Travel.

A FEW STATIONS IN INDIA.

By Mrs. H. V. BAGSHAWE.

PART I.

As the majority of officers and their wives seem to look upon their tour in India as a penance instead of a pleasure, it may be of interest to those coming out for the first time to hear about a very small portion of the country from one who sees all its good points and many advantages, and finds very few disadvantages.

As I have spent most of my life in the Colonies, I left England eighteen months ago delighted to say good-bye to the dull skies and cold climate and terribly high cost of living—our last station was London, where I suppose it is worse than anywhere else. My great desire had always been to come to India, and now that I am here I must say it has come up to my expectations. My husband, too, who had done a previous tour fifteen years ago was delighted to return, and finds life out here very little altered, except of course for the rise of prices.

We sailed from Southampton early in November, 1924, on H.M.T. "Hecuba," arriving in Bombay on December 1.

I was determined to catch my first glimpse of India at sunrise, so I was up on deck at 4 a.m., and was well rewarded. Never shall I forget it, the ever-changing opalescent colours, from the palest mauves and blues to fiery reds and golds, as the sun rose over the tops of the western ghats on the eastern side of the harbour, Bombay being on the other side wreathed in the mists of dawn, her spires and domes rising up like fairy palaces out of a bluey-green lagoon.

We were tied up alongside the Alexandra Dock by 8 a.m., when our orders were brought aboard and we found ourselves posted to Jullunder, a small station in the Punjaub, about 100 miles from Lahore.

As we could obtain no information about the place from anyone on board, or at the embarkation office, we decided to stay two days in Bombay while we wired on for information regarding accommodation for ourselves and family, consisting of three children and a governess.

On receiving a satisfactory reply we left Bombay one day at noon, arriving at Jullunder at dawn, forty-one hours later. We were met by a brother officer, who had very kindly made arrangements to put us up at his own bungalow for a few days until we moved into our own. The Dak bungalow at Jullunder is very primitive, and, being on the edge of the bazaar, most unsuitable for children.
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There were luckily a few empty bungalows in the cantonment, so it did not take us long to select one, choose our furniture on hire from the bazaar, buy crockery, glass, lamps, and cooking utensils, engage servants, and move in—this was accomplished in under three days; not a bad effort I think in a country where time is supposed to be no object. Jullunder is a very pretty little cantonment, situated about five miles from the city, all the roads are broad and shady, being planted with big leafy trees. Most houses have large compounds, with pretty gardens, vegetables, fruit and flowers growing in profusion, hence the place being sometimes very aptly called "The Garden of the Punjaub." It is an extraordinarily healthy station, the climate during the cold weather months being really cold and bracing, plentiful rain falling from December to March—during these months it is quite cold enough for thick winter clothes, plenty of bedding and roaring fires at night. There is practically no sickness, even in the hot weather, and it is almost free of malaria, last year's returns showing one case amongst the British troops.

The weather begins to warm up in March, by May 1 all the women and children have gone to the Hills. Jullunder as the crow flies is only about fifty miles from the Dalhousie Hills, but it is a long roundabout journey of nearly eighteen hours by rail and car.

The British Station Hospital is situated about a mile out of cantonments. It has fifty to a hundred beds and a staff of four M.O's. Not far from the hospital are the British Infantry Barracks.

Jullunder is the headquarters of a Brigade area, the garrison consisting of one battalion British infantry, one Native infantry, one Depot or training battalion, Dogra Regiment, one battery of artillery and one squadron of cavalry. It is, I should think, quite one of the cheapest stations in India, certainly the cheapest we have struck so far. After four years' housekeeping in London it fairly made me gasp.

There is practically nothing to see in and around Jullunder of any historical interest; those who had cars sometimes went out to play tennis and dine with the Maharajah of Kapurthala at his palace fifteen miles away. After four months in Jullunder we left for Dalhousie, where my husband was lucky enough to be posted for the hot weather. We left Jullunder one evening at 5 p.m., arriving at Pathancote (via Amritsar) the following morning at 6 a.m., from there we had a fifty-two mile motor drive up to Dalhousie.

The road for the first six miles runs along the flat, then turns up into the hills, the country on both sides is very picturesque, the hillsides being thickly covered with trees of every description. In April the snow was still lying on the distant heights in Kashmere and in the clear morning air looked very beautiful. We reached Dunera, halfway, about 9 a.m., where we had an hour to wait, as owing to the narrowness and dangers of the road the traffic is controlled and only allowed up and down at a given time and has to cross at Dunera. While we waited we had break-
fast at the Dak bungalow, which was just as well, as owing to a breakdown later on we reached our destination four hours late.

Immediately above Dunera one can see the little Goorkha station of Bahklo perched on an isolated mountain top, there is only a mule track up from the main road about three miles below.

When one reaches the forty-fourth milestone the road turns into the valley of Banikhet, where there is a small maidan to which the officers, troops and residents of Dalhousie come to play football, cricket and polo. After leaving Banikhet the road winds up the mountain side leaving the barracks of Mandkote on the left, and then passes through the second block known as Ticca, these two separate lots housing two half battalions. A little beyond this the road runs through Balun, where the garrison church, bakeries, I.A.S.C. depot, bazaar and hospital are situated and is known as cantonments. Dalhousie itself is about a 1,000 feet higher and may be reached by a steep short-cut of a mile straight up the Khud, while the motor road winds round the other side of the hill for about three miles. The hillsides are all covered with the evergreen Himalayan oak and flaming deep-red rhododendrons, the undergrowth in most places being a mass of ferns and moss.

Dalhousie proper is situated on three hills, Bakrota (8,000 feet), Terah (6,400 feet) and Poetryn (6,000 feet). Bakrota is a good three miles from Poetryn and is mostly inhabited by rich natives; Terah is also residential; whilst Poetryn has the bazaar, churches, convent and Headquarters Lahore District Offices situated on it.

We were lucky enough to obtain a charming little bungalow on Terah quite near the club and bazaar and nearest by far to the B.S.H., but even then it meant a tremendous climb for my husband up and down every day.

The hospital is beautifully situated on a spur running out into the valley of the Ravi and Bathri with a magnificent view all round. It has about a hundred beds and a staff of four medical officers, nursing sisters and orderlies. The climate of Dalhousie is extraordinarily bracing and fresh, never getting very hot. I don’t think there was a night in the seven months I was up there that I didn’t need an eiderdown. One great disadvantage is the horde of sandflies and mosquitoes that annoy one in May and June before the rains break. The monsoon wasn’t half as bad as I expected, most days one could get out for a walk or game of tennis, but the continual mist and damp was most trying, as one could not keep it out of the house, so one found all one’s things getting damp and mouldy in spite of continual airing in front of large fires; the only things to keep it out were large tin-lined trunks.

Eighteen miles from Dalhousie is the State of Chamba, a favourite week-end trip, and where many people go to get big game shooting, such as bear, panther, antelope, etc. There is quite good rough shooting to be had round Dalhousie, pheasant, jungle fowl, chicor and hares, and, for those who collect, many specimens of beautiful butterflies and moths.
The cost of living up there I found very little different from the plains, we could always obtain large supplies of beautiful fresh vegetables and fruit, the latter coming from Kulu, some fifty miles away—peaches, William pears, English apples, apricots and cherries in profusion, so that one could do without the supplies that I believe are often so necessary in the hills. After seven months in Dalhousie my husband was posted to the B.S.H. New Cantonments, Delhi. We were delighted at the thought of going to the capital of India, but New Cantonments is by no means Delhi, being ten miles out; it is new in every sense of the word, a few bungalows dumped in the middle of nowhere. No shops, no churches, no bazaar, in fact absolutely nothing. The B.S.H. is a most imposing-looking building, its establishment being two medical officers, nursing sisters, etc. And a complement of about 100 beds, but it is so big it would take 500.

Delhi is the Headquarters of the Brigade area and the garrison normally consists of one British infantry battalion, two Native infantry, one regiment of cavalry, one battery of artillery and one company of armoured cars. During the cold weather months the British infantry and one Native infantry go into camp at Kingsway, three miles the other side of Delhi, to guard the Viceroy, whilst the gunners and armoured cars are stationed in the old fort inside the city, so that the population of New Cantonments dwindles considerably, and it is often difficult to get a game of bridge or tennis. Later on, in 1926-27, when the Viceroy lives in the new Viceregal Lodge in the City of Raisina, the two battalions stationed at Kingsway will return to Cantonments.

All bungalows in New Cantonments are owned by Government and consequently the rents are very high, but they are big and comfortable and have water laid on and fans and electric light. Nearly everyone has a car and spend all their spare time going in and out of Delhi for shopping and amusements. We managed to exist without one, though I must own it was a little awkward at times. Last January, the big Eastern Command manoeuvres brought 30,000 troops into camp at New Cantonments. Spectators had the chance of seeing a very fine demonstration of an artillery barrage (long distance) also a review of all troops by the Viceroy and the late Commander-in-Chief, Lord Rawlinson.

The cold weather in Delhi is cold and bracing and lasts from the end of November to the end of February, but unlike Jullunder no rain fell during the six months I was there. The thermometer rises pretty high in June before the monsoon breaks, and from then onwards the station is not very healthy, malaria being fairly bad. Although we had no car, owing to the kindness of friends I was able to see all the "sights" of Delhi, both ancient and modern. The present city stands within the old walls built by Shah Jehan in 1648, and is situated on the right bank of the Jumna. The Citadel or Fort stands on the eastern side of the city on the immediate banks of the river, its walls forming the eastern defences. There is a small British garrison in the fort of one battery of artillery, one armoured car
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company and a company of British Infantry, also a ten-bedded detention hospital with a medical officer in charge. The Fort in the hot weather is most unhealthy, especially in the later months when the malaria is bad. It would take many pages to describe the wonders and beauties of the old buildings inside the Citadel that were built by Shah Jehan, they are mostly of white marble inlaid with semi-precious stones, few of which now remain, but owing to the foresight of the late Lord Curzon a Bill was brought into force in 1905 protecting and preserving all ancient monuments, so that ever since then all these beautiful buildings have been looked after and the grounds surrounding them cared for; in some places the frescoes and decorations have been restored to show visitors what these buildings were like in the old days.

Immediately opposite the entrance to the Fort known as the Lahore Gate is that famous bazaar Chandi Chowk; here arts and crafts of every description may be had, ivory carvings, paintings, embroideries, silks, pottery and jewellery. A morning spent in Chandi Chowk is well worth the dusts and smells one encounters there.

At the bottom of this famous street stands the Hindu Jain Temple, unique of its kind, I believe, but I never visited it.

Not far off is the Mahommedan Jumma Musjid or Great Mosque, erected by Shah Jehan in 1644, built of red sandstone on a rocky eminence overlooking the fort and river. An enormous flight of steps leads up to the main entrance, inside is a huge courtyard paved in marble and marked off in spaces, each to accommodate a worshipper, at the western end stands a huge dome flanked by two minars. Visitors are shown with great pride a sandal worn by the Prophet, his footprint in stone and, most precious of all, a hair from his beard.

Leaving the city by the north or Kashmere Gate one may see the breach there made by the victorious British troops in 1857, and further on one comes to the famous Ridge on which stands a red sandstone memorial to those who fell in Delhi during the Mutiny.

To the south-west in the centre of the new city stands the old observatory of Jantar Mantar built by Rai Singh in 1710. A group of weird scientific buildings with a colossal sundial in the centre some sixty feet high; one may ascend this up a flight of ninety-seven steps where one obtains a fine view of the new city.

About a mile out of Delhi on the Agra road stands a heap of ruins known as the Ferozo Shah Kotal, in the centre of which is a tall marble pillar called the Asokka pillar and dating from 250 B.C., brought to its present position in 1351 A.D. by Firoz Shah.

A little further on one comes to the Puranakila or old fort, date of building unknown, but occupied at different periods by Sher Shah and Humayun. Two miles beyond this is the tomb of Humayun, father of the famous Akbar, a large red sandstone edifice in the usual pattern of Moghul tombs. It stands in palatial grounds and is surrounded for many miles by
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a veritable graveyard, so numerous are the tombs in this area; the next biggest is Safdar Yang, Prime Minister to Ahmad Shah. Beyond these tombs, eleven miles away, is the minar or tower of Kutb Ala-ud-Din. It stands in the ruins of his old city and rises to a height of 400 feet. It is described in the guide-books as the seventh wonder of India, and is certainly well worth a visit. Near here is a wonderful old Baoli or well of great depth, three sides of which are enclosed by tiers of stone corridors, whilst the fourth has a long flight of steps down to the water.

A few miles to the south-east of the Kutb stand the fort and ruins of the old city, built by Tuglaq Shah in 1323 and since known as Tuglaqabad; the walls are over five miles in circumference and some forty feet high.

I have only mentioned a few of the most interesting monuments; they are really innumerable to those who care for sight-seeing. I think to see Delhi is to see one of the most interesting sights in India.

PART II

During our time in Delhi I paid a visit to Agra and found it most delightful and Picturesque and even more interesting than Delhi from a historical point of view.

It is a small cantonment but most attractive; big shady trees and pretty gardens, most of the bungalows have thatched roofs, there is an exceptionally nice club, and out by the famous Taj a small golf course. The B.S.H. is situated not far from the station and has three M.O.’s. I believe it is a cheap station; the friends with whom I was staying had previously been stationed at New Cantonments, Delhi, and said they found a vast difference all round in prices at Agra.

My first excursion sight-seeing was to visit the Taj Mahal at midnight on the occasion of a full moon. I am sorry to say I was sadly disappointed; one is led to expect so much. It was certainly a very pretty sight; but reminded me too much of one of Arthur Collins’s wonderful productions at Drury Lane; it only wanted a scantily-clad Eastern chorus to complete the effect. A further visit in daylight and a climb to the top of one of the four flanking minars did not alter my impression, though I must own I greatly admired the craftsmanship of inlay and carving.

The following day I went across the River Jumna, on the banks of which the Taj stands, to see the tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah, the grandfather of the beautiful Mumtaz-i-Mahal. A little gem of a building, quite different from the usual type of mausoleum built by the Moghuls.

Another afternoon I spent in the fort four hours of unending interest, as I was lucky enough to have a friend to take me round; he knew every nook and cranny. I saw the military and archaeological section and many interesting things that the ordinary tripper is not shown; the fort at Agra is much bigger and far more interesting than that at Delhi. It was built
by the great Akbar in 1565, and is still in an almost perfect state of preservation.

Twenty-six miles south-west of Agra is the deserted city of Fatepur Sikri; it was only occupied for a short time by Akbar, who then decided to return to Agra. The walls of the city are six miles in circumference, the palaces and Jumma Masjid are situated on the crest of a low hill in the south-west corner of the city, many of the buildings are still in a state of good repair, the gem of all being the tomb of the Saint who lived there in a cave previous to the building of the city. The tomb itself is inlaid with onyx, ebony and mother-of-pearl, and is adorned with a pillared canopy in the same work. I spent three hours there, and only saw about half there is to be seen.

Five miles north of the Delhi road is the tomb of Akbar; it differs from all others—the actual body is buried under ground, but the cenotaph of white marble is five stories up in a marble-paved courtyard open to the sky.

Agra is noted for its alabaster and marble carving; many fascinating works of art are to be had in the bazaars; the biggest trade is, I think, in miniatures of the Taj in alabaster, sold to American tourists in hundreds. Altogether I thought Agra a delightful station, and envy those lucky enough to be stationed there.

Shortly after my trip to Agra I went over to Meerut, forty miles north of Delhi, and the headquarters of the United Province District. A big cantonment with a large garrison. The B.S.H. has a large staff and is well equipped in every way. Meerut seems a very popular station. I don't think I have come across anyone who has been stationed there who didn't like it. There is plenty to amuse one, races, golf, tennis, shooting and pig-sticking. It is also a very pretty cantonment with good bungalows, and not outrageously expensive. At the end of April the weather began to warm up, so I had to take my family to the hills. Our destination was Wildflower Hall Hotel, Mahasu, seven miles out of Simla. We left Delhi one night at 9 p.m. and reached Kalka the next morning at 6 o'clock, changing there into the mountain railway, and arriving at Simla six hours later. I was very disappointed with the journey up, the hills are so bare and brown, a great contrast to the journey up to Dalhousie. One passes the hill stations of Kasauli, where there is a Pasteur Institute, Dagshai, Sabatho and Solon. The engineering of the railway is a wonderful piece of work, sometimes one looks down on three or four terraces of the line, having zigzagged slowly backwards and forwards up the side of the mountain. After passing through the tunnel of Tari Devi one comes into full view of Simla, and I don't think I have ever seen an uglier one; it is a very scattered station, being stretched along various hill tops, the highest of which is Jakko; even at a distance all the buildings look most ramshackle and dilapidated, and appear worse on closer inspection.
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Simla is assuming the proportions of a city, besides the native bazaars there are many first-class European shops of every description. On outlying hills are residential suburbs.

I cannot say I was greatly attracted by Simla, it seemed hot and dusty and overcrowded. Mahasu, where I was staying, is 8,500 feet; fifteen hundred feet higher than Simla, and situated in a thick pine forest. The original house was built by the late Lord Kitchener as his week-end house and residence, and a more delightful spot would be difficult to find. It stands just off the Great Hindustan-Tibet road, and commands a magnificent view of the snows to the north, and Kasauli and the plains to the south. Simla itself is, I believe, most frightfully expensive, the cost of living being nearly 50 per cent. more than anywhere else in India. It does not seem very healthy either, as one often hears of epidemics and illness, and the air is certainly nothing like as bracing and fresh as that of Dalhousie.

Before ending this article I will add a few notes which I hope may be useful to newcomers to the country. I should have been glad of the information myself, and perhaps it may help very slightly in making them see the good points and appreciate the country as much as I have.

Bombay.—Hotels: The Taj, Grand and Ballard Pier. The Grand is very clean and comfortable and not far from the docks.

On arrival in Bombay wire on to station to know if any accommodation is available, as in most out-stations there are no hotels or dak bungalows.

Have your bedding, roll of blankets, pillows, &c., ready, as none are supplied on the Indian railways, also towels and all toilet requisites that are necessary for the journey.

A restaurant car is attached to all mail trains, but with children it is a good tip to get the Army and Navy Stores to put one up a case or hamper of food, so doing away with the long trek down the train to the dining car, and the unsatisfactory food obtained there; bottles of boiled water for the journey are essential for children, as it is quite unsafe to ask for it at any of the stations en route.

As one never knows to what part of India one may be posted, it is advisable to have both warm and thin clothing handy, as if going north in the cold weather twenty-nine hours out of Bombay the warm clothing is urgently required.

It is advisable to travel with a servant, but if possible do not engage a Bombay man, as they are very unreliable and mostly dishonest; a good tip is to write out to a friend up country to engage one to meet you at Bombay.

Servants up country are on the whole excellent; I have been very lucky with mine, and could wish for none better. Their wages are not high as they feed themselves and want no extras. Mine cost me the same as a cook and small slavey at home, who got high wages, food, washing and all sorts of extras, and were always wanting days off and afternoons off, which an Indian servant never does. A lot depends on the bearer (butler) being a good man, as he is the head servant and can control the rest and make them work well if he so chooses.
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Jullunder.—No hotels. A very indifferent dak bungalow, badly furnished, and no servants.

Dalhousie.—Stiffies Hotel and Stiffies Annexe.

Delhi.—Maiden’s Hotel and the Cecil, the latter strongly recommended.

Agra.—The Cecil Hotel and Laurie’s Hotel, both excellent.

Meerut.—Stiffie’s Hotel, very comfortable for long residence.

Simla.—The Cecil Hotel, Korstorfan’s and many others, besides endless boarding houses and apartments.

Horses and Ponies.—The cost of a good polo pony or first-class hack is very high, but small ponies of 14 hands for ordinary work can be picked up for 300 to 500 rupees.

Dogs.—Many people bring out English thoroughbreds or obtain animals out here; but I think it is very risky, as the whole country teems with rabies and the risk is heavy.

Motor-cars or bicycles are essential to an M.O. for his work, the former in big stations such as Lahore, Pindi, Lucknow and others, but bikes suffice in the smaller stations; both may be purchased out here new or secondhand.

Recreation, with the exception of polo, is cheap in India, as one’s ordinary subscription to the local club covers all games, one hardly ever being asked to pay more than ten to twelve rupees a month inclusive.

Firearms.—It is as well to bring out two shot guns of different bore, and a rifle, but not a ‘303, as these are no longer allowed to be imported.

Luggage.—Bring as many tin-lined trunks and boxes as possible to keep out the innumerable destructive insects and the damp of the monsoon.

If possible, always take all your luggage with you per passenger train, as if sent per “goods” it is doubtful if you will see it for some weeks.

Clothing.—Both men and women should bring thick and thin clothing, as one is liable to be moved about so much. The durzi (tailor) of India is wonderful, for a few rupees he can make and copy anything. Good material from home and made up by the durzi is a great economy.

Everyone should possess a topee; excellent ones may be purchased at Port Said at half the price of those obtainable either at home or in Bombay.

Customs Duty is very nearly thirty per cent on everything; it is advisable to bring out as little real silver as possible, not only to avoid duty, but to have less to tempt the wily native, who is generally not at all interested in electroplate.

Leave is granted in the hot weather if the officer is not posted to a hill station, and once during his tour he may be granted six months’ long leave.

Food in India is excellent, meat, vegetables and fruit being very cheap; ordinary groceries are expensive, but fifty per cent. may be saved by getting a large consignment once or twice a year from wholesale dealers in the big seaport towns.
All the stations in the Punjab have Government military dairies, where first-class milk or butter is produced.

Furniture can, I think, be hired in every station in India, the only place I have heard of it not being forthcoming is Cawnpore. It is generally strong and serviceable and inexpensive.

Linen, blankets, pillows, etc., should be brought out, curtains or material for them always comes in useful in making the big and barn-like bungalows of India more comfortable and attractive.

Crockery, glass, and kitchen utensils can all be hired or purchased locally, or if a better class article is required can be ordered from Bombay or Calcutta and other big towns.

Eighteen months in four stations out here has proved to me that one can live far more cheaply in India than in England, one gets far more for one's money and it seems to go much further. For years I have kept careful and detailed accounts, which show at the end of a year we had spent far less than we ever did at home, and yet we live in complete comfort, one almost might say luxury, have bought ponies, etc., and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, whilst at home we lived like hermits in a suburban cottage and merely existed, and yet could not make both ends meet. We both came to India prepared to enjoy our life out here, and we have, every moment of it!

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In a previous article the author dealt with the teratoid group of testicular growths; this article deals with the second relatively common group of neoplasms of the testicle—the seminiferous or germ-celled tumour called variously spermatocytoma, seminoma, round-celled sarcoma and embryonal carcinoma.

Two conceptions prevail with regard to the origin of the seminiferous cells. (1) It is generally stated that the seminiferous cells are derived from columnar germinal epithelium (mesothelium) which covers the genital ridge lying medial to the Wolffian body. (2) Beard on the other hand concluded from a study of the primitive sex cells in elasmobranchs that the genital or sex cells are formed at a much earlier phase in development—the morula stage—and migrate through the entoderm into the genital area when the coelom is formed.

Whether the seminiferous epithelium is derived from the mesothelium of the genital ridge or migrates there from the morula the author states remains uncertain.