

WANDERINGS OF A PILGRIM,

IN SEARCH OF

The Picturesque, #

DURING FOUR-AND-TWENTY YEARS IN THE EAST;

WITH

REVELATIONS OF LIFE

IN

THE ZENĀNA.

BY

فاني پارکس

ILLUSTRATED WITH SKETCHES FROM NATURE.

"Let the result be what it may, I have launched my boat."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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the deputation appointed to receive his lordship, by whom the prince was treated as the walī-uhd, or heir-apparent.

The first day, Lord Combermere and the resident breakfasted with the king of Oude; the party was very numerous. We retired afterwards to another room, where trays of presents were arranged upon the floor, ticketed with the names of the persons for whom they were intended, and differing in their number and value according to the rank of the guests. Two trays were presented to me, the first containing several pairs of Cashmere shawls, and a pile of India muslin and kimkhwāb, or cloth of gold. The other tray contained strings of pearl, precious stones, bracelets, and other beautiful native jewellery. I was desired to make my sālām in honor of the bounty of his majesty. As soon as the ceremony had finished, the trays were carried off and placed in the Company's treasury, an order having arrived, directing that all presents made to the servants of the Company should be accepted,—but for the benefit of the state.

That night his majesty dined at the residency, and took his departure at ten P. M., when quadrilles immediately commenced. The ladies were not allowed to dance while his majesty was present, as, on one occasion, he said, "That will do, let them leave off," thinking the ladies were quadrilling for his amusement, like nāch women. The second day, the king breakfasted with Lord Combermere, and we dined at the palace.

During dinner a favourite nāch woman attitudinized a little behind and to the right of his majesty's chair; at times he cast an approving glance at her performance. Sometimes she sang and moved about, and sometimes she bent her body *backwards*, until her head touched the ground; a marvellously supple, but not a graceful action.

The mornings were devoted to sports, and quadrilles passed away the evenings. I saw some very good elephant fights, some indifferent tiger fights, a rhinoceros against three wild buffaloes, in short, battles of every sort; some were very cruel, and the poor animals had not fair play.

The best fight was seen after breakfast at the palace. Two battaire (quails) were placed on the table; a hen bird was put

was not detained one moment more than necessary on the road. One of the barkandāz was armed with *two* swords and a great bamboo!

THE BARKANDĀZ.

A man of this description is too picturesque a personage to be omitted. The annexed portrait was taken by S. Mahumud Ameer; it represents a policeman in Calcutta with his sword, shield, and small-arms: the style of the turban and the dress altogether is remarkable; on the leathern band across his shoulder is the *chaprās*, or badge of the station to which he belongs.

The shield is generally of black leather adorned with brass knobs. Native gentlemen have shields well painted, sometimes bearing the portrait of some native lady, and richly ornamented with silver. We purchased a shield of the hide of the rhinoceros at the fair at Allahabad; there are numerous indentations upon it, the marks of bullets, which appear to have been turned off by the thickness and strength of the hide. My husband used to cut it up to leather the tips of billiard cues—therefore I carried it off, and added it to my museum.

The journey was very unpleasant, very hot, and not a breath of air.

The dust from the trampling of the bearers' feet rolled up in clouds, filling my eyes and mouth, and powdering my hair; and my little terrier, Fairy Poppus, as the natives call her, in imitation of my "Fury, pup, pup," was very troublesome in the *pālkee*.

I arrived at Cawnpore at 7 A.M., and was glad to take shelter in my new house, which I found very cool and pleasant, after a hot drive during the last stage in a buggy.

The house, or rather bungalow¹, for it is tiled over a thatch, is situated in the centre of the station, near the theatre; it stands on a platform of stone rising out of the Ganges, which flows below and washes the walls. The station is a very large

¹ Properly *Banglā*.

one: besides the gentlemen of the Civil Service, there are the artillery, the eleventh dragoons, the fourth cavalry, and three or four regiments of infantry.

The work of this day began by what is really an operation in India, and constantly repeated, that is, washing the hair. My ayha understood it remarkably well; for the benefit of those ladies having beautiful tresses in the East, I give the receipt¹.

June 9th.—The deaths are numerous in our farm-yard; in such weather it is a matter of surprise that any thing can exist. At 4 P.M. the thermometer outside the verandah, in the sun, stood at 130°; in the shade, at 110°! From this time to the end of August we lost 280 Guinea fowls from vertigo, and three calves also died.

A storm is raging: it arose in clouds of dust, which, sweeping over the river from the Lucnow side, blow directly on the windows of the drawing-room; they are all fastened, and a man at every one of them, or the violence of the wind would burst them open; my mouth and eyes are full of fine sand; I can scarcely write;—not a drop of rain, only the high wind, and the clouds of dust so thick we cannot see across the verandah. I feel rather afraid lest some part of the house, which is not in good repair, should give way if it continue to blow in such gusts. This bay-windowed room feels the whole force of the tufān, which is the heaviest I have seen. In Calcutta we had severe storms, with thunder and lightning; here, nothing but clouds of sand—reaching from earth to heaven—with a hot yellow tinge, shutting out the view entirely. The storm has blown for an hour, and is beginning to clear off; I can just see the little white-crested waves on the river beneath the verandah.

In the open air the thermometer stands at 130°; in the drawing-room, with three tattīs up, at 88°. The heat is too oppressive to admit of an evening drive.

A high caste and religious native gentleman, Shah Kubbeer-oo-deen Ahmud, requested to be allowed to play at chess with me; the natives are passionately fond of the game, which is

¹ See Appendix, No. 13.

writing, to which I had recourse with good success on this occasion¹.

18th.—The Governor-general breakfasted with the king. The whole party quitted the Residency on elephants most beautifully clothed, and were met half-way by his majesty. The scene was magnificent. The elephants, the camels, the crowds of picturesque natives, the horsemen, and the English troops, formed a *tout ensemble* that was quite inspiring. The Governor-general got into the king's howdah, and proceeded to the palace, where breakfast was laid in a fine service of gold and silver. After breakfast we proceeded to a verandah to see various fights, and, having taken our seats, the order was given to commence the tamāshā.

THE ELEPHANT FIGHTS.

The river Goomtee runs in front of the verandah; and on the opposite side were collected a number of elephants paired for the combat. The animals exhibited at first no inclination to fight, although urged on by their respective mahāwats, and we began to imagine this native sport would prove a failure.

At length two elephants, equally matched, were guided by the mahāwats on their backs to some distance from each other, and a female elephant was placed midway. As soon as the elephants turned and saw the female they became angry, and set off at a long swinging trot to meet each other; they attacked with their long tusks, and appeared to be pressing against each other with all their might. One elephant caught the leg of the other in his trunk, and strove to throw his adversary or break his fore-leg. But the most dangerous part appeared to be when they seized one another by their long trunks and interlaced them; then the combat began in good earnest. When they grew very fierce, and there was danger of their injuring themselves, fireworks were thrown in their faces, which alarmed and separated them, and small rockets were also let off for that purpose.

¹ Appendix, No. 16.

The situation of a mahāwat during the fight is one of danger. The year before, the shock of the combat having thrown the mahāwat to the ground, the elephant opposed to him took a step to one side, and, putting his great foot upon him, quietly crushed the man to death!

Sometimes the elephant will put up his trunk to seize his opponent's mahāwat and pull him off: skill and activity are requisite to avoid the danger.

The second pair of elephants that were brought in front of the verandah hung back, as if unwilling to fight, for some time; several natives, both on horseback and on foot, touched them up every now and then with long spears to rouse their anger. One of the elephants was a long time ere he could be induced to combat—but, when once excited, he fought bravely; he was a powerful animal, too much for his adversary—for having placed his tusks against the flank of his opponent, he drove him before him step-by-step across the plain to the edge of the river, and fairly rolled him over into the Goomtee. Sometimes a defeated elephant will take to the water, and his adversary will pursue him across the river.

The animals are rendered furious by giving them balls to eat made of the wax of the human ear, which the barbers collect for that purpose!

The hair on the tail of an elephant is reckoned of such importance, that the price of the animal rises or falls according to the quantity and length of the hair on the tail. It is sometimes made into bracelets for English ladies.

A great number of elephants fought in pairs during the morning; but, to have a good view of the combat, one ought to be on the plain on the other side the river, nearer to the combatants; the verandah from which we viewed the scene is rather too distant.

When the elephant fights were over, two rhinoceros were brought before us, and an amusing fight took place between them; they fought like pigs.

The plain was covered by natives in thousands, on foot or on horseback. When the rhinoceros grew fierce, they charged the

crowd, and it was beautiful to see the mass of people flying before them.

On the Goomtee, in front of the verandah, a large pleasure-boat belonging to his Majesty was sailing up and down; the boat was made in the shape of a fish, and the golden scales glittered in the sun.

The scene was picturesque, animated, and full of novelty.

In an inclosed court, the walls of which we overlooked, seven or eight fine wild buffaloes were confined: two tigers, one hyena, and three bears were turned loose upon them. I expected to see the tigers spring upon the buffaloes, instead of which they slunk round and round the walls of the court, apparently only anxious to escape. The tigers had not a fair chance, and were sadly injured, being thrown into the air by the buffaloes, and were received again when falling on their enormous horns. The buffaloes attacked them three or four together, advancing in line with their heads to the ground. I observed that when the buffaloes came up to the tiger, who was generally lying on the ground, and presented their horns close to him—if the animal raised his paw and struck one of them, he was tossed in a moment; if he remained quiet, they sometimes retreated without molesting him.

The bears fought well, but in a most laughable style. The scene was a cruel one, and I was glad when it was over. None of the animals, however, were killed.

A fight was to have taken place between a country horse and two tigers, but Lady William Bentinck broke up the party and retired. I was anxious to see the animal, he is such a vicious beast; the other day he killed two tigers that were turned loose upon him.

Combats also took place between rams: the creatures attacked each other fiercely—the jar and the noise were surprising as head met head in full tilt. Well might they be called battering rams!

21st.—We visited Constantia, a beautiful and most singular house, built by General Martine; it would take pages to describe it; the house is constructed to suit the climate; venti-

fagging, up to their knees in water, against the stream and this cold wind; this twist in the river will, however, allow of half an hour's sail, and the poor creatures may then warm themselves. I will send each man a red Lascar's cap and a black blanket, their Indian bodies feel the cold so bitterly. When the sails are up my spirits rise; this tracking day by day against wind and stream so many hundred miles is tiresome work. My solitude is agreeable, but the tracking detestable. I must go on deck, there is a breeze, and enjoy the variety of having a sail. At Pukkaghur eight peacocks were by the river-side, where they had come for water; on our approach they moved gently away. They roost on the largest trees they can find at night. I have just desired three pints of oil to be given to the dāndees, that they may rub their limbs. The cold wind, and being constantly in and out of the water, makes their skin split, although it is like the hide of the rhinoceros; they do not suffer so much when their legs have been well rubbed with oil. What a noise the men are making! they are all sitting on the deck, whilst a bearer, with a great jar of oil, is doling out a chhattak to each shivering dāndee.

24th.—Another trouble! The river is very broad, with three great sandbanks in the centre, and there is scarcely any water among the divided channels. Two great cotton boats are aground in the deepest part. They must be off ere there will be room for the Seagull. Whilst the cook-boat anchors, the washermen will set to work to wash the clothes on the river's edge, and will dry them in the rigging; and the crews of both vessels will unite to cut the pinnace through the sand. Noon: the cotton boats are off; the dinghee is moving about, sounding the passage.

I have had a ramble on the sands, and have found a shell, the shape of the most curious of the fossils we used to find in the cliffs at Christ Church in Hampshire. I have only found three small ones, and must look for more; they are rarely on the sands. Whilst we were waiting for the cotton boats to get off, I sketched them. The boat called an ulāk is beautiful, like a bird upon the waters—graceful and airy—with bamboos in all