart from each other ; for instance, the Amoy Chinese can hardly understand the Tong-wha natives, though living within thirty miles of them.

The Canton dialect is almost as strange to natives of Amoy, or of any town in the province of Fookien, as the English language ; and the Cantonese are equally looked upon as foreigners. The Teng-lang, or natives of Fookien, have almost as much antipathy to a Qung-tong-lang, or Cantonese, as to a European. But this hatred is principally caused by the latter infesting the Fookien coast with their piratical tymungs, or teng-ers, for the purpose of plunder.

The Fookien men seldom follow piracy themselves. They are generally willing to trade with foreigners. They own more European-built vessels than all the other provinces of China. They are also willing to emigrate, when circumstances offer for their interest ;

most of the Chinese residing at Singapore, Siam, and other settlements in the Straits, are natives of the province of Fookien, and some of them are very wealthy.

The Cochinese numerals are as follows:—

Moke	—	One		Trow	—	Six
Hi'	—	Two		Vei	—	Seven
Bar	—	Three		Sheh	—	Eight
Bong	—	Four		Yat	—	Nine
Nam	—	Five		Teh	—	Ten.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Leave Toa-tai-ting.—Appearance of the Country.—Abundance of Mica.—Lizard-hunting.—A Storm.—Cultivated Hills.—Cochinese Entertainment.

DURING the short time I remained at Toa-tai-ting I had numerous visitors, and among them the most influential men of the place, besides many mandarins; some of them brought me presents of tobacco, rue, fruit, &c.

After seven days' stay here, my travelling chop was made out. A mandarin and two soldiers arrived, to conduct me on my way again. I was removed to a house outside the city, there to remain in readiness to start the next morning.

It was on the 21st of May that I set out again. We were now about one hundred miles from the city of Yar-ding-ting, "the way the crow flies;" but how many miles we might travel before reaching it was extremely doubtful, as Toa-tai-ting was considered about half way, and we had travelled little less than two hundred miles on our journey here.

Our path lay direct across the plain, in a south-westerly direction. We had to cross many small streams; some we forded, at some we paid one cash

each to be ferried over. After walking about fifteen miles through highly-cultivated land, we came to a river, much larger than the one we had crossed by the bridge, on the other side of the plain.

There was no bridge that I could see over this river; but there were plenty of ferry boats, which charged us five cash for a passage. I here saw three Malay canoes, propelled very swiftly by hand-paddles. They were trunks of trees hollowed out, tapered off at each end, and painted red.

On the other side of the river, the land became more uneven; but our path led through a beautiful country, with fields of sugar cane, rice, sweet potatoes, and cotton. The rising ground was planted with betel-nut, while on the banks of some of the small tributaries of the river were banana and plantains, growing most luxuriantly. Most of the land was divided into fields, and separated by thorn hedges. I also noticed the castor oil plant growing wild in many parts.

Descending into a little valley, we came to a cottage, where we stayed that night, there being no other habitation within ten miles ahead of it.

There was a small rocky stream running through this valley, in which I bathed. The water was clear and shallow; and, just as I stepped in, I was struck by the sight of a great quantity of what appeared to be gold dust in the sand, and among the white quartz and slate which formed the bottom. But I was soon undeceived, when I collected some of it; for it was

nothing but mica, which lost its golden tint as soon as it was disturbed. I never saw such large mica anywhere before, not even at the gold diggings in Australia, where it abounds. Some pieces in this stream were the size of peas, but very thin; and, when removed to the surface, they looked like the scales of a fish.

The Australian diggers say that where there is mica, there is gold. I have no doubt there may be some affinity between the two minerals; for the formation of the land, the stratum of the rock, and the presence of white quartz, are decidedly indicative of the presence of the precious metal; and I know a valley leading out of Campbell's Flat, Castlemain, in the Forest Creek diggings, Australia, much resembling the one I was now in. Not having time, nor the implements for searching, I was obliged to leave it unexplored; but it is my humble opinion that there are rich mines of gold in this part of Cochin-China.

The next morning we started again, and crossed the rapid stream, from which a light mist was rising, and winding up to the rich, heavy trees that overhung it. The little thatched cottage standing on its bank, the green fields with dewy plants, the distant hills appearing one by one between the trees in the grey morning light, and the glad orisons of birds greeting the kindling east, altogether made a sweet change from the humming of mosquitoes, which had made night hideous.

We soon came to a gentle ascent, which led to a

thick jungle, infested by tigers. The soil here was a red loam, mixed with sand. After going forward about a mile, our mandarin called my attention to the track of a tiger in the sand. As the dew had damped the surface, the track was left very plainly along our path for some hundreds of yards ahead of us; it was about six inches broad.

The forest extended for about eight miles; and was succeeded by an open space, where we got a more commanding view of the country.

The sky was overcast, and but little wind was stirring. We could hear the distant thunder rolling around, which in this country is a true precursor of coming rain. The weather was favourable to travelling; though sultry, it was not so scorchingly hot as it had been.

The ground we now traversed was barren, producing nothing but a few stumpy fir trees; the soil consisted of loose white sand, covered with furze, and swarming with the handsomest lizards I had ever seen. Some of them were nine inches and a foot in length, very gracefully formed, their skins spotted and streaked with all the colours of the rainbow, especially red, yellow, and green. They were very nimble in their movements; they could discern us approaching a long way off, and, being very timid, would dart into their holes in the sand, like so many rabbits. They are quite harmless, and feed upon insects, which they are able to catch by the suction of their breath. Their flesh forms a great

delicacy with the Cochinese, and many natives make their livelihood by catching them. This they manage by digging them out of the sand. The lizard-catcher can tell, by the appearance of the hole, whether there is a lizard in it, or not; and, as the creature seldom burrows down more than six feet, he follows the hole with a spade or a hoe, and then plunges his hand in, and draws out the lizard; he then breaks its back, to prevent its escaping from him, while he searches for more. I had the curiosity to taste its flesh, and I found it really good, and not unlike rabbit.

We then crossed a sandy plain. Fortunately the sky was cloudy, and I could walk on it with comparative ease; but its looseness rendered travelling tedious. There was no vegetation whatever, not so much as a blade of grass to be seen anywhere; and the sand was so white, that it was painful to the eyes, and caused just such a sensation as ground covered with snow does. The only relief I could find was to walk close behind one of my guides, and keep my eyes occasionally on his back.

In some places the wind had raised the sand into small hills; and, in passing over them, we sank knee deep in it. In other parts, where it was harder, it was blown in ridges or streaks, resembling a ripple on the water.

Shortly afterwards, we had to descend a steep declivity, which led to a small oval lake of salt water, about three miles in length, and surrounded by barren

hills of white sand. The bottom was visible, even in a great depth, through the clearness of the water.

On the opposite side of the lake were two small cottages, inhabited by fishermen, who caught a peculiar kind of fish here, much resembling the char caught in the lakes of Westmoreland and Cumberland. These fishermen were licensed by the Quong of Toa-tai-ting, to fish in the lake; and the two cottages belonged to government. The threatening appearance of the weather made us secure one of these for the night, as we were afraid we should not be able to reach the next station, seven miles distant, before the rain commenced. We had but just sat down to our evening meal when the "band of heaven" began to play in thundering style, if not altogether for our entertainment, yet to my profit; for it would make the paths damp and cool, and render walking much more easy and comfortable. The evening sky was hid by a lattice-work of showers, as blast overtook blast; and the distant hills stood out against the white electric rain and the pale blue lightning.

The surface of the little lake was ruffled as tempestuously as though it were a sea; and the large drops of rain, pouring upon it, sparkled on its surface like myriads of diamonds. The thunder was loud and grand, the lightning forked and vivid. The sandy hills were flooded with the rain, which in the short space of half-an-hour made furrows in their sides, only to be filled again when the sun should absorb the damp, and the wind waft the sand in clouds into the

vacancies. And this unceasing work goes on for centuries, though nothing is lost or destroyed, but only changed!

It was truly an awful night. Thank God, I had shelter; and though I was surrounded by heathens, yet how truly the roaring of that tempest told me that He was there, and that I was not alone in that distant and almost unknown country!

The next morning, the weather was quite fine again. We left the cottage at sun-rise, and continued our journey over the sand, which was soft and cool to the feet.

After walking five miles, we came to a gentle ascent, with a little furze growing here and there, which gave a pleasant relief to the eyes. Lizards were very numerous here, and were skipping about in all directions. We passed through a valley; and, for the next eight miles, over undulating ground, uncultivated, producing only a scanty growth of dwarf fir trees.

After fording a small stream, we came to a few cottages, where we halted for an hour, and afterwards proceeded again. Six miles farther, the soil changed to a light mould, mixed with decomposed granite; and, though very hilly, the ground was cultivated in terraces to the very summit of the mountains, growing cotton, sweet potatoes, rice, pepper, and ground-nuts.

The tops of some of the hills were covered with huge granite blocks of various shapes, and had the appearance of having been at some distant period water-

washed, many of them being perforated. The soil here was so rich, even among these rocks, that all the interstices were cultivated; which shows the value of the land, and the industry of the inhabitants; for it must be great labour to reach the summit of some of these hills.

Having come to a few cottages, we stayed for the night at one of them. It was superior, in both exterior and interior, to those I had lately lodged at; and the furniture bore evident signs of the opulence of the tenants.

The hostess was a comely dame of some forty years. She appeared much interested in the account our mandarin gave her of me. She took the earliest opportunity to show her pity for my misfortune, and charity for my distress. She brought me a string of three hundred cash, besides providing our party with fruit, rue, and cakes for our supper. Cakes I call them; they were a farinaceous compound, folded in banana leaves, and boiled; tasting, ugh! of chalk, sawdust, and brass filings, which crushed in my teeth; it was like chewing earth! But I must not complain of this lady's generosity; for the fruit she gave us, consisting of pineapples, bananas, mangoes, and meat, being as nature made it, and unaided by Cochinese culinary art, was excellent.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Illness of the Mandarin in charge of me.—Journey delayed.—A Lizard Hunt.—Novel Mode of getting a Light.—Journey resumed.—Arrival at Bing-wah-ting.—Its Appearance.—Saigon.—Its Trade.—French Designs in Cochin-China.—Openings for Commercial Enterprise.

EARLY the next morning, we went on, and walked through ten miles of well-cultivated country, studded with cottages.

At noon, we emerged between two low hills on the sea-beach again; along which we travelled as before.

Our mandarin became very unwell this day; the constant fatigue had almost worn him out, though he was a strong man, and used to travelling in this country. We had therefore to discontinue the journey; and we stayed at a mandarin's house, in a small fishing village. The master proved to be a very kind man; and he was much amused at seeing me. He had a good supper provided for us, and altogether made us very comfortable.

The next day, our mandarin was still unwell, and unable to proceed; therefore, by our host's persuasion, we remained at his house. To pass away the time, his son (a smart young man of eighteen), myself, and our two soldiers, went out lizard-hunting.

We walked about three miles, to a sandy moor covered with low furze. Here our soldiers commenced digging out the lizards. Sometimes they lost the hole, in the loose sand, and therefore could not find the lizard; but generally they were successful.

After enjoying this sport for about three hours, we all felt inclined for a smoke of tobacco; but none of us had the means of getting a light, and there was no house nearer to us than the village. One of our soldiers, however, not liking to be disappointed, used the most novel means to obtain fire that ever I had seen.

He cut two pieces of dry wood, about a foot long and half-an-inch in diameter. In the middle of one he made a round hole, just large enough to admit the end of the other. Then, tearing a piece of his cotton shirt, he placed it over the hole, resting the end of the other stick upon it perpendicularly; and, twisting it swiftly between his hands, the friction soon produced fire, which ignited the rag, to the astonishment of myself, and the thankfulness of us all.

After hunting lizards for another hour or so, we returned to the village. We had caught, altogether, twenty-three, varying in size from six inches to a foot in length; all of them spotted, and marked with the most beautiful colours.

The following morning, we resumed our journey. We kept the beach till noon, when we turned inland; and, after walking about four miles, we came to the city of Bing-wah-ting.

I was left in a cottage with the two soldiers, while the mandarin went and reported our arrival to the Quong. He soon returned, and brought answer that I was to remain where I was for that night, and proceed next morning to Saigon, which was only seven miles distant.

Bing-wah-ting is situated on level ground, and is by far the largest city I had as yet seen in this country. It is enclosed by brown stone walls, twenty feet high, round which were placed many cannon, commanding the suburbs, which are very extensive, and in general appearance the same as I had seen at other places, consisting of low one-storied houses, very irregularly built, but always kept much more clean than in any town of China.

The inhabitants were not so civil and kind to me as they had been at many places in the interior; nor was my appearance at all strange to them; for doubtless they often see Europeans, in command of vessels (owned by Chinese at Singapore) which trade to the city of Saigon.

After breakfast next morning, we started for Yarding-ting, or Saigon; we crossed a swampy flat, on the other side of which stood that large, dark, and dreary-looking city. It has a most dismal aspect at a distance, especially when approached on the north side. No person would take it to be an inhabited place; it looks more like an immense reservoir of water, or fortified lines, for there are no houses visible from the outside,

they being lower than the immense walls surrounding them. A solitary staff, with a white flag flying on it, was the only sign of animation in this city, the Babylon of Cambodia.

We met throngs of natives of all classes, rich and poor, hurrying along the streets, as though on some important business. They took but little notice of me, and less of each other. I was left at a large guard-room, unoccupied by soldiers at this time, and opposite the east gate, while our mandarin went and reported our arrival.

Saigon is on the right bank of the river Dong-nai, a broad and rapid stream, navigable for miles above the city, even for large vessels. It is the capital of the two countries of Tsciompa and Cambodia, both of which pay tribute into its treasury. It belongs to Cochin-China, being the second city of importance in that kingdom, and is governed by a viceroy, who is generally a prince of the blood. It is the principal arsenal, and is the only place in this country where there are foundries for the casting of cannon. It is the greatest emporium of trade, and contains (suburbs included) about eighty thousand inhabitants, of whom about thirty thousand are foreigners, viz., Chinese, Siamese, Malays, and Cambodians. The city is guarded by seven forts, of very inferior construction, with many guns of large calibre, which are so mounted, that they can neither be elevated nor depressed. Many of them are imbedded in the masonry, only having their muzzles

on the outside, and the breach inside, bare. These forts have a stone ridge, running along the outside, for men to stand upon while loading the guns.

The city is surrounded by a substantial stone wall, about forty feet high, and in places thirty feet in thickness; the stone is of a peculiar kind, being of a dark red, or rather brown colour, and appears at a distance like rusted iron. Outside it there is a deep ditch, two hundred feet broad, crossed by several bridges; opposite to each of which is a gateway into the city.

Within the walls are many large brick buildings, with tiled roofs; but having only a ground floor. The principal are the Viceroy's palace, the Quong's palace, the arsenal, the mint, and the government granaries.

The trade of the city is considerable. Hundreds of Chinese junks come here annually, as well as many Siamese, and a few European-built vessels; but the latter are all owned by Chinese, resident in Singapore, or the Straits. The Viceroy has four European-built vessels, besides a steamer of five hundred tons; these form his naval squadron. Innumerable native craft are always to be seen anchored in the river.

The inhabitants are very suspicious of Europeans, and especially of Frenchmen. For this reason, I was not allowed to enter the place, but was kept very strictly in the guard-house.

Many of the Cochinese told me that France had notified that she would shortly invade a portion of the country, to which she asserted she had a right by some

treaty, signed by an usurper to the throne of Cochin-China. A statement of the claim that France has upon this country may not be uninteresting to the reader here.

The establishment of a permanent settlement in Cochin-China is not a new design. It was attempted seventy years ago, and the opportunity has been again gladly seized upon by the Emperor Napoleon; evidently, not merely for the purpose of avenging the insults and cruelties experienced by the French missionaries, but with the view of obtaining a footing from which to carry on operations in the eastern hemisphere.

In the year 1774, the usurper, Caung-shung, was deposed by three brothers of pure Cochinese extraction, who reigned to the satisfaction of the people. The son of Caung-shung succeeded in getting himself proclaimed king in the place of his father, who had been killed by the new sovereigns. He was unsuccessful, however, in establishing his authority, and had to fly to Siam.

He entrusted a French priest, named Adran, with the charge of his son (then about thirteen years of age), to whom he had been tutor. Adran took this young prince to France, where he prevailed upon the reigning monarch to espouse the cause of the aspiring lad; and a treaty was signed at Versailles, between him and Louis XVI., in the year 1788, in which it was stipulated on the one part, that France should place under the orders of the King of Cochin-China a squadron of

twenty ships of war, five complete European regiments, and two regiments of native colonial troops; and furnish him with one million dollars, one-half to be contributed in specie, and the remainder to be laid out in saltpetre, cannon, muskets, and other military stores.

On the other part, the King of Cochin-China agreed to furnish stores, &c., for fourteen ships of the line; to permit consuls of France to reside in all parts of his dominions; to cede the bay and peninsula of Turon in perpetuity; to construct roads; and, in case of war in India, to furnish fourteen thousand men for the aid of France, and sixty thousand to defend any portion of Cochin-China.

Armed with this document, honoured with the title of Bishop of Cochin-China, and entrusted with the office of ambassador extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, Adran left France with his charge, in the frigate *Medusa*, in 1789.

Passing over various particulars, I may state that, by the French aid, Caung-shung again ascended the throne, which had been usurped by his ancestors. But upon his death, and that of his son, who succeeded him, French influence declined, and the most bitter system of persecution has followed. The French missionaries have been imprisoned, tortured, and crucified, driven to live in holes and crannies of the rocks, and perform the rites of their religion in secret, and in the daily expectation of a bloody martyrdom. I must say that France has a perfect right to avenge the indignities

and barbarities committed upon her subjects; or to spread her influence over those portions of Asia that are not yet obedient to the decrees of Europe; but the visible determination to form a permanent settlement introduces a new element into the affair.

Of course, no person who is interested in British interest in the East can regard the formation of a naval and military depôt in any part of Cochin-China by a powerful European state otherwise than as fraught with injury to Great Britain, in respect to her trade in the China Sea, and the Straits' settlements.

Hitherto the British empire in Asia has had no enemy, within ten thousand miles, capable of even a menace. The French possess Pondicherry it is true; but Pondicherry is no refuge for a fleet, and can supply no army.

The Portuguese hold the cities of Goa and Macao; in both places, however, they exist but by sufferance; for they are subject not only to European, but even to native force.

The Dutch power in the Archipelago is real, but Holland cannot meet a European danger; and her policy has always been to grasp everything, and then yield back half, with a groan over the advantage taken of her weakness.

The Spaniards possess a *point d'appui* in the Philippines, which an energetic race might make formidable; but their colonies are buried in the trance which for three centuries has oppressed the mother-country.

No native power, save China, possesses a fleet, even if I may be allowed to call it such; and the Chinese feebleness has been demonstrated too often for that vain race to disbelieve.

No European state can send armies across half the world; and England, since the victory of Plassey in 1727, may be said to have stood alone. The fleets of the maritime powers might pass and repass across her course; but from attack, from a real substantial danger, she has been exempt. The consequences have been most important, both to her enterprise and her finance.

Bombay and Madras, richer than any maritime cities of Asia not belonging to Anglo-Saxons, have been left wholly undefended. Calcutta, it is true, is protected, and is probably the city on earth most impregnable to external attack; but it has been made safe by no device of man.

Stations have been jotted down at Hong-kong, Singapore, Labuan, and Shanghae, without a thought of how they are to be defended in case of war. With the dominion of the seas, and India as her storehouse, the certainty of ultimate victory was too plain not to act as a check on Asiatic discontent and European envy. The case will be widely different, should France succeed in building an empire, or even founding a settlement in Cochin-China.

Hue, the residence of the court of Annam, and the chief city of the kingdom, is situated on a large river, and commands a delta as rich as Bengal. A fleet, such

as is only seen in European waters, might refit there in absolute security. Stores, coals, men, and shelter, would be equally at hand; and, from these resources, the great drawback of France, in any Asiatic contest with Great Britain, would be removed.

In the event of a European war, we must either fortify Bombay, Madras, Singapore, Hong-kong, and Shanghae, or keep up great fleets in Asia, to watch the mouths of the Annam and the Amoor.

Passing from this view of the question, let us look at the "tradal" aspect. If we consider the position of this empire, its close proximity to the new Chinese treaty port in the island of Hai-nan, and to Hong-kong, it must strike the most superficial observer, that a trade here would necessarily have followed the more extended one with China, and the commercial dealings with Siam; for there is a considerable population, and many useful commercial products may be obtained.

Permission to trade, although little use has been made of it, has been granted to Great Britain, in the name of the East India Company, over and over again. Warren Hastings, in the year 1798, commissioned Captain Chapman, when restoring some mandarins to that country, to investigate its capabilities for commerce, and to discover what connection could be made with it advantageous to Bengal. He was vested with powers, should he find the state of things answer the expectations formed of them, to conclude a commercial treaty. Permission was given by the King to trade;

but Chapman seems to have left rather abruptly in 1804.

Mr. Roberts was sent on a political mission to Cochin-China by the East India Company. The next expressed willingness to permit trade is recorded in the account of Crawford's embassy, in 1821.

But this, and the visits of Sir John Davis and others, have all resulted in mere enquiries, with no practical evidence on our part of a *bonâ fide* desire to trade.

In conclusion I may add, that the shores of Cochin-China abound with some of the finest harbours in the world. From Cape St. James to the Bay of Turon, there are no less than nine of these, safe, and accessible with every wind. Those of Turon and Hone-cohe are not surpassed by any in the world; and, if France were to make a judicious use of any portion of this country she might obtain, promoting free commerce and civilization, instead of fortifying and making *points d'appui* of every place, I see no reason why England should be jealous, or in any way alarmed at it.

CHAPTER XXV.

Attack of Fever and Ague.—Native Doctor.—Present from the Quong.—Set out for Artien-ting by Boat.—Cambodia River.—Mandarin Junk.—Interview with a Mandarin.—His Astonishment at the Appearance of a European.—Mosquitoes on the Rivers.

THE guard-house at Saigon, where I stayed, was very large, covering nearly half-an-acre of ground, and capable of holding one thousand men. It was divided into three compartments; one for officers, one for soldiers, and one for a lock-up or temporary prison.

There are five of these guard-houses round the outside of the city, but they are only used in times of rebellion, or when an attack is made upon the place, and then they form the quarters of a picket guard.

I was lodged in the officers' quarters; the only tenants besides myself were two old men, and their wives, who had the care of the building, and attended to my wants.

On the third day after my arrival, I was taken very ill of fever and ague, complaints very common among the natives. The ague commenced every alternate day regularly at nine o'clock, a.m., and continued till three o'clock, p.m.; during which six hours I felt a shivering, and could not get myself warm by any means, though the temperature in the room was above one

hundred degrees Fahrenheit. This attack was followed by extreme heat and thirst for about three hours, after which I felt almost as well as though nothing had been amiss. I felt no inconvenience during the next day, and not until nine o'clock, a.m., on the following morning, when I had another attack, and as regular to the time as clock-work.

After suffering in this manner for nine days, I complained of sickness to the man who had charge of me; he reported it to the Quong of Saigon, and a native doctor was ordered to attend upon me.

The doctor said he thoroughly understood how to treat this complaint, and that he could cure me in a few days; so I put myself under his care. He was a Christian too, a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, which he appeared determined that I should know, for he crossed himself almost at every word he spoke.

He first placed two small candles at the foot of my bed, and hung between them a miniature cross, representing our blessed Saviour crucified. He then prayed, or pretended to do so, for about half-an-hour. Then he came to my bed-side, and brought the lighted candles, and the miniature cross, and desired me to chin-chin or worship them! but I positively refused, and told him that I required no priestcraft; that, if he was a doctor, I wished him to cure my disease; and that I never worship anything that is made by the hand of man, for my religion teaches me to worship God, and Him alone.

As I had been able to pick up a few native words, and this man understood a little French, what I could not say in one language, I was able to explain in the other; so that this priest-doctor understood me perfectly. He seemed quite astonished at being "brought up" so suddenly. He little thought, perhaps, that there are more sects and more dialectical controversies in the Christian religion, than in the heathen religion of his own country.

He remarked to the person who attended upon me, that he did not know what kind of a man I was, not to believe in the religion which he had been taught (as he said) by my countrymen!

Not wishing to prolong a discourse which afforded me no interest, I begged him to order me something proper for my complaint; so he commenced by feeling my pulse, not in my wrist, but in my ankle! He then wrote a prescription, and sent it to an apothecary to be dispensed.

When the medicines, which consisted of herbs, arrived, he ordered boiling water to be brought in a large bowl, in which he immersed them. He told me to sit up in my bed, and placed the bowl between my legs. He covered me over with mats, so that the vapour from the herbs, which had a very nauseous smell, could not escape. In this position I remained for about half-an-hour, till I became saturated with perspiration, and in so much pain that I begged to have the mats removed, but the doctor would not permit

it. I was kept in that state for full an hour, when the mats were removed, and I was allowed to go to sleep.

After three hours' sleep, I awoke greatly relieved; and I had no attack the next morning, although it was due. For the three following days I underwent the same operation, and on the fourth I was almost well, thanks to the skill of the Cochinese faculty.

I had now remained at Saigon eleven days; and, as there was no European vessel then trading there, the Quong gave orders to forward me immediately to Artien-ting, a sea-port in Cambodia, and more generally known to foreigners by the name of Con-kow. It is about two hundred miles south-west from Saigon. As I was not in good health at this time, the Quong kindly ordered a fast boat to be engaged, to pass me down the rivers and canals leading to Artien-ting; besides six men to row the boat, and a mandarin to take charge of me.

When the mandarin arrived, he brought me, as a present from the Quong of Saigon, ten thousand cash, value intrinsically two and a half dollars; but which would go farther in this country than ten dollars would in any other. He also brought one picul, or cwt. of sugar, two piculs of rice, and half a picul of salt fish; these were the provisions for the voyage, but the cash was my pocket-money. In addition, there was one pound of Chinese tea for my own use, besides twenty-two cocoa-nuts.

For the correct delivery of these articles, the man-

darin required my receipt, which I gave him, after putting my forefinger in the ink, and dabbing it on the paper, which is the mode of ratification by a person who is unable to write or read their characters.

On the 12th of June, 1858, according to my calculation, I left Saigon; and, having walked about two miles through the suburbs, where I met Chinese from all parts of China, especially Fookien and Canton men, I arrived at the confluence of two streams that empty themselves into the Dong-nai, swelling that already great and mighty river.

Our boat was here anchored beside a house. Houses and warehouses line both sides of all the rivers here, and many of them are extended for some feet into the water, being supported upon piles.

There was a great deal of merchandise, especially sugar and dried fish, being transported in lighters to the junks and native vessels. In one of the lighters, I saw some Manchester bales being brought on shore from a Siamese lugger, which shows that European goods are sought after, even in this remote corner of the globe.

We proceeded up the western branch of the river. Our boat was about twenty feet long, six feet broad, and very light. The after-part was covered in with thin planks, nailed to semi-circular hoops, which afforded some shelter from the sun and rain. It had one deck fore and aft, under which our provisions were stowed, upon the stone ballast which was to give the

boat stability, for without it these vessels are so cranky, that they almost capsize if a person steps on the gunwale. Even with the ballast in, they are so high out of the water, and the deck is built so much above the water line, that they lurch and roll at any movement on board. We had no sails, our whole dependence lay upon our oars; for the canals are so narrow, and so winding, that sails would be useless.

Not being quite well, I lay in my cabin the greater part of the day, and took but little notice of the country. All that I observed was that, after rowing up the river about three miles, we turned into a canal, with high banks on each side, which shut out the land from view.

At night we anchored in the canal. Our crew lay down to rest for about six hours, and then commenced rowing again. In this manner we continued for five days; sometimes stopping at a village for an hour or so, to buy fruit, vegetables, or any other little necessary we required.

On the sixth day, we came to the great Cambodia river, which was about a mile broad where we crossed it. It forms the boundary line between the kingdoms of Cambodia and Cochin-China. I saw numbers of Malay canoes, swiftly sculling over its deep waters. The natives here were quite naked, and almost black.

We then entered another canal, where we met many lighters, loaded with sugar, salt fish, rice, and other produce of the country. Most of them were going to

Artien-ting, where their cargoes would be shipped for China or Singapore.

The next day we came to a large city, on the banks of a fine river. Here we stayed for some hours, but I was not allowed to go on shore. Many of the natives came on board to see me; some brought me presents of fruit or tobacco. They treated me much more kindly than the people at Saigon; for, as they never had any dealings with foreigners, they had no antipathy to them. Wherever Europeans, and especially Roman Catholic priests had been, strange to say, I always found a marked difference for the worse in the behaviour of the people, who at those places showed hatred of all whites; and, in my position, I was more likely to find the *true sentiments* of the natives, than one who was on an independent visit to the country.

After leaving the city, we came to large plantations of cocoa and betel-nuts, lining each side of the canal. At night we anchored opposite a mandarin station, which was surrounded by a strong fence, to prevent tigers from breaking in. Here we had to show our chop, before we could pass, as pirates often frequent even these canals. Cargo boats are obliged to carry arms, to protect themselves against those marauders.

Whilst sailing down this canal the following day, we met an armed mandarin junk. As soon as it came alongside, the crew threw their grapples on board of us, which brought us round so violently, that our little

boat nearly capsized. The junk being under sail, with a fair wind, dragged us after it, when five soldiers jumped on board of us; they commenced searching everywhere, and brought me up, for the mandarin in command of the junk to see. He appeared much surprised at the sight of an Englishman, and my presence would have been sufficient to have condemned the boat and crew as being piratical, if we had not had our chops or passports from the Quong of Saigon.

After examining these papers, the mandarin of the armed junk ordered our immediate release. He became quite courteous to me, and asked our mandarin many questions about me. We then resumed our passage. This affair startled me a little at first, as I took the junk to be a pirate, and I feared I was going to be made a prisoner again.

This evening we crossed another large river, called by the Cochinese Mueh-gak, a broad, deep, and rapid stream. Having arrived at the opposite side, we entered a small lock, with peculiar flood-gates. During the time our boat was passing through, I jumped on shore, and got a fine view of the country, which was a vast plain as far as the eye could see in all directions, and highly cultivated.

We continued rowing down canals for four days more, when we came to a small village, where I was taken on shore before the head-mandarin, who wished to see me, as he said he had never yet seen a European. I was conducted into a small room, where he was

squatted on a couch, chewing betel-nut; he was a hearty-looking man, about fifty years of age, remarkably stout; and the clothes he had on might be made considerably cleaner, if they were washed.

Upon seeing me, he commenced laughing, and beckoned me towards him. When I approached, he took me by the hand in the most friendly manner, and offered me some betel-nut, which I declined. I told him that I never used it, so he commenced laughing again. He then sent for some rae and cakes, which he gave me, and still continued laughing. He wished to look at my teeth (this is a compliment in Cochin-China); on seeing them he burst out into loud laughter, till he turned quite red in the face. He was now nearly tired of laughing, I think, for he had had three good turns at it, and all to himself too; for no one else appeared so extremely amused at the sight of the *barbarians*. He then took me by the hand again, and stared at me so attentively, that I was afraid he would mesmerize me. Oh! now he was satisfied; yes, he believed I was a being; yes, a man! Oh, how wonderful, how clever he was! he had positively discovered, in so short a time as half-an-hour, that I was really, like himself, a human being; so he released my hand, and relieved his eyes upon some other object. Oh! now he speaks for the first time, and remarks to me how disgusting it was of me to eat so much food, and never to sweeten my breath and cleanse my teeth with the fragrant perfumes of the betel-nut. Not being able to answer this

charge, he evidently thought I did not understand what he said ; so he addressed himself to our mandarin.

My whiskers, the grey colour of my eyes, and the hair upon my arms, seemed to puzzle him exceedingly. He asked our mandarin whether all my countrymen were in a like manner deformed, with as much confidence as though he had just arrived with me from Europe, and had seen all the manners and customs of my country.

After this he enquired of him whether I was quiet ; and how it was he was not afraid to stay, and especially to sleep, in the same boat with me ; also what I ate, and whether I took my food cooked or raw. He made a great many foolish remarks, but not in any way tauntingly ; for he seemed rather afraid of me.

After remaining at his house for about an hour, I returned to the boat, and we continued our voyage. We met numerous lighters, loaded with various merchandise, and mostly manned by Siamese. These men can easily be distinguished from the Cochinese, by their hair being cut short, and by the much darker colour of their skin. They are generally not so tall as the Cochinese, but they are much stouter and stronger. They have merely a cloth wrapped round their waist ; some of the more wealthy wear a sarong, an oblong piece of cloth, generally of very gaudy colours, folded round their loins and legs, much in the same way as the Malays. They all, rich and poor, young and old, chew betel-nut, which forms a great article of trade. Every

bazaar and market is stocked with the green nuts, and the pepper leaf.

Night was by far the most unpleasant part of my time; for the mosquitoes along these rivers and canals swarmed in millions, setting upon me all night as thickly as rain could fall. As soon as the grey light of evening came, these fearful insects commenced their humming noise, and tormented me. My eyes were swollen so much from their poisonous bites, that I could hardly open them, especially in the morning. Our mandarin brought me some herbs, from which I made a decoction to bathe my eyes with, and it gave me considerable relief. But I could not get any medicine to prevent their biting me.

Hot as the sun was during the day-time, I was always sorry to see it setting. The mosquitoes here were larger than I had seen in any place before, being much longer than a common fly, and their bodies almost as large. They were spotted with red and yellow, and their bite was very venomous; so much so, that my face, hands, and feet, were covered with painful sores. Nor did my clothes afford much protection against them, for they could positively pierce their lancets through my drill trousers. I killed them four and five at a time, as they settled on me; so that in the morning, my face was covered with blood, partly from their bodies, and partly from the wounds they had made in my flesh.

CHAPTER XXVI.

City of Artien-ting, or Con-kow.—Its Buildings and Shipping.—Commerce.—My Obligation to the Cochinese.—Passage in a Mandarin Boat to a British Vessel.—Reception on Board the Brig *Punch*.—Kindness shown to me.—Melancholy Accident.—Engaged as Mate of the British Barque *Kim-quan-seng*.

ON the evening of the 26th of June, 1858, being the fourteenth day since I left Saigon, and the sixty-eighth since I left Kang-war-ting, I arrived at my final destination, Artien-ting, or Con-kow, situated on the right bank of a river of the same name, which empties itself into the Gulf of Siam, about a mile distant.

Con-kow is a small city, but the suburbs are very extensive. It is guarded on the sea face by two high round forts, mounting many guns. There is always a strong native force kept here for the protection of the place.

Opposite the city is a very remarkable island, towering up in the shape of a sugar-loaf, on which are built many pretty little cottages, the country seats of some of the wealthy merchants and mandarins of Con-kow. This island is not more than a mile in diameter, and is almost round. It is clothed with luxuriant verdure, from the water's-edge to the very summit, which is about one thousand feet above the level of the sea. It con-

tains many small grottoes and Buddhist temples, which are all dedicated, as well as the island itself, to Ting-Ti-Quong, literally "Heaven's Great Prince."

The river is about half-a-mile broad opposite the city, and is deep only along that side; the opposite side, and round the sugar-loaf island, being dry at low water. Numerous native vessels, Chinese junks, and cargo boats, are anchored along the warehouses on the city side, and there is a considerable trade carried on at this place. It is the depôt for all the export produce of the surrounding country, consisting chiefly of sugar, rice, salt and dried fish, silk, cotton, gamboge, and other native products, which are here shipped on board of European vessels for Siam, Singapore, or China. The whole of the trade is monopolized by a few Chinese merchants. No European vessels are allowed to enter the harbour of Con-kow; they are all obliged to anchor at Campoot, a very unsafe roadstead, about thirty miles distant, where the cargo is taken to vessels in long prahus like lighters.

There are annually a few European vessels chartered in China, by the Chinese merchants, to come to Campoot, where they load with salt fish and rice; the former article may often be bought for two-and-a-half dollars per picul, and it will realize in China ten and even twelve dollars per picul or cwt.

The amount of merchandise exported annually from this port and Campoot is estimated at about one million dollars, or about two hundred and fifty thousand

pounds; while the imports do not exceed one hundred thousand dollars, and chiefly consist of cottons, woollens, hardware, and opium; the latter, though severely interdicted by the native laws, finds its way in small quantities into the country, but it is chiefly used by the Chinese agents, who are employed by merchants at Singapore and China, to procure and buy up cargo for their vessels. The punishment for importing, buying, or dealing in this drug is death, and confiscation of all the offender's property to the native government. About sixty European vessels annually arrive at Campoot.

After being five days at Artien-ting, I was accommodated in a prahu lighter loaded with sugar, which was going to Campoot in a few days, to discharge its cargo on board of some European vessel bound for Singapore; in which the Quong of Con-kow had taken a passage for me to Singapore. So, many thanks and much respect to the Cochinese government for their care of me during my long stay in their country; for they had treated me far better than they would one of their own countrymen, and better than my own government would have treated me, had I been shipwrecked on the coast of England.

I had five thousand cash remaining now, which I took on board the cargo boat with me, besides two new silk crape turbans and the piece of silk the Quong of Kang-war-ting had given me, instead of their value in cash, as they were lighter to carry on my long journey.

All these articles were handed over to me in the presence of a mandarin at Con-kow.

Though they had put restrictions on my liberty at times, and in certain places, yet they had given me the most satisfactory reason for so doing, namely, to guard me against injury. Every allowance must be made for the inconvenience I had to sustain. If a Cochinese became destitute in England, and received English food, shelter, and clothing, they might be as strange and uncomfortable to him, as their mode of living, habits, and dress, were to me. But I was well satisfied with their conduct to me, and to the day of my death I shall say, that *the Cochinese generally are a kind and liberal people, much superior in every respect to their neighbours, the Chinese.*

After I had been four days on board the cargo boat, the master received an order to proceed to Campoot. We accordingly weighed, and when we had reached the two round forts at the river's mouth, we anchored for a few minutes, while a mandarin fast boat got ready to convey us to the shipping. This cruiser, which mounted six guns, and carried forty-five men, had received orders from the Quong of Con-kow to accompany us, and to see me safe on board of a European vessel; as it is no uncommon occurrence for the cargo boats to be attacked and taken by pirates, who infest the numerous islands between Con-kow and Campoot. The orders were to take me on board immediately, and return to Con-kow, in case of falling in with pirates, for the Quong was

only interested in my safe delivery on board of some British vessel, and then his responsibility ceased.

Owing to adverse winds, we could not get farther than the island, behind which we anchored for the night. The next morning we proceeded, and about noon we reached the shipping. Oh, what joy it was to me, to behold once more my own country vessels, and to see the British ensign proudly flying at the peaks of two of the vessels, even in this remote corner of the globe!

As soon as the fast boat saw us safely alongside the British brig *Punch*, she bore up, and ran back to Conkew again, the mandarin vessels here being very shy of European ships, and seldom approaching near to them, for what reason I cannot say.

The *Punch*, Captain George Anderson, was the vessel in which the Quong of Artien-ting had engaged a passage for me to Singapore. This brig was a regular trader between Singapore and Campoot, and was owned by Ho-chung-lee, a Chinese merchant resident at Singapore. I jumped on board, went aft, and asked for the captain, who, coming out of his cabin, enquired, in Malay, what I wanted. He told me afterwards that he had taken me to be a Singapore Chinaman, dressed as I was, and being so extremely sun-burnt. But when I asked for a passage to Singapore, or to any other port he might be bound for, he discovered by my voice that I was no Chinaman; and, after a hearty laugh, and an apology, he invited me into his cabin, where I gave

him a brief account of my misfortunes, and the situation I was placed in, which much surprised and interested him. He said that his mate, who had been on shore at Campoot yesterday, had heard from a French Roman Catholic priest, that a European was staying at Con-kow, who had been taken by pirates, and would shortly be sent on board of the brig, to go to Singapore.

Strange to say, I had never seen a French priest during my whole stay in the country; though it appears that one of them knew I was staying at Con-kow. I think, as these priests have access to most parts of the country, he might have visited me; nor do I consider that he was setting a good example of kindness, in showing no anxiety for my safety; for, though he might not be a countryman of mine, he was a European, and the Cochinese look upon all Europeans, whether English, French, Spanish, or Dutch, as one and the same race of people. I heard remarks made afterwards by several of the natives to the effect that, if European missionaries had no care for their destitute countrymen, how could they expect the Cochinese to have any, since the missionaries had told them, that they should follow their example in every respect.

In conclusion I must add, that I received every kindness from Captain Anderson, who provided for me most bountifully at his own table, and liberally placed his wardrobe at my service, which I gladly availed myself of; and, after a thorough cleansing, internally

and externally, I began to feel that I was once more among civilized people. Before night I was quite a different person in appearance. The masters of the other vessels that were lying at Campoot were equally liberal and kind to me; especially Captain Arnot, of the British brig *Dido*, who poor man! is gone where many had gone before him, and where many will follow him; for, about eight months afterwards, his vessel foundered, with all hands on board, in a cyclone, in the Bay of Bengal.

I must not forget to mention Captain Duncan, of the British barque *Zoe*, who was also very kind to me, and gave me several suits of clothes. On the whole, I could not have been delivered at a better place, for the captains of the five vessels then anchored at Campoot vied with each other in generosity and kindness. It is out of respect to them, and at their request, that I have put this *narrative of my travels in Cochin-China* in print; it being too long to relate otherwise.

Just one month after my delivery at Campoot, a most melancholy accident occurred, which verified Captain Arnot's words, that "one man's fall causes another man's rise."

The chief mate of the British barque *Kim-quan-seng*, Mr. Dodds, was drowned, while out on a pleasure excursion, in the long boat, which capsized in a squall; when he, as well as the crew of six Malays, and the mate of the *Punch*, were all precipitated into the water. I saw the accident from the deck of the brig.

Captain Anderson, and Captain Marshall of the *Kim-quan-seng*, were both on shore at Campoot; and, there being no other European but myself on board of either vessel, the command naturally devolved upon me. I ordered our long boat to the rescue immediately, and succeeded in saving the lives of all, except Mr. Dodds.

When our boat returned, and reported who was missing, I went myself, and searched all the islands to which it was possible for him to swim, but could not find him; so I returned on board, and hoisted the British ensign "half-mast." The first question that Captain Marshall asked me, when he returned in the evening, was, whether his mate, Mr. Dodds, was drowned, or why was the flag "half-mast?" I answered that I was sorry to say, he had guessed too truly!

Captain Marshall dined on board the *Punch* that evening; and, during the meal, I engaged to go as mate of the British barque *Kim-quan-seng*, then bound on a voyage to Amoy, China. So now I must bid the reader a cordial farewell.

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