

OVERLAND ROUTE

TO

INDIA AND CHINA.

The air of that sweet Indian land,
Whose air is balm; whose ocean spreads
O'er coral rocks and amber beds;
Whose mountains, pregnant by the beam
Of the warm sun, with diamonds teem;

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Whose sandal groves and bowers of spice
Might be a Peri's Paradise!

MOORE.

LONDON:
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reside in scattered bungalows in the midst of gardens. The principal buildings, besides those alluded to above, are St. George's Church, Government House, Madras Club, the College, &c. The only object in the vicinity worth visiting is St. Thomas's Mount.

Buggies ply like cabs in England, so that we can be easily conveyed through the various parts of Madras in a few hours.

The population of Madras is above 400,000. Hotels are bad, but the club excellent. Railways are opened into the interior, and advancing rapidly. Electric telegraph to Bombay and Calcutta. Lowest range of thermometer is 75°, highest 140°. Thus much,—and a great deal more that must be seen to be fully appreciated,—we learn as we drive through the burning streets of Madras; and we are by no means sorry when, after due refreshment at the excellent club-house, we find ourselves once more on board our ocean house, and steaming away for—

CALCUTTA.

Less than three days brings us to the mouth of the river Hooghly, up which we steam for 100 miles ere we anchor off the Gaunts of this city of palaces,—the seat of government of the Bengal presidency and the capital of British India.

Wonderful and striking is the change as we rush suddenly from the bosom of the briny ocean into the majestic river. On each side the banks, in some places very high, are covered with luxuriant tropical vegetation,—the golden and sweet-scented babool, the magnolia, the graceful bamboo, and a host of other beautiful plants and trees, springing out of dense shrubbery. Here we begin to feel more powerfully than we have yet done that we have reached the famous land of India; and every object that meets our wondering gaze tends to deepen and intensify this feeling, which is at length brought to a climax by the sudden appearance of the magnificent city.

Calcutta stands on the east bank of the Hooghly, a branch

of the Ganges. It is upwards of six miles in length, extending along the river's bank. The population is about 600,000, and, like the other principal cities under British rule, of a very mixed character, affording the stranger no small amount of amusement in the way of costume and physiognomy. Many of the houses are tall and stately, with verandahs and Grecian pillars. Behind the front lines of mansions is the native town, with dirty, narrow streets, dirty natives,—all more or less naked,—ghastly religious mendicants, showy marriage processions, and sounds of creaking wheels and discordant voices. From the quay, built by Lord Hastings, we may see all this, and also the vessels of every shape and size from all parts of the world; while near the banks are hundreds of Brahmins, saying their prayers and washing in the deified river.

This is a great commercial city. The river is deep and broad,—fully a mile at Calcutta,—and the tributaries of the Ganges afford facilities for trade with the rich interior; consequently the traffic is very great, and the population of the surrounding country is dense. Hotels are large and numerous. Railways and electric telegraphs connect the city with many important stations inland. The lowest range of the thermometer is 52°, highest 140°.

The buildings, &c., worth seeing are too numerous to particularize. Our Engraving gives the view from Garden Reach, and embraces the river Hooghly, with its crowd of shipping and boats. The splendid new *Government House*, in the centre, was built by the Marquis of Wellesley; and *Fort William*, to the right, was begun by Lord Clive. It is the strongest fortress in India, used to be garrisoned by two or three European regiments and native troops; but since the terrible mutinies of the present year (1857), it is probable that important changes will be made in regard to this. To the left of the Government House are seen the handsome buildings of the *Esplanade*. The gauts, or broad flights of steps on the banks of the river, are curious; and the pagodas,

temples, &c., are absolutely innumerable and totally indescribable.

In order to visit Madras and Calcutta we have again diverged from the direct route to China. From Point de Galle the steamer proceeds straight east, until it cleaves the islet-studded waves of the Malacca Straits. After a voyage of five days from Point de Galle we touch at—

PENANG,

Or, the Prince of Wales Island. This is the seat of government of the British possessions in the Straits of Malacca; a very fine island, mountainous, comparatively cool and salubrious. It is 18 miles long by 8 broad, and was purchased by the East India Company in 1786. It lies on the west coast of Malay. Population is about 40,000. Our time here is short, and, after a few hours' halt, we proceed on our rapid course through the interesting Straits of Malacca towards—

SINGAPORE.

The voyage from Penang to Singapore occupies two days, and is varied and pleasant, as land is in sight all the way. The bold mountain ranges of the Malay peninsula appear on our left, and the picturesque islets of the straits, with the Island of Sumatra, on our right.

Singapore, alias Lion's Town, is at the southern extremity of the Malay peninsula, and the population is upwards of 60,000. It stands on a small island about 80 miles distant from the equator. A strait, quarter of a mile wide, divides it from the mainland. The town is built on a salt creek which can only be navigated by boats, and the ship anchorage is two miles from the town. A chain of small islands, seaward of Singapore, are inhabited by a race of semi, if not absolute, savages, of whom little is known. The settlement is