

DOWN SOUTH.

By U. P. A.

(Continued from p. 39.)

V.—THE RETURN.

Fifty-eight miles from Dindigul, at the busy little town of Udamalpet, we turned south and made straight for the junction of the main ridges of the Palni, Animalai and Cardamom Hills. Twenty-two miles farther on, in the midst of the foothills, we crossed the border of Travancore State.

The remaining thirty odd miles provided us with a succession of thrills of the kind which prove the truth of the dictum, "Too old at forty." The road was very narrow and tortuous, the surface vile, and the gradients fierce. It wound along the face of precipitous cliffs following the valley of the Amaravati River. This river could be seen as a thin silver thread, thousands of feet below, a prodigious drop should anything go amiss. The hillsides were bare, and during the first part of the run the heat was intense, a forbidding, uncomfortable vale.

Quickly we rose to a height of 7,000 feet and reached the top of the watershed from which the river takes origin. The peak on the right of the defile is 8,841 feet high.

From this point the condition of the road improves and the scenery becomes attractive: woods, green fields and wide-flung tea and coffee plantations. The views are very fine.

After descending to Munnar (4,500 feet) we went on a few miles farther to an estate bungalow situated amidst beautiful surroundings at a height of 4,900 feet. Here the youthful chatelaine, born in the Corps, gave us a real Corps welcome.

The High Range, Travancore, is well worth seeing, particularly if you are so fortunate as to be the guest of that most hospitable person, the tea planter. Here you will find grand mountain scenery, a picturesque and interesting industry, and a community second to none in grit, kindness and good cheer.

However, nowadays the planter is not the happy-go-lucky freelance he used to be. In the important tea districts of Ceylon, Assam, the Nilgiris and Travancore tea is highly organized, and, with a few insignificant exceptions, under the control of Big Business. Administration closely resembles the military pattern. I met a sort of tea G.O.C. with his brigade-major (engineer), staff-captain (chemist), and P.M.O.; and I saw a District Monthly Return of Output which was just like a District Monthly Return of Sickness. It was amusing to observe that the head tea man's inspection was voted to be an infernal nuisance and a waste of time and whitewash.

Also that the head tea man was treated with much deference and was always addressed as "Sir." His jokes never failed to get over no matter how hoary they might be.

When you do not know how the other half of the world lives, you may be mistaken in being envious : there is such a thing as jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.

The best route between Travancore and British India is by the new state road on the seaward face of the Western Ghâts, connecting with Cochin. We were unable to sample it, as our next objective was Ootacamund.

We left Munnar on April 8, and retraced our way to Udamalpet, thence turning west to Pollachi, and north to Coimbatore.

Coimbatore District lies at an average elevation of 2,500 feet. Except in the malarious foothills, it is healthy and windswept. It is separated from the Mysore plateau by several ranges, the biggest being the Bilirangan Hills. The latter form a double range, enclosing a valley 4,000 feet above sea level. This valley, with its boundary slopes, was covered with fine forests of valuable timber, notably teak, rosewood and sandalwood. In these forests and the high grass of the intervening glades were to be found wild elephant, bison, bear, tiger, leopard, ibex, antelope, several species of deer, hyæna, pig, wolf, etc., while the rivers were filled with mahseer : a sportsman's paradise.

Though the forests still stand, exploitation has played havoc with their virgin luxuriance ; and though game is still to be found, excessive shikar—especially of the unauthorized sort—has sadly thinned the ranks. The plight of the bison is particularly bad because, some years ago, they were decimated by a severe epidemic of foot-and-mouth disease which started amongst the domesticated cattle of the villages.

After a chequered history, this district passed under the domination of Haidar Ali, to whom it was granted by the ruler of Mysore—Haidar then being in the Mysore service. In 1768 he and his son, Tipu Sultan, were turned out by the British ; but they soon rallied, recaptured the area, and carried into captivity all the weak, scattered garrisons.

In 1783 the British again occupied the district, and restored it by treaty to Mysore. This restoration proved to be premature for, in 1790-91, Lord Cornwallis was forced to invade Mysore, while Tipu Sultan besieged the town of Coimbatore. After five months the town was captured, and Tipu carried his prisoners to Seringapatam.

In 1792, Coimbatore was ceded to the British and, on the storming of Seringapatam and death of Tipu Sultan in 1791, the district passed under the administration of the East India Company.

It is curious that, although we are all more or less acquainted with the events of the Mutiny and the wars with Afghanistan and with the tribes of the north-west frontier, few of us know much about the stirring history

of southern India; and yet it was here that Sir Arthur Wellesley was schooled.

North of Coimbatore, at the foot of the Nilgiris, is Mettaipalayam, a picturesque little town, the railhead of the broad-gauge railway. From here, or from Coimbatore, via Erode, there is an excellent highway through the wooded semi-hilly district of Salem to Bangalore. For motoring purposes it is the best route to and from the Nilgiris. The northern road, via Mysore, is a good deal shorter, but its surface is very bad.

India is, for the most part, a country of the improvised and second-rate. Hence, it is a mistake to live there, continuously, for more than three or four years. (The official period of qualification for long leave ex-India is thirty-three months.) A capacity for gin and bitters is not the only distinguishing feature of the typical old "Koi Hai." More deplorable traits are complacency, acquiescence in the *status quo* and boredom in the presence of the first-class—for there are a few things in India which are in the front rank; and, in meeting these, you miss a lot of enjoyment if you are incapable of registering enthusiasm and surprise. For instance, there is the Taj Mahal at Agra, ditto at Bombay, the Kolahoi Glacier and the cemetery at Mian Mir; the Kulu Valley, the Sind Desert, the Mohurram and the Followers' Section I.H.C. forming fours. Each, in its own class, is wonderful.

Not the least amazing is the thirty-two mile hill road from Mettaipalayam to Ootacamund. Without doubt it is one of the finest mountain motor roads in the world, and a joy to travel over. It is skilfully graded and cambered, broad, smooth and with easy corners; and the scenery and views over its entire length are fascinating.

Coonor and Wellington, contiguous to each other, lie at a height of 6,000 feet, twelve miles from Ooty and at the south-east corner of the Nilgiri plateau. They enjoy an excellent climate, and are noted for tea, golf, rejuvenated officials on retired pay, and debilitated officials on privilege leave and on no pay at all.

Ootacamund and the Nilgiris are like Srinagar and Kashmir, or Millbank and the Vauxhall Bridge Road—so well known that they need no description: so renowned, that to mention them is to court wild enthusiasm—which is apt to become tiresome—or flat contradiction—which is bad for the nerves. The ordinary man is well advised to contemplate such places in silence, and to leave the voicing of their charms to the troubadours and poets.

Talking of poets—have you ever noticed the affinity of poesy and pathology? It may be that I am a sympathetic person: I hope so: anyhow, my collection of pathological poetry grows apace. Or is it because the pathological poets like to share the fruits of their inspiration with all and sundry, and irrespective of sympathy? Or is it because they are

determined you shall swallow their effusions, whether you are poetically inclined or not? Certain it is that the pathologist, of all folk, most resembles the blacksmith, in that he fears not any man.

The last little laboratory valentine arrived yesterday : verbena-scented, mauve note-paper. Here it is (published without permission) :—

*Do the spots on Fusiliers
Adorn the soles of Grenadiers ?
Is the little beast a tick
That's sending stalwart soldiers sick ?
Simla's worried, H.-P.'s fussed ;
Is N.Y.D. or Typhus wu'st ?
Mosquito, louse or tick or bug or
What is tickling Ahmednagar ?*

Another pathologist was asked by the C.M.A. to explain a sudden accession to the guinea-pig ration strength. The reply to the C.M.A.—with a copy to me—reads thus :—

*My Caroline, in order to console
Herself in loneliness, plumped for a brood of piglets four ;
But, ignorant of methods of control,
Produced the four, five times : that is to say, a tidy score
Alas !*

*Surely you will not blame her, C.M.A. ?
Nor cut her gram or bran ? Have you no little babujis
Who, day by day, and scorning Fate—at play
Laugh and grow fat on ghi and gur and clamber on your
knees ?*

*Alack—
That you should ban to my dear Caroline
The golden chains which fasten thee to thine.
Thy name is mud :
May every foul bacillus in my lab. invade thy blood !*

The remainder of the poem is not fit for publication in any periodical not specifically devoted to modernity, since it proceeds to consign the C.M.A. to a lunatic asylum, lepers' ward, in language as realistic as revolting. Still, it is pleasing to note that, for the first time on record, the controller of military accounts succumbed at once and without further argument. There is nothing the Oriental admires as much as a family of Carolinian dimensions, or fears as much as a poetical curse.

Caroline is still alive, and is cheered and comforted in her old age by a multitude of lusty descendants.

One must not be too critical or too severe. "Wassermann morning" must be very trying ; and a succession of organisms "morphologically identical with K.L.B." (whatever that may mean) surely merits an occasional rest in the arms of Calliope.

Perhaps, some day, one of our eminent pathologists will settle down in Ooty on retired pay and become the Bard of the Blue Mountains.

Before leaving Ooty one must say something about the Todas—the remnant of the aboriginal inhabitants of this district. The origin of these people seems to go back to a dim and distant past, and is still hidden in the mists of conjecture. In physique, ethnology, archæology, culture and language the Todas are isolated and unique. They appear to have no affinities with any other Indian race. They are a peaceful, pastoral people to whom the buffalo is Life—spiritual as well as material; in fact, the buffalo is to them what money used to be to us. They are handsome in a wild, uncouth way; and they have many strange manners and customs, including the practice of polyandry. As a rule they are quite friendly and full of fun, and a visit to one of their bigger villages is an amusing and interesting experience. The entertainment will include part-singing, and for the small sum of one rupee you will get more verses than there are words in the Song of Solomon.

What is the secret of the survival of the Todas, and of their unruffled contentment and happiness in a world plagued with poverty, discontent and strife?

The answer is: the cow.

Why, then, should we not follow the example of this primitive race, and substitute the cow for the sovereign or sterling—or whatever is supposed to govern our destinies?

It seems to have been proven beyond doubt that the sovereign, etc., are utterly useless and subversive, whereas we know well that the cow is full of good deeds and altogether beneficent.

Suppose, for instance, that we had to pay America another instalment of the War Debt. This might take the form of a million Highland cattle, two million Ayrshires, three million red Herefords, four million Devon shorthorns and five million Jerseys—say, fifteen million in all.

In order to replace this mighty herd, we should all have to go back to the land, work hard and—in consequence—gain everlasting happiness. Those of us who could be spared would be engaged in building ships to transport the animals and, on the day the armada sailed, we might be able again to sing, “Britannia Rules the Waves,” without feeling shamefaced about it.

By this form of payment the U.S.A. also would solve her unemployment problem. Half a million new cowboys would be enrolled for byre-conservancy duty. All the corn in the great Middle West would be consumed to keep the fat stock in condition, and all the cotton in the Southern States would be woven into *jhoods* to keep the beasts warm in the winter time. The builders would be busy, for all the bank premises would have to be altered and enlarged to accommodate current accounts (steaks, joints, ox-tails, etc.), savings bank accounts (salted butter and cheese) and deposit accounts (tinned cream and maconochie).

The negro problem would be solved likewise. All the surplus negroes would be mustered as cattle-men for the Atlantic passage; and arrangements would be made with the British Government for the disposal of all such personnel found to be in possession of saxophones, banjoleles or jazz music. On a ship's arrival at Southampton, Liverpool or Glasgow, the heads of all incriminated negroes would be tapped smartly with heavy sledge-hammers, after which the offenders could be converted into fertilizers for the purpose of forcing the grass necessary for the oncoming herds.

Further, India and America would discover a bond of union in the sacred cow and the golden calf. No doubt Mr. Gandhi would embrace us on both cheeks, and obtain advantageous terms, for the export of billions of India's noble remnant—with a safeguard against canning, of course. This would immediately clear up the Indian tangle, and endear us to our American cousins as never before. The gift of a handsome pedigree cow will infallibly melt the heart of the hardest American—not excepting Mr. Hearst or the chairman of the foreign relations committee.

There is no end to the heavenly possibilities of such a scheme; people would be so busy milking cows and dodging bulls, that they would have no time for fighting or for attending any more conferences; in fact, we should have attained the long-looked-for Millennium.

On June 1, we bade Ooty a reluctant farewell and made for Mysore, 100 miles away, by the northern road.

The first part of the route, over the rolling downs of the Nilgiri plateau, is good going. Then there is an abrupt descent, very steep in parts, with sharp corners, and a bad surface. The hillside is densely wooded, but here and there you can obtain a wonderful view of the plain below. Next come the foothills, through which runs the Mysore State boundary. This zone is also covered with forest, largely composed of tall clumps of bamboo. It is stocked with game, including wild elephant. Finally there is a stretch of uninteresting plain, over which the car bumps and rocks as the objective, Chamundi Hill, is gradually approached.

The State is dotted with a large number of huge, isolated, rocky outcrops, some of them towering to 5,000 feet; and, as their summits often afford a good water supply, many of them were, in the old days, crowned by strong fortresses.

Chamundi Hill is situated two miles south-east of the city, and is 3,500 feet high. Chamundi is another name for Kali, the consort of Siva. The summit of the hill may be reached by a flight of steps but, thank goodness, there is also a fine, modern motor road to the top. Here there is a temple to Kali, and a pretty little summer-house where, in the hot weather, the maharajah sometimes rests in the cool of the evening.

The colossal figure of Mandi, Siva's bull, is worth seeing. It is a finely executed sculpture, hewn out of the solid rock: date, about 1675. The bull is in the recumbent attitude and, even so, is sixteen feet high.

These curious rocky outcrops are natural, but another prominent feature of the Mysore landscape is artificial—the water. All over the country you come across lakes or “tanks” which are often so extensive that it is hard to believe that they are man-made. One of them, Sulekere, is forty miles in circumference. They are usually in series, and are part and parcel of the irrigation system.

Mysore State was originally inhabited by wild, aboriginal tribes. Their descendants are still to be met with in the remoter parts of the country. Following these primitives came Buddhists, Jains, Brahmins, Mussalmans and Christians. From this it will be readily understood that Mysore has had a lively history.

With the fall of the old capital, Seringapatam, in 1799, Mysore's long life of storm and stress ended, and a period of lean years culminated in the classic famine of 1876-78, the result of failure of four successive monsoons. This was a terrible visitation. Thousands upon thousands of countryfolk crowded into Bangalore in hopeless confusion and despair. They died in the streets, of starvation, at the rate of forty a day. Government poured grain into Bangalore, but there was neither a scheme, nor any means, of distribution. At first sight this may seem to be a glaring piece of ineptitude, but is it not an example, on a small scale, of what is happening throughout the world to-day?

In 1881 the British Government founded the system of administration which is now in force and, since then, the State has made such rapid and sound progress that it is by far the most advanced of all the native States, and much more advanced than many parts of British India.

The common tongue is Kanarese. Café's Telegu, Noir's Tamil and our Urdu were useless here.

Mysore (i.e., “Buffalo Town”) City is a worthy place. It is well planned, with broad streets, fine buildings, artistic monuments, beautiful gardens, an efficient police force and a conservancy establishment which really does a job of work. *Actually, the city is clean!*

The maharajah's palace is rather tawdry and flimsy, but it is of secondary importance to the palace in Bangalore. It contains the famous coronation chair, presented by Aurazeb in 1699.

The diwan's house was built originally by Wellington (then Colonel Wellesley) for his own use.

To see Mysore City in all its glory, you should arrange to visit it during the Dusehra festival. This festival is to Mysore what the Wagner celebration is to Bayreuth, or Shakespeare's birthday is to Stratford-on-Avon. However, Mysore always seems to be *en carnival*; from the city, the illuminated Chamundi looks beautiful; and to view the lights of the city from the hill is to catch a glimpse of fairyland.

The loveliness and variety of much of the scenery in Mysore is due to the fact that the State occupies the southern angle of the east and west

Ghâts, where they converge and commingle in the Nilgiri plateau. In addition to this, a ridge, which runs north and south, forms the dividing watershed of two great rivers, the Kistna (or Krishna) and the Cauvery.

From Mysore our route followed the line of the western Ghâts. It presented a wondrous succession of wild hills, rich valleys, swiftly flowing streams and thick forests of tropical luxuriance. As far north as Belgaum we travelled by the lesser roads to the west of the main highways. As a result we had to pay a goodly sum in tolls to the Mysore road fund (*sic*) but it was well worth it; the long drive through these magnificent jungles left an impression which neither Georgina nor I will ever forget. And here, alas, I fail! I'm sorry about this but—not being a W. H. Hudson—description is impossible.

Ten miles north-east of Mysore is Seringapatam. It is approached through a crowded bazaar. Here Georgina stopped the car and created a diversion by soundly spanking a small boy who was tormenting a tethered fowl. The bystanders—including the offender's mamma—were too astonished to protest. Clear of the bazaar, we crossed a bridge, and were then on the island of Seringapatam, in the Cauvery River. The island is three miles long by one broad, and contains the fort, an ancient temple dedicated to Ranganatha—a big and imposing building—the Gumbaz or mausoleum of Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, and the summer garden and palace where Colonel Wellesley resided.

To see Seringapatam properly, you should arrange to halt for three or four hours.

We made straight for the *dâk* bungalow—a clean little place, carefully sited on a grassy patch overlooking the river and facing the Wellesley bridge. The butler, a Mussalman, said he knew all the sights. So he did: at least, he knew their locations, but he was utterly ignorant of their names, uses or history. The result was that, when he said: "Stop, Your Honour," we had to consult the map and then fend for ourselves. Georgina intoned a chant from the guide-book while I gazed wildly around, trying to identify the dungeon in which the British were kept, in chains, for years and years: the exact spot where Tipu met his doom: the *darbar* site, and the harem where Haidar emulated Blue Beard.

There is no worse method of sight-seeing. According to the Georginian chant, Seringapatam became the capital of Mysore in 1610. Although between 1638 and 1771 it sustained eight sieges, it never fell to the enemy: he was either beaten off or bought off.

Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, foreseeing trouble with the British, extended and strengthened the fort. Nevertheless, when we first besieged the place, in 1792, we gave Tipu such a bad time that he submitted to terms. Thereafter, further strengthening was carried out so that, on being besieged a second time (1799) Tipu put up a stout and prolonged resistance.

Eventually the fortress was carried by storm in a very gallant manner, and Tipu fell in the closing stage of the assault.

Contrary to the opinion of many people to-day, the Great War was not the only war : there were a few brave men in days of old.

The ramparts of the fort are very fine. They should be viewed first from the main bastion, near the breach made in 1799. This vantage point will give you some idea of the courage and determination of the attacking troops, who had to cross the broad river under heavy fire before actually engaging in the assault.

While I was trying to visualize Georgina's intonation—"Cheering madly, the foremost troops made for the breach"—Sri Purshottamnadas Venkatachaliyam (hereinafter referred to as "S.P.V.") joined our little party. Obviously he was a Hindu. All the same, he lifted his cap. He said : " Good morning, sir and madam. Do you require a guide? "

" Good morning. We hate guides. "

" Sir and madam, your present conductor—though doubtless a worthy man—knows nothing. I, Sri Purshottamnadas Venkatachaliyam, am university student, and quite aware of all historical facts of my native land. "

We fled, closely followed by Café, Noir and the D.B. butler. We scrambled into the car and hurried off to the picturesque watergate, near where it is said Tipu met his end. However, before Georgina had finished her chant about this sector, S.P.V.—who had borrowed a cycle—tracked us down.

" Good morning, sir and madam. Do you require a guide? "

Again we beat a speedy retreat. This time we covered from three or four miles at top speed. We saw the old bungalows once inhabited by the surgeon and by the director of ordnance to the Mysore *raj*. These officials were Englishmen, and their bungalows—fully furnished—and gardens are still kept as they were a hundred and more years ago. These places are full of interest and, like everything else in Seringapatam, are in excellent condition. By reason of this, the Mysore administration merits our grateful thanks.

In spite of furious pedalling, S.P.V. just failed to catch us.

However, on reaching the Darya Daulat—the summer garden and palace—S.P.V., who had taken a short cut, received us at the entrance.

S.P.V. was a youth about twenty. He had a pleasant face, a good manner and spoke English well. His clothes, though decidedly threadbare, were neat and clean. He told us all about the frescoes on the wall—coloured panoramas depicting Colonel Baillie's defeat in 1780, Haidar's triumph and Tipu's procession, etc.

We soon found that S.P.V. was as good as his word in so far as his country's history was concerned. He knew what to tell us and how to tell it; and when we had " done " the place thoroughly we felt sorry we had avoided his acquaintance earlier in the day.

"And now, S.P.V., we must go. By the way—is this your regular occupation?"

"Oh, no, sir! I am a fourth-year medical student, at present on holiday. But times are hard. I shall be grateful, sir and madam, if you can spare me a rupee."

The Mysore medical student does not seem to be very different from his prototype in other parts of the world—in one respect, at any rate.

In Mysore, Medicine is now a close preserve. Pursuant to the prevailing nationalistic sentiment, the state medical school was moved from Bangalore to the capital; and, as a M.B.(Mysore) is not allowed to practise in England, so it has been decreed that a F.R.C.S.(Eng.) shall not be allowed to practise in Mysore. This is called Reciprocity on the Self-Determination model. If the shade of Mr. Woodrow Wilson ever looks down on our wonderful world, it must find it difficult to believe the evidence of its own eyes.

From Seringapatam we struck north-west over the hills to Shimoga, a rough drive of 150 miles. There are good rest-houses at Hassan, Arsikere and Shimoga. You can cut out Hassan by driving direct from Channarayapatna to Arsikere over a road—a very bad one—which is not shown on the map.

Leaving Shimoga on the morning of June 4, we reached the Gersoppa Falls in time for tiffin.

We first visited these Falls early in December, and that is the time to see them at their best. Before the monsoon there is too little water to make a spectacle, and during and after the monsoon the view is entirely obscured by dense clouds of mist and spray which rise from the depths of the ravine. Besides, during the latter period the river is so swollen and turbulent that the ferry-boat from the north—or British—side is unable to cross to the south, or Mysore side; and, to realize the full beauty of these falls, you must view them from both banks. The south bank is unapproachable except by this ferry.

The Falls are 18 miles east of Gersoppa village. We have mis-named them, and perpetuated the mistake on our maps. The local and correct name is Jog Falls. They are situated on the Sharavati River, 30 miles from the sea. The water drops down a sheer cliff in four cascades—the Rajah (or Horseshoe), the Roarer, the Rocket and La Dame Blanche.

At this point the river is 230 feet in breadth, and the drop is 830 feet.

Compare this with Niagara: Horseshoe Fall, breadth 2,600 feet and height 155 feet; American Fall, breadth 1,400 feet and height 165 feet.

The volume of water which pours over Niagara is much greater than in the case of the Gersoppa or Jog Falls; but nothing can surpass the effects of the latter's tremendous height and unspoiled beauty. In these respects it can have few—if any—rivals in the world.

There are a number of well-situated vantage points at various levels on

both banks. If you wish a minor thrill, you should scramble down the south bank and, from the bottom of the chasm, look upwards. If you desire a major thrill, you may lie on a narrow, projecting ledge of rock high up on the north bank, wriggle forward—your ankles firmly grasped by your relatives, friends and servants—and look straight down into the depths of the boiling cauldron 850 feet below—that is, if you can.

That is what Hell must look like: terrifying but beautiful, horrible but magnetic.

After this, a certain amount of bravado concealed the fact that I had a ghastly sinking feeling in the epigastrium—but I wanted to have another look. Georgina said: "No. My turn." Well, it wasn't my fault. Her inspection lasted about $\frac{1}{100}$ of a second. She gave a quick gasp, wriggled back like an electrified lizard, lost her colour, told me off for a foolhardy knave and marched us off the rock.

In the early afternoon a lovely rainbow forms across the foot of the falls and, as the sun gradually declines, the rainbow slowly mounts until it spans the top of the falls—an entrancing sight. At times, the moon, too, throws a faintly tinted light across the belt of spray.

On great occasions—when the Heaven-born visit the place—Bengal lights, burning straw, charred wood and similar articles are floated over the falls. The cascades and clouds of spray are thus lighted up in a way which produces an amazingly weird effect.

In the dāk bungalow on the British side there is a visitors' book full of interesting names and entries. Many of the latter are early Victorian and, if somewhat heavy, are of a high literary standard. It would be difficult to find a more inspiring natural sight than the Jog Falls.

Next day we arrived in Karwar after a grand forest drive, via Sirsi and Yellapur, of about 125 miles.

Karwar is the north-west district of North Kanara. The port is the only safe haven on this coast between Bombay and Cochin. At one time it promised to be of importance on account of a projected extension of the railway from Hubli. The extension did not materialize, and now Karwar is merely a small coasting and fishing place and a resort for holiday-makers who spend all their time—sleep and meals excepted—in the sea.

One day, Charles—the Charles who packed the butter into our thermos—was neither eating nor sleeping; that is to say, he was bathing.

He is a peaceful, inoffensive person.

Imagine his alarm and surprise when a minnow suddenly darted at him. Charles side-paddled.

The minnow missed, sulked for a moment, and then made a second and more determined attack on its quarry.

This time Charles spread-eagled his legs, and the minnow just failed to butt him on the right patella.

Charles is like most quiet men when roused; he has a temper which

effervesces *pari passu* with delay. As the minnow flashed past, Charles grabbed it by the tail. Unfortunately, the little brute whipped round and bit him on the shoulder.

Charles let go.

The rest of the story I had from Mrs. Charles. It is best told in an expurgated form.

It seems that Charles thought that a white-hot spear had been thrust through his deltoid.

He said so.

The whole arm became intensely painful, swollen and red, and Charles said things about that too. Then, poor chap, he became too ill to talk much; but he made up for this later on, during convalescence.

The acute stage lasted for two or three days, during which the limb became completely paralysed. It was not until about the tenth day that Charles really felt himself again.

On the assumption that the minnow must have died of shock, Charles bathed on the eleventh day. He carried with him a pickle fork, but, I am glad to say, had no occasion to use it.

Inquiries amongst the local fishermen, at the headquarters of the Bombay Natural History Society and elsewhere, failed to clear up the mystery, and this so preyed on Charles's mind that he resolutely refused to send an account of the incident to the press. I suggested that the CORPS NEWS AND GAZETTE would be glad to publish a short description of the affair, but the suggestion was received with quite unwarrantable asperity.

Personally, I think that Charles must have bumped one of the "Emden's" derelict torpedoes. That ship spent some time in the Indian Ocean before delivering the famous bombardment of Madras. Charles avers the thing was no bigger than a sardine; but then, if there is one thing Charles hates more than another, it is exaggeration.

Karwar harbour covers the seaward expansion of the estuary of the Kalinadi River. Its mouth is protected by the picturesque Oyster Rocks. A few miles to the south of this barrier lies the Portuguese island of Anjidiv. Across the water, to the north, may be seen the tree-clad hills of Goa. The whole scene is delightful.

This, however, is New Karwar. Old Karwar—now in ruins and scarcely discernible—was a different place. It was a noted centre of trade, intrigue and strife, and its history provides many illustrations of the difficulties and dangers which faced the traders and seamen of old. Here, in 1660, Sir William Courten's Company started a muslin weaving factory which, for a time, proved a great success. As the venture prospered and grew, a valuable export trade in muslins, pepper, cardamoms and cassia was established. Sivaji started the trouble, but was bought off for what was then a large sum: Rs. 1,120. Of course, the germ of blackmail spread to all the local chiefs and freebooters, with the result that, although the

factory continued to show profits, conditions were more or less precarious during the ensuing forty years.

In 1684 the factory was the centre of a serious disturbance, when the crew of a small vessel landed, carried off a cow, and killed the animal.

Troubles arising from Portuguese enmity and Dutch jealousy were constant. Then the Maratthas built a fort in the vicinity, and so threatened the factory that it had to close down from 1720 to 1750. It then reopened for two years, but was finally put out of action by the Portuguese in 1752.

We stayed at Karwar for a few days, and then made for Poona via Yellapur, Haliyal, Khanapur and Belgaum—a run of about 320 miles, which we did in two stages.

On arrival in Poona I found a letter awaiting me. The postmark was “Jullundur.” The missive ran thus:—

“Protector of the Poor—Salaam!

Over a long time your servant has not been praying for your Honour's return to Punjab. Likewise my wife and two children—both males, praise be to God—have not been praying for your Honour's and Memsahib's daily arrivals.

Your Highnesses—Salaam!

God Almighty—to whom all thanks are overdue—at last answers united fervent prayers now arranging your Honour's transfer to Punjab, thus your old servant's heart is full to bursting of high tensions.

Send wire at once. Also fare to Poona, where your slave may attend to conduct your Honourable Bahadur and Memsahib to Punjab, via B.B. and C.I. Rail-gharri.

Sing to the ALL-POWERFUL (from whom all blessings are overdue) for that your Honour's return to the care of this unworthy chap.

Send fare, also advance of pay and *rassad*—URGENT.

Ever praying for your long lifes and prosperities,

Your old servant,

NABBHI BAKSH (Bearer).”

Aha, the Hop again!

I have neither information nor orders.

And yet, this is not the first time the Hop has startled me with the same sort of letter.

We shall see. Coming events cast their shadows before; and when the shadow takes the form of a shrewd little Punjabi Mussalman, it would be unwise to treat it with contempt.

A return to the north?

Ah, well, no matter! At any rate, we have been DOWN SOUTH.