Tales of the Malayan Coast From Penang to the Philippines

Rounsevelle Wildman

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Title: Tales of the Malayan Coast

Author: Rounsevelle Wildman

Release date: January 12, 2009 [eBook #27784]

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/27784

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TALES OF THE MALAYAN COAST ***

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Rounsevelle Wildman



Rounsevelle Wildman, U. S. Consul-General at Hong Kong.



Tales of the Malayan Coast

From Penang to the Philippines

By
Rounsevelle Wildman
Consul General of the United States
at Hong Kong
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Boston
Lothrop Publishing Company

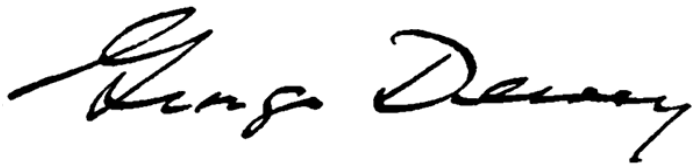
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J. S. Cushing & Co.—Berwick & Smith
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George Dewey, Admiral U. S. Navy

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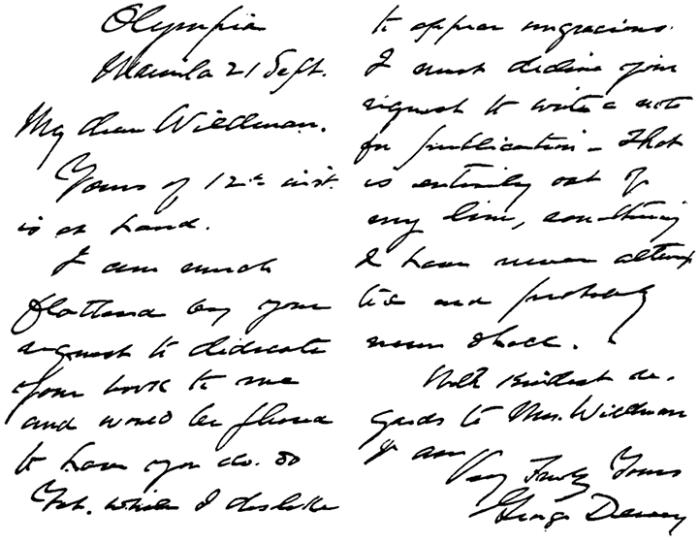
To

Our Hero

And my friend

Admiral George Dewey, U.S.N.

I Dedicate this Book



Flagship Olympia,
Manila, 21 Sept., 1898.

My Dear Wildman:—

Yours of 12th instant is at hand. I am much flattered by your request to dedicate your book to me, and would be pleased to have you do so.

With kindest regards, I am,

Very truly yours,

George Dewey.

Preface

These stories are the result of nine years' residence and experience on the Malayan coast—that land of romance and adventure which the ancients knew as the Golden Chersonesus, and which, in modern times, has been brought again into the atmosphere of valor and performance by Rajah Brooke of Sarawak, the hero of English expansion, and Admiral George Dewey of the Asiatic squadron, the hero of American achievement. The author, in his official duties as Special Commissioner of the United States for the Straits Settlement and Siam, and, later, as Consul General of the United States at Hong Kong, has mingled with and studied the diverse people of the Malayan coast, from the Sultan of Johore and Aguinaldo the Filipino to the lowest Eurasian and "China boy" of that wonderful Oriental land. These stories are based on his experiences afloat and ashore, and are offered to the American public at this time when all glimpses of the land that Columbus sailed to find are of especial interest to the modern possessors of the land he really did discover.

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Tales of the Malayan Coast From Penang to the Philippines

Baboo's Good Tiger

A Tale of the Malacca Jungle

Aboo Din's first-born, Baboo, was only four years old when he had his famous adventure with the tiger he had found sleeping in the hot lallang grass within the distance of a child's voice from Aboo Din's bungalow.

For a long time before that hardly a day had passed but Aboo-Din, who was our *syce*, or groom, and wore the American colors proudly on his right arm, came in from the servants' quarters with an anxious look on his kindly brown face and asked respectfully for the *tuan* (lord) or *mem* (lady).

"What is it, Aboo Din?" the mistress would inquire, as visions of Baboo drowned in the great Shanghai jar, or of Baboo lying crushed by a boa among the yellow bamboos beyond the hedge, passed swiftly through her mind.

"Mem see Baboo?" came the inevitable question.

It was unnecessary to say more. At once Ah Minga, the "boy"; Zim, the cook; the *kebuns* (gardeners); the *tukanayer* (water-boy), and even the sleek Hindu *dirzee*, who sat sewing, dozing, and chewing betel-nut, on the shady side of the veranda, turned out with one accord and commenced a systematic search for the missing Baboo.

Sometimes he was no farther off than the protecting screen of the "compound" hedge, or the cool, green shadows beneath the bungalow. But oftener the government Sikhs had to be appealed to, and Kampong Glam in Singapore searched from the great market to the courtyards of Sultan Ali. It was useless to whip him, for whippings seemed only to make Baboo grow. He would lisp serenely as Aboo Din took down the rattan withe from above the door, "*Baboo baniak jahat!*" (Baboo very bad!) and there was something so charmingly impersonal in all his mischief, that we came between his own brown body and the rod, time and again. There was nothing distinctive in Baboo's features or form. To the casual observer he might have been any one of a half-dozen of his playmates. Like them, he went about perfectly naked, his soft, brown skin shining like polished rosewood in the fierce Malayan sun.

His hair was black, straight, and short, and his eyes as black as coals. Like his companions, he stood as straight as an arrow, and could carry a pail of water on his head without spilling a drop.

He, too, ate rice three times a day. It puffed him up like a little old man, which added to his grotesqueness and gave him a certain air of dignity that went well with his features when they were in repose. Around his waist he wore a silver chain with a silver heart suspended from it. Its purpose was to keep off the evil spirits.

There was always an atmosphere of sandalwood and Arab essence about Baboo that reminded me of the holds of the old sailing-ships that used to come into Boston harbor from the Indies. I think his mother must have rubbed the perfumes into his hair as the one way of declaring to the world her affection for him. She could not give him clothes, or ornaments, or toys: such was not the fashion of Baboo's race. Neither was he old enough to wear the silk *sarong* that his Aunt Fatima had woven for him on her loom.

Baboo had been well trained, and however lordly he might be in the quarters, he was marked in his respect to the mistress. He would touch his forehead to the red earth when I drove away of a morning to the office; though the next moment I might catch him blowing a tiny ball of clay from his *sumpitan* into the ear of his father, the *syce*, as he stood majestically on the step behind me.

Baboo went to school for two hours every day to a fat old Arab *penager*, or teacher, whose schoolroom was an open stall, and whose only furniture a bench, on which he sat cross-legged, and flourished a whip in one hand and a chapter of the Koran in the other.

There were a dozen little fellows in the school; all naked. They stood up in line, and in a soft musical treble chanted in chorus the glorious promises of the Koran, even while their eyes wandered from the dusky corner where a cheko lizard was struggling with an atlas moth, to the frantic gesticulations of a naked Hindu who was calling his meek-eyed bullocks hard names because they insisted on lying down in the middle of the road for their noonday siesta.

Baboo's father, Aboo Din, was a Hadji, for he had been to Mecca. When nothing else could make Baboo forget the effects of the green durian he had eaten, Aboo Din would

take the child on his knees and sing to him of his trip to Mecca, in a quaint, monotonous voice, full of sorrowful quavers. Baboo believed he himself could have left Singapore any day and found Mecca in the dark.

We had been living some weeks in a government bungalow, fourteen miles from Singapore, across the island that looks out on the Straits of Malacca. The fishing and hunting were excellent. I had shot wild pig, deer, tapirs, and for some days had been getting ready to track down a tiger that had been prowling in the jungle about the bungalow.

But of a morning, as we lay lazily chatting in our long chairs behind the bamboo chicks, the cries of "Harimau! Harimau!" and "Baboo" came up to us from the servants' quarters.

Aboo Din sprang over the railing of the veranda, and without stopping even to touch the back of his hand to his forehead, cried,—

"Tuan Consul, tiger have eat chow dog and got Baboo!"

Then he rushed into the dining room, snatched up my Winchester and cartridge-belt, and handed them to me with a "*Lekas* (quick)! Come!"

He sprang back off the veranda and ran to his quarters where the men were arming themselves with ugly *krises* and heavy *parangs*.

I had not much hope of finding the tiger, much less of rescuing Baboo, dead or alive. The jungle loomed up like an impassable wall on all three sides of the compound, so dense, compact, and interwoven, that a bird could not fly through it. Still I knew that my men, if they had the

courage, could follow where the tiger led, and could cut a path for me.

Aboo Din unloosed a half-dozen pariah dogs that we kept for wild pig, and led them to the spot where the tiger had last lain. In an instant the entire pack sent up a doleful howl and slunk back to their kennels.

Aboo Din lashed them mercilessly and drove them into the jungle, where he followed on his hands and knees. I only waited to don my green *kaki* suit and canvas shooting hat and despatch a man to the neighboring *kampong*, or village, to ask the *punghulo* (chief) to send me his *shikaris*, or hunters. Then I plunged into the jungle path that my *kebuns* had cut with their keen *parangs*, or jungle-knives. Ten feet within the confines of the forest the metallic glare of the sun and the pitiless reflections of the China Sea were lost in a dim, green twilight. Far ahead I could hear the half-hearted snarls of the cowardly, deserting curs, and Aboo Din's angry voice rapidly exhausting the curses of the Koran on their heads.

My men, who were naked save for a cotton *sarong* wound around their waists, slashed here a rubber-vine, there a thorny rattan, and again a mass of creepers that were as tenacious as iron ropes, all the time pressing forward at a rapid walk. Ofttimes the trail led from the solid ground through a swamp where grew great sago palms, and out of which a black, sluggish stream flowed toward the straits. Gray iguanas and pendants of dove orchids hung from the limbs above, and green and gold lizards scuttled up the trees at our approach.

At the first plot of wet ground Aboo Din sent up a shout, and awaited my coming. I found him on his hands and knees, gazing stupidly at the prints in the moist earth.

"Tuan," he shouted, "see Baboo's feet, one—two—three—more! Praise be to Allah!"

I dropped down among the lily-pads and pitcher-plants beside him. There, sure enough, close by the catlike footmarks of the tiger, was the perfect impression of one of Baboo's bare feet. Farther on was the imprint of another, and then a third. Wonderful! The intervals between the several footmarks were far enough apart for the stride of a man!

"*Apa?*" (What does it mean?) I said.

Aboo Din tore his hair and called upon Allah and the assembled Malays to witness that he was the father of this Baboo, but that, in the sight of Mohammed, he was innocent of this witchcraft. He had striven from Hari Rahmadan to Hari Rahmanan to bring this four-year-old up in the light of the Koran, but here he was striding through the jungle, three feet and more at a step, holding to a tiger's tail!

I shouted with laughter as the truth dawned upon me. It must be so,—Baboo was alive. His footprints were before me. He was being dragged through the jungle by a full-grown Malayan tiger! How else explain his impossible strides, overlapping the beast's marks!

Aboo Din turned his face toward Mecca, and his lips moved in prayer.

"May Allah be kind to this tiger!" he mumbled. "He is in the hands of a witch. We shall find him as harmless as an old cat. Baboo will break out his teeth with a club of billion wood and bite off his claws with his own teeth. Allah is merciful!"

We pushed on for half an hour over a dry, foliage-cushioned strip of ground that left no trace of the pursued. At the second wet spot we dashed forward eagerly and scanned the trail for signs of Baboo, but only the pads of the tiger marred the surface of the slime.

Aboo Din squatted at the root of a huge mangrove and broke forth into loud lamentations, while the last remaining cur took advantage of his preoccupation to sneak back on the homeward trail.

"Aboo," I commanded sarcastically, "*pergie!* (move on!) Baboo is a man and a witch. He is tired of walking, and is riding on the back of the tiger!"

Aboo gazed into my face incredulously for a moment; then, picking up his *parang* and tightening his *sarong*, strode on ahead without a word.

At noon we came upon a sandy stretch of soil that contained a few diseased cocoanut palms, fringed by a sluggish lagoon, and a great banian tree whose trunk was hardly more than a mass of interlaced roots. A troop of long-armed *wah-wah* monkeys were scolding and whistling within its dense foliage with surprising intensity. Occasionally one would drop from an outreaching limb to one of the pendulous roots, and then, with a shrill whistle of fright, spring back to the protection of his mates.

A Malay silenced them by throwing a half-ripe cocoanut into the midst of the tree, and we moved on to the shade of the sturdiest palm. There we sat down to rest and eat some biscuits softened in the milk of a cocoanut.

"There is a boa in the roots of the banian, Aboo," I said, looking longingly toward its deep shadow.

He nodded his head, and drew from the pouch in the knot in his *sarong* a few broken fragments of areca nut. These he wrapped in a lemon leaf well smeared with lime, and tucked the entire mass into the corner of his mouth.

In a moment a brilliant red juice dyed his lips, and he closed his eyes in happy contentment, oblivious, for the time, of the sand and fallen trunks that seemed to dance in the parching rays of the sun, oblivious, even, of the loss of his first-born.

I was revolving in my mind whether there was any use in continuing the chase, which I would have given up long before, had I not known that a tiger who has eaten to repletion is both timid and lazy. This one had certainly breakfasted on a dog or on some animal before encountering Baboo.

I had hoped that possibly the barking of the curs might have caused him to drop the child, and make off where pursuit would be impossible; but so far we had, after those footprints, found neither traces of Baboo alive, nor the blood which should have been seen had the tiger killed the child.

Suddenly a long, pear-shaped mangrove-pod struck me full in the breast. I sprang up in surprise, for I was under a cocoanut tree, and there was no mangrove nearer than the lagoon.

A Malay looked up sleepily, and pointed toward the wide-spreading banian.

“Monkey, Tuan!”

My eyes followed the direction indicated, and could just distinguish a grinning face among the interlacing roots at

the base of the tree. So I picked up the green, dartlike end of the pod, and took careful aim at the brown face and milk-white teeth.

Then it struck me as peculiar that a monkey, after all the evidence of fright we had so lately witnessed, should seek a hiding-place that must be within easy reach of its greatest enemy, the boa-constrictor.

Aboo Din had aroused himself, and was looking intently in the same direction. Before I could take a step toward the tree he had leaped to his feet, and was bounding across the little space, shouting, “Baboo! Baboo!”

The small brown face instantly disappeared, and we were left staring blankly at a dark opening into the heart of the woody maze. Then we heard the small, well-known voice of Baboo:—

“*Tabek* (greeting), Tuan! Greeting, Aboo Din! Tuan Consul no whip, Baboo come out.”

Aboo Din ran his long, naked arm into the opening in pursuit of his first-born—the audacious boy who would make terms with his white master!

“Is it not enough before Allah that this son should cause me, a Hadji, to curse daily, but now he must bewitch tigers and dictate terms to the Tuan and to me, his father? He shall feel the strength of my wrist; I will—O Allah!”

Aboo snatched forth his arm with a howl of pain. One of his fingers was bleeding profusely, and the marks of tiny teeth showed plainly where Baboo had closed them on the offending hand.

“*Biak*, Baboo, *mari*!” (Good, come forth!) I said.

First the round, soft face of the small miscreant appeared; then the head, and then the naked little body. Aboo Din grasped him in his arms, regardless of his former threats, or of the blood that was flowing from his wounds. Then, amid caresses and promises to Allah to kill fire-fighting cocks, the father hugged and kissed Baboo until he cried out with pain.

After each Malay had taken the little fellow in his arms, I turned to Baboo and said, while I tried to be severe,—

"Baboo, where is tiger?"

"*Sudah mati* (dead), Tuan," he answered with dignity. "Tiger over there, Tuan. *Sladang* kill. I hid here and wait for Aboo Din!"

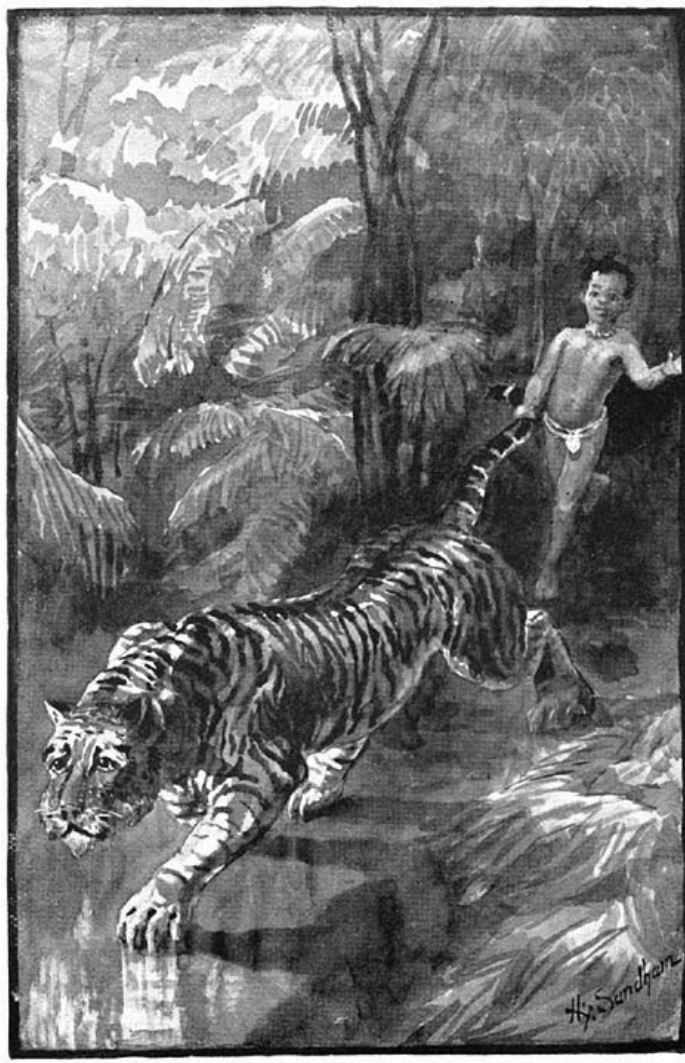
He touched his forehead with the back of his brown palm. There was nothing, either in the little fellow's bearing or words, that betrayed fear or bravado. It was only one mishap more or less to him.

We followed Baboo's lead to the edge of the jungle, and there, stretched out in the hot sand, lay the great, tawny beast, stamped and pawed until he was almost unrecognizable.

All about him were the hoof-marks of the great *sladang*, the fiercest and wildest animal of the peninsula—the Malayan bull that will charge a tiger, a black lion, a boa, and even a crocodile, on sight. Hunters will go miles to avoid one of them, and a herd of elephants will go trumpeting away in fear at their approach.

"*Kuching besar* (big cat) eat Baboo's chow dog, then sleep in lallang grass,"—this was the child's story. "Baboo find, and say, '*Bagus kuching* (pretty kitty), see Baboo's doll?'

Kuching no like Baboo's doll mem consul give. Kuching run away. Baboo catch tail, run too. Kuching go long ways. Baboo 'fraid Aboo Din whip and tell kuching must go back. Kuching pick Baboo up in mouth when Baboo let go.



Baboo's good tiger

"Baboo catch tail, run too" (see page 26)

"Kuching hurt Baboo. Baboo stick fingers in kuching's eye. Kuching no more hurt Baboo. Kuching stop under

banian tree and sleep. Big *sladang* come, fight kuching. Baboo sorry for good kuching. Baboo hid from *sladang*,—Aboo Din no whip Baboo?"

His voice dropped to a pathetic little quaver, and he put up his hands with an appealing gesture; but his brown legs were drawn back ready to flee should Aboo Din make one hostile move.

"Baboo," I said, "you are a hero!"

Baboo opened his little black eyes, but did not dispute me.

"You shall go to Mecca when you grow up, and become a Hadji, and when you come back the high *kadi* shall take you in the mosque and make a *kateeb* of you," said I. "Now put your forehead to the ground and thank the good Allah that the kuching had eaten dog before he got you."

Baboo did as he was told, but I think that in his heart he was more grateful that for once he had evaded a whipping than for his remarkable escape. A little later the *punghulo* came up with a half-dozen *shikaris*, or hunters, and a pack of hunting dogs. The men skinned the mutilated carcass of the only "good tiger" I met during my three years' hunting in the jungles of this strange old peninsula.

Baboo's Pirates

An Adventure in the Pahang River

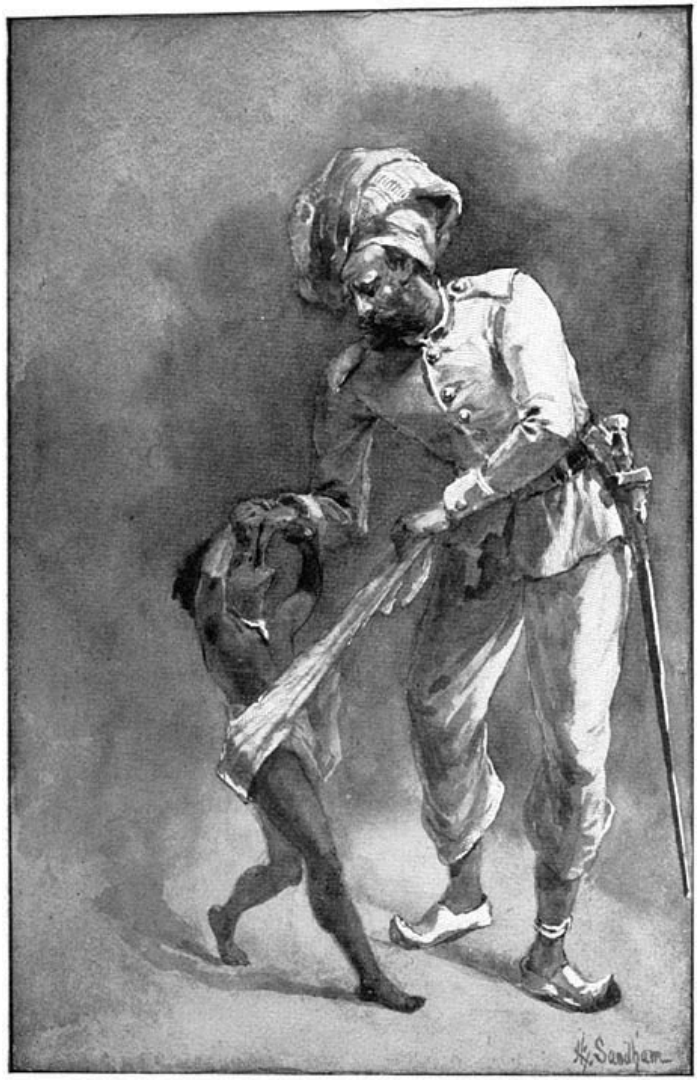
There was a scuffle in the outer office, and a thin, piping voice was calling down all the curses of the Koran on the heads of my great top-heavy Hindu guards.

“Sons of dogs,” I heard in the most withering contempt, “I will see the Tuan Consul. Know he is my father.”

A tall Sikh, with his great red turban awry and his brown *kaki* uniform torn and soiled, pushed through the bamboo chicks and into my presence.

He was dragging a small bit of naked humanity by the folds of its faded cotton *sarong*.

The powerful soldier was hot and flushed, and a little stream of blood trickling from his finger tips showed where they had come in contact with his captive’s teeth. It was as though an elephant had been worried by a pariah cur.



Baboo and the Sikh

"It was as though an elephant had been worried by a pariah cur"

"Your Excellency," he said, salaaming and gasping for breath.

"It is Baboo, the Harimau-Anak!"

Baboo wrenched from the guard's grasp and glided up to my desk. The back of his open palm went to his forehead, and his big brown eyes looked up appealingly into mine.

"What is it, Tiger-Child?" I asked, bestowing on him the title the Malays of Kampong Glam had given him as a perpetual reminder of his famous adventure.

Dimples came into either tear-stained cheek. He smoothed out the rents in his small *sarong*, and without deigning to notice his late captor, said in a soft sing-song voice:—

"Tuan Consul, Baboo want to go with the Heaven-Born to Pahang. Baboo six years old,—can fight pirates like Aboo Din, the father. May Mohammed make Tuan as odorous as musk!"

"You are a boaster before Allah, Baboo," I said, smiling.

Baboo dropped his head in perfectly simulated contrition.

"I have thought much, Tuan."

News had come to me that an American merchant ship had been wrecked near the mouth of the Pahang River, and that the Malays, who were at the time in revolt against the English Resident, had taken possession of its cargo of petroleum and made prisoners of the crew.

I had asked the colonial governor for a guard of five Sikhs and a launch, that I might steam up the coast and investigate the alleged outrage before appealing officially to the British government.

Of course Baboo went, much to the disgust of Aboo Din, the *syce*.

I never was able to refuse the little fellow anything, and I knew if I left him behind he would be revenged by running away.

I had vowed again and again that Baboo should stay lost the next time he indulged in his periodical vanishing act, but each time when night came and Aboo Din, the *syce*, and Fatima, the mother, crept pathetically along the veranda to where I was smoking and steeling my heart against the little rascal, I would snatch up my cork helmet and spring into my cart, which Aboo Din had kept waiting inside the stables for the moment when I should relent.

Since Baboo had become a hero and earned the appellation of the Harimau-Anak, his vanity directed his footsteps toward Kampong Glam, the Malay quarter of Singapore. Here he was generally to be found, seated on a richly hued Indian rug, with his feet drawn up under him, amid a circle of admiring shopkeepers, *syces*, *kebuns*, and fishermen, narrating for the hundredth time how he had been caught at Changhi by a tiger, carried through the jungle on its back until he came to a great banian tree, into which he had crawled while the tiger slept, how a *sladang* (wild bull) came out of the lagoon and killed the tiger, and how Tuan Consul and Aboo Din, the father, had found him and kissed him many times.

Often he enlarged on the well-known story and repeated long conversations that he had carried on with the tiger while they were journeying through the jungle.

A brass lamp hung above his head in which the cocoanut oil sputtered and burned and cast a fitful half-light about the box-like stall.

Only the eager faces of the listeners stood out clear and distinct against the shadowy background of tapestries from

Madras and Bokhara, soft rich rugs from Afghanistan and Persia, curiously wrought finger bowls of brass and copper from Delhi and Siam, and piles of cunningly painted *sarongs* from Java.

Close against a naked fisherman sat the owner of the bazaar in tall, conical silk-plaited hat and flowing robes, ministering to the wants of the little actor, as the soft, monotonous voice paused for a brief instant for the tiny cups of black coffee.

I never had the heart to interrupt him in the midst of one of these dramatic recitals, but would stand respectfully without the circle of light until he had finished the last sentence.

He was not frightened when I thrust the squatting natives right and left, and he did not forget to arise and touch the back of his open palm to his forehead, with a calm and reverent, "*Tabek, Tuan*" (Greeting, my lord).

So Baboo went with us to fight pirates.

He unrolled his mat out on the bow where every dash of warm salt water wet his brown skin, and where he could watch the flying fish dash across our way.

He was very quiet during the two days of the trip, as though he were fully conscious of the heavy responsibility that rested upon his young shoulders. I had called him a boaster and it had cut him to the quick.

We found the wreck of the *Bunker Hill* on a sunken coral reef near the mouth of the Pahang River, but every vestige of her cargo and stores was gone, even to the glass in her

cabin windows and the brasses on her rails.

We worked in along the shore and kept a lookout for camps or signals, but found none.

I decided to go up the river as far as possible in the launch in hope of coming across some trace of the missing crew, although I was satisfied that they had been captured by the noted rebel chief, the Orang Kayah of Semantan, or by his more famous lieutenant, the crafty Panglima Muda of Jempol, and were being held for ransom.

It was late in the afternoon when we entered the mouth of the Sungi Pahang.

Aboo Din advised a delay until the next morning.

“The Orang Kayah’s Malays are pirates, Tuan,” he said, with a sinister shrug of his bare shoulders, “he has many men and swift *praus*; the Dutch, at Rio, have sold them guns, and they have their *krises*,—they are cowards in the day.”

I smiled at the *syce’s* fears.

I knew that the days of piracy in the Straits of Malacca, save for an occasional outbreak of high-sea petty larceny on a Chinese lumber junk or a native trader’s *tonkang*, were past, and I did not believe that the rebels would have the hardihood to attack, day or night, a boat, however unprotected, bearing the American flag.

For an hour or more we ran along between the mangrove-bordered shores against a swiftly flowing, muddy current.

The great tangled roots of these trees stood up out of the water like a fretwork of lace, and the interwoven branches above our heads shut out the glassy glare of the sun. We

pushed on until the dim twilight faded out, and only a phosphorescent glow on the water remained to reveal the snags that marked our course.

The launch was anchored for the night close under the bank, where the maze of mangroves was beginning to give place to the solid ground and the jungle.

Myriads of fireflies settled down on us and hung from the low limbs of the overhanging trees, relieving the hot, murky darkness with their thousands of throbbing lamps.

From time to time a crocodile splashed in the water as he slid heavily down the clayey bank at the bow.

In the trees and rubber-vines all about us a colony of long-armed *wah-wah* monkeys whistled and chattered, and farther away the sharp, rasping note of a cicada kept up a continuous protest at our invasion.

At intervals the long, quivering yell of a tiger frightened the garrulous monkeys into silence, and made us peer apprehensively toward the impenetrable blackness of the jungle.

Aboo Din came to me as I was arranging my mosquito curtains for the night. He was casting quick, timid glances over his shoulder as he talked.

“Tuan, I no like this place. Too close bank. Ten boat-lengths down stream better. Baboo swear by Allah he see faces behind trees,—once, twice. Baboo good eyes.”

I shook off the uncanny feeling that the place was beginning to cast over me, and turned fiercely on the faithful Aboo Din.

He slunk away with a low salaam, muttering something

about the Heaven-Born being all wise, and later I saw him in deep converse with his first-born under a palm-thatched *cadjang* on the bow.

I was half inclined to take Aboo Din's advice and drop down the stream. Then it occurred to me that I might better face an imaginary foe than the whirlpools and sunken snags of the Pahang.

I posted sentinels fore and aft and lay down and closed my eyes to the legion of fireflies that made the night luminous, and my ears to the low, musical chant that arose fitfully from among my Malay servants on the stern.

The Sikhs were big, massive fellows, fully six feet tall, with towering red turbans that accentuated their height fully a foot.

They were regular artillery-men from Fort Canning, and had seen service all over India.

They had not been in Singapore long enough to become acquainted with the Malay language or character, but they knew their duty, and I trusted to their military training rather than to my Malay's superior knowledge for our safety during the night.

I found out later that the cunning in Baboo's small brown finger was worth all the precision and drill in the Sikh sergeant's great body.

I fell asleep at last, lulled by the tenderly crooned promises of the Koran, and the drowsy, intermittent prattle of the monkeys among the varnished leaves above. The night was intensely hot; not a breath of air could stir within our living-cabin, and the cooling moisture which always comes with nightfall on the equator was lapped up by the thirsty

fronds above our heads, so that I had not slept many hours before I awoke dripping with perspiration, and faint.

There was an impression in my mind that I had been awakened by the falling of glass.

The Sikh saluted silently as I stepped out on the deck.

It lacked some hours of daylight, and there was nothing to do but go back to my bed, vowing never again to camp for the night along the steaming shores of a jungle-covered stream.

I slept but indifferently; I missed the cooling swish of the *punkah*, and all through my dreams the crackle and breaking of glass seemed to mingle with the insistent buzz of the tiger-gnats.

Baboo's diminutive form kept flitting between me and the fireflies.

The first half-lights of morning were struggling down through the green canopy above when I was brought to my feet by the discharge of a Winchester and a long, shrill cry of fright and pain.

Before I could disentangle myself from the meshes of the mosquito net I could see dimly a dozen naked forms drop lightly on to the deck from the obscurity of the bank, followed in each case by a long, piercing scream of pain.

I snatched up my revolver and rushed out on to the deck in my bare feet.

Some one grasped me by the shoulder and shouted:—

"*Jaga biak, biak, Tuan* (be careful, Tuan), pirates!"

I recognized Aboo Din's voice, and I checked myself just as my feet came in contact with a broken beer bottle.

The entire surface of the little deck was strewn with glittering star-shaped points that corresponded with the fragments before me.

I had not a moment to investigate, however, for in the gloom, where the bow of the launch touched the foliage-meshed bank, a scene of wild confusion was taking place.

Shadowy forms were leaping, one after another, from the branches above on to the deck. I slowly cocked my revolver, doubting my senses, for each time one of the invaders reached the deck he sprang into the air with the long, thrilling cry of pain that had awakened me, and with another bound was on the bulwarks and over the side of the launch, clinging to the railing.

With each cry, Baboo's mocking voice came out, shrill and exultant, from behind a pile of life-preservers. "O Allah, judge the dogs. They would *kris* the great Tuan as he slept —the pariahs!—but they forgot so mean a thing as Baboo!"

The smell of warm blood filled the air, and a low snarl among the rubber-vines revealed the presence of a tiger.

I felt Aboo Din's hand tremble on my shoulder.

The five Sikhs were drawn up in battle array before the cabin door, waiting for the word of command. I glanced at them and hesitated.

"*Tid 'apa, Tuan*" (never mind), Aboo Din whispered with a proud ring in his voice.

"Baboo blow Orang Kayah's men away with the breath of

his mouth."

As he spoke the branches above the bow were thrust aside and a dark form hung for an instant as though in doubt, then shot straight down upon the corrugated surface of the deck.

As before, a shriek of agony heralded the descent, followed by Baboo's laugh, then the dim shape sprang wildly upon the bulwark, lost its hold, and went over with a great splash among the labyrinth of snakelike mangrove roots.

There was the rushing of many heavy forms through the red mud, a snapping of great jaws, and there was no mistaking the almost mortal cry that arose from out the darkness. I had often heard it when paddling softly up one of the wild Malayan rivers.

It was the death cry of a *wah-wah* monkey facing the cruel jaws of a crocodile.

I plunged my fingers into my ears to smother the sound. I understood it all now. Baboo's pirates, the dreaded Orang Kayah's rebels, were the troop of monkeys we had heard the night before in the tambusa trees.

"Baboo," I shouted, "come here! What does this all mean?"

The Tiger-Child glided from behind the protecting pile, and came close up to my legs.

"Tuan," he whimpered, "Baboo see many faces behind trees. Baboo 'fraid for Tuan,—Tuan great and good,—save Baboo from tiger,—Baboo break up all glass bottles—old bottles—Tuan no want old bottle—Baboo and Aboo Din, the father, put them on deck so when Orang Kayah's men

come out of jungle and drop from trees on deck they cut their feet on glass. Baboo is through talking,—Tuan no whip Baboo!"

There was the pathetic little quaver in his voice that I knew so well.

"But they were monkeys, Baboo, not pirates."

Baboo shrugged his brown shoulders and kept his eyes on my feet.

"Allah is good!" he muttered.

Allah was good; they might have been pirates.

The snarl of the tiger was growing more insistent and near. I gave the order, and the boat backed out into mid-stream.

As the sun was reducing the gloom of the sylvan tunnel to a translucent twilight, we floated down the swift current toward the ocean.

I had given up all hope of finding the shipwrecked men, and decided to ask the government to send a gunboat to demand their release.

As the bow of the launch passed the wreck of the *Bunker Hill* and responded to the long even swell of the Pacific, Baboo beckoned sheepishly to Aboo Din, and together they swept all trace of his adventure into the green waters.

Among the souvenirs of my sojourn in Golden Chersonese is a bit of amber-colored glass bearing the world-renowned name of a London brewer. There is a dark stain on one side of it that came from the hairy foot of one of Baboo's "pirates."

How we Played Robinson Crusoe

In the Straits of Malacca

Two hours' steam south from Singapore, out into the famous Straits of Malacca, or one day's steam north from the equator, stands Raffles's Lighthouse. Sir Stamford Raffles, the man from whom it took its name, rests in Westminster Abbey, and a heroic-sized bronze statue of him graces the centre of the beautiful ocean esplanade of Singapore, the city he founded.

It was on the rocky island on which stands this light, that we—the mistress and I—played Robinson Crusoe, or, to be nearer the truth, Swiss Family Robinson.

It was hard to imagine, I confess, that the beautiful steam launch that brought us was a wreck; that our half-dozen Chinese servants were members of the family; that the ton of impedimenta was the flotsam of the sea; that the Eurasian keeper and his attendants were cannibals; but we closed our eyes to all disturbing elements, and only remembered that we were alone on a sunlit rock in the midst of a sunlit sea, and that the dreams of our childhood were, to some extent, realized.

What live American boy has not had the desire, possibly but half-admitted, to some day be like his hero, dear old Crusoe, on a tropical island, monarch of all, hampered by no dictates of society or fashion? I admit my desire, and, further, that it did not leave me as I grew older.

We had just time to inspect our little island home before the sun went down, far out in the Indian Ocean.

Originally the island had been but a barren, uneven rock, the resting-place for gulls; but now its summit has been made flat by a coating of concrete. There is just enough earth between the concrete and the rocky edges of the island to support a circle of cocoanut trees, a great almond tree, and a queer-looking banian tree, whose wide-spreading arms extend over nearly half the little plaza. Below the lighthouse, and set back like caves into the side of the island, are the kitchen and the servants' quarters, a covered passageway connecting them with the rotunda of the tower, in which we have set our dining table.

Ah Ming, our "China boy," seemed to be inveterate in his determination to spoil our Swiss Family Robinson illusion. We were hardly settled before he came to us.

"*Mem*" (mistress), "no have got ice-e-blox. Ice-e all glow away."

"Very well, Ming. Dig a hole in the ground, and put the ice in it."

"How can dig? Glound all same, hard like ice-e."

"Well, let the ice melt," I replied. "Robinson Crusoe had no ice."

In a half-hour Jim, the cook, came up to speak to the "*Mem*." He lowered his cue, brushed the creases out of his spotless shirt, drew his face down, and commenced:—

"Mem, no have got chocolate, how can make puddlin'?"

I laughed outright. Jim looked hurt.

"Jim, did you ever hear of one Crusoe?"

"No, *Tuan*!" (Lord.)

"Well, he was a Tuan who lived for thirty years without once eating chocolate 'puddlin'.' We'll not eat any for ten days. *Sabe?*"

Jim retired, mortified and astonished.

Inside of another half-hour, the *Tukang Ayer*, or water-carrier, arrived on the scene. He was simply dressed in a pair of knee-breeches. He complained of a lack of silver polish, and was told to pound up a stone for the knives, and let the silver alone.

We are really in the heart of a small archipelago. All about us are verdure-covered islands. They are now the homes of native fishermen, but a century ago they were hiding-places for the fierce Malayan pirates whose sanguinary deeds made the peninsula a byword in the mouths of Europeans.

A rocky beach extends about the island proper, contracting and expanding as the tide rises and falls. On this beach a hundred and one varieties of shells glisten in the salt water, exposing their delicate shades of coloring to the rays of the sun. Coral formations of endless design and shape come to view through the limpid spectrum, forming a perfect submarine garden of wondrous beauty. Through the shrubs, branches, ferns, and sponges of coral, the brilliantly colored fish of the Southern seas sport like goldfish in some immense aquarium.

We draw out our chairs within the protection of the almond tree, and watch the sun sink slowly to a level with the masts of a bark that is bound for Java and the Bornean

coasts. The black, dead lava of our island becomes molten for the time, and the flakes of salt left on the coral reef by the outgoing tide are filled with suggestions of the gold of the days of ’49. A faint breeze rustles among the long, fan-like leaves of the palm, and brings out the rich yellow tints with their background of green. A clear, sweet aroma comes from out the almond tree. The red sun and the white sheets of the bark sail away together for the Spice Islands of the South Pacific.

We sleep in a room in the heart of the lighthouse. The stairway leading to it is so steep that we find it necessary to hold on to a knotted rope as we ascend. Hundreds of little birds, no larger than sparrows, dash by the windows, flying into the face of the gale that rages during the night, keeping up all the time a sharp, high note that sounds like wind blowing on telegraph wires.

Every morning, at six o’clock, Ah Ming clambers up the perpendicular stairway, with tea and toast. We swallow it hurriedly, wrap a *sarong* about us, and take a dip in the sea, the while keeping our eyes open for sharks. Often, after a bath, while stretched out in a long chair, we see the black fins of a man-eater cruising just outside the reef. I do not know that I ever hit one, but I have used a good deal of lead firing at them.

One morning we started on an exploring expedition, in the keeper’s jolly-boat. It was only a short distance to the first island, a small rocky one, with a bit of sandy beach, along which were scattered the charred embers of past fires. From under our feet darted the grotesque little robber-crabs, with their stolen shell houses on their backs. A great white jellyfish, looking like a big tapioca pudding, had been washed up with the tide out of the reach of the sea, and a small colony of ants was feasting on it. We did not try to explore the interior of the islet. We named it Fir

Island from its crown of fir-like casuarina trees, which sent out on every breeze a balsamic odor that was charged with far-away New England recollections.

The next island was a large one. The keeper said it was called *Pulo Seneng*, or Island of Leisure, and held a little *kampong*, or village of Malays, under an old *punghulo*, or chief, named Wahpering. We found, on nearing the verdure-covered island, that it looked much larger than it really was. The woods grew out into the sea for a quarter of a mile. We entered the wood by a narrow walled inlet, and found ourselves for the first time in a mangrove swamp. The trees all seemed to be growing on stilts. A perfect labyrinth of roots stood up out of the water, like a rough scaffold, on which rested the tree trunks, high and dry above the flood. From the limbs of the trees hung the seed pods, two feet in length, sharp-pointed at the lower end, while on the upper end, next to the tree, was a russet pear-shaped growth. They are so nicely balanced that when in their maturity they drop from the branches, they fall upright in the mud, literally planting themselves.

The *punghulo's* house, or bungalow, stood at the head of the inlet. The old man—he must have been sixty—donned his best clothes, relieved his mouth of a great red quid of betel, and came out to welcome us. He gracefully touched his forehead with the back of his open palm, and mumbled the Malay greeting:—

"*Tabek, Tuan?*" (How are you, my lord?)

When the keeper gave him our cards, and announced us in florid language, the genial old fellow touched his forehead again, and in his best Bugis Malay begged the great Rajah and Ranee to enter his humble home.

The only way of entering a Malay home is by a rickety

ladder six feet high, and through a four-foot opening. I am afraid that the great "Rajah and Ranee" lost some of their lately acquired dignity in accepting the invitation.

Wahpering's bungalow, other than being larger and roomier than the ordinary bungalow, was exactly like all others in style and architecture.

It was built close to the water's edge, on palm posts six feet above the ground. This was for protection from the tiger, from thieves, from the water, and for sanitary reasons. Within the house we could just stand upright. The floor was of split bamboo, and was elastic to the foot, causing a sensation which at first made us step carefully. The open places left by the crossing of the bamboo slats were a great convenience to the *punghulo's* wives, as they could sweep all the refuse of the house through them; they might also be a great accommodation to the *punghulo's* enemies, if he had any, for they could easily ascertain the exact mat on which he slept, and stab him with their keen *krises* from beneath.

In one corner of the room was the hand-loom on which the *punghulo's* old wife was weaving the universal article of dress, the *sarong*.

The weaving of a *sarong* represents the labor of twenty days, and when we gave the dried-up old worker two dollars and a half for one, her *syrah*-stained gums broke forth from between her bright-red lips in a ghastly grin of pleasure.

There must have been the representatives of at least four generations under the *punghulo's* hospitable roof. Men and women, alike, were dressed in the skirt-like *sarong* which fell from the waist down; above that some of the older women wore another garment called a *kabaya*. The

married women were easily distinguishable by their swollen gums and filed teeth.

The roof and sides of the house were of *attap*. This is made from the long, arrow-like leaves of the nipah palm. Unlike its brother palms—the cocoa, the sago, the gamooty, and the areca—the nipah is short, and more like a giant cactus in growth. Its leaves are stripped off by the natives, then bent over a bamboo rod and sewed together with fibres of the same palm. When dry they become glazed and waterproof.

The tall, slender areca palm, which stands about every *kampong*, supplies the natives with their great luxury—an acorn, known as the betel-nut, which, when crushed and mixed with lime leaves, takes the place of our chewing tobacco. In fact, the bright-red juice seen oozing from the corners of a Malay's mouth is as much a part of himself as is his *sarong* or *kris*. Betel-nut chewing holds its own against the opium of the Chinese and the tobacco of the European.

As soon as we shook hands ceremoniously with the *punghulo's* oldest wife, and *tabeked* to the rest of his big family, the old man scrambled down the ladder, and sent a boy up a cocoanut tree for some fresh nuts. In a moment half a dozen of the great, oval, green nuts came pounding down into the sand. Another little fellow snatched them up, and with a sharp *parang*, or hatchet-like knife, cut away the soft shuck until the cocoanut took the form of a pyramid, at the apex of which he bored a hole, and a stream of delicious, cool milk gurgled out. We needed no second invitation to apply our lips to the hole. The meat inside was so soft that we could eat it with a spoon. The cocoanut of commerce contains hardly a suggestion of the tender, fleshy pulp of a freshly picked nut.

We left the *punghulo's* house with the old chief in the bow of our boat—he insisted upon seeing that we were properly announced to his subjects—and proceeded along the coast for half a mile, and then up a swampy lagoon to its head.

The tall tops of the palms wrapped everything in a cool, green twilight. The waters of the lagoon were filled with little bronze forms, swimming and sporting about in its tepid depths regardless of the cruel eyes that gleamed at them from great log-like forms among the mangrove roots.

Dozens of naked children fled up the rickety ladders of their homes as we approached. Ring-doves flew through the trees, and tame monkeys chattered at us from every corner. The men came out to meet us, and did the hospitalities of their village; and when we left, our boat was loaded down with presents of fish and fruit.

Almost every day after that did we visit the *kampong*, and were always welcomed in the same cordial manner.

Wahpering was tireless in his attentions. He kept his *Sampan Besar*, or big boat, with its crew at our disposal day after day.

One day I showed him the American flag. He gazed at it thoughtfully and said, "*Biak!*" (Good.) "How big your country?" I tried to explain. He listened for a moment. "Big as *Negri Blanda*?" (Holland.) I laughed. "A thousand times larger!" The old fellow shook his head sadly, and looked at me reproachfully.

"*Tidah! Tidah!*" (No, no.) "Rajah, *Orang Blanda* (Dutchman) show me chart of the world. Holland all red. Take almost all the world. Rest of country small, small. All in one little corner. How can Rajah say his country big?"

There was no denying the old man's knowledge; I, too, had seen one of these Dutch maps of the world, which are circulated in Java to make the natives think that Holland is the greatest nation on earth.

One day glided into another with surprising rapidity. We could swim, explore, or lie out in our long chairs and read and listlessly dream. All about our little island the silver sheen of the sea was checkered with sails. These strange native craft held for me a lasting fascination. I gazed out at them as they glided by and saw in them some of the rose-colored visions of my youth. Piracy, Indian Rajahs, and spice islands seemed to live in their queer red sails and palm-matting roofs. At night a soft, warm breeze blew from off shore and lulled us to sleep ere we were aware.

One morning the old chief made us a visit before we were up. He announced his approach by a salute from a muzzle-loading musket. I returned it by a discharge from my revolver. He had come over with the morning tide to ask us to spend the day, as his guests, wild-pig hunting. Of course we accepted with alacrity. I am not going to tell you how we found all the able-bodied men and dogs on the island awaiting us, how they beat the jungle with frantic yells and shouts while we waited on the opposite side, or even how many pigs we shot. It would all take too long.

We went fishing every day. The many-colored and many-shaped fish we caught were a constant wonderment to us. One was bottle-green, with sky-blue fins and tail, and striped with lines of gold. Its skin was stiff and firm as patent leather. Another was pale blue, with a bright-red proboscis two inches long. We caught cuttle-fish with great lustrous eyes, long jelly feelers, and a plentiful supply of black fluid; squibs, prawns, mullets, crabs, and devil-fish. These last are considered great delicacies by the natives. We had one fried. Its meat was perfectly white, and tasted

like a tallow candle.

The day on which we were to leave, Wahpering brought us some fruit and fish and a pair of ring-doves. Motioning me to one side, he whispered, the while looking shyly at the mistress, “Ranee very beautiful! How much you pay?” I was staggered for the moment, and made him repeat his question. This time I could not mistake him. “How much you pay for wife?” He gave his thumb a jerk in the direction of the mistress. I saw that he was really serious, so I collected my senses, and with a practical, businesslike air answered, “Two hundred dollars.” The old fellow sighed.

“The great Rajah very rich! I pay fifty for best wife.”

I have not tried to tell you all we did on our tropical island playing Robinson Crusoe. I have only tried to convey some little impression of a happy ten days that will ever be remembered as one more of those glorious, Oriental chapters in our lives which are filled with the gorgeous colors of crimson and gold, the delicate perfumes of spice-laden breezes, and with imperishable visions of a strange, old-world life.

They are chapters that we can read over and over again with an ever increasing interest as the years roll by.

The Sarong

The Malay's Chief Garment

No one knows who invented the *sarong*. When the great Sir Francis Drake skirted the beautiful jungle-bound shores of that strange Asian peninsula which seems forever to be pointing a wondering finger into the very heart of the greatest archipelago in the world, he found its inhabitants wearing the *sarong*. After a lapse of three centuries they still wear it,—neither Hindu invasion, Mohammedan conversion, Chinese immigration, nor European conquest has ever taken from them their national dress. Civilization has introduced many articles of clothing; but no matter how many of these are adopted, the Malay, from his Highness the Sultan of Johore, to the poorest fisherman of a squalid *kampong* on the muddy banks of a mangrove-hidden stream, religiously wears the *sarong*.

It is only an oblong cloth, this fashion-surviving garb, from two to four feet in width and some two yards long; sewn together at the ends. It looks like a gingham bag with the bottom out. The wearer steps into it, and with two or three ingenious twists tightens it round the waist, thus forming a skirt and, at the same time, a belt in which he carries the *kris*, or snake-like dagger, the inevitable pouch of areca nut for chewing, and the few copper cents that he dares not trust in his unlocked hut. The man's skirt falls to his knees, and among the poor class forms his only article of dress, while the woman's reaches to her ankles and is worn in connection with another *sarong* that is thrown over her head as a veil, so that when she is abroad and meets one of the opposite sex she can, Moslem-like, draw it about her face in the form of a long, narrow slit, showing only her coal-black eyes and thinly pencilled eyebrows.

In style or design the *sarong* never changes. Like the tartan of the Highlanders, which it greatly resembles, it is

invariably a check of gay colors. They are all woven of silk or cotton, or of silk and cotton mixed, by the native women, and no *attap*-thatched home is complete without its hand-loom.

One day we crawled up the narrow, rickety ladder that led into the two by four opening of old Wahpering's palm-shaded home. The little *punghulo* or chief, touched his forehead with the back of his open palm as we advanced cautiously over the open bamboo floor toward his old wife, who was seated in one corner by a low, horizontal window, weaving a *sarong* on a hand-loom. She looked up pleasantly with a soft "*Tabek*" (Greeting), and went on throwing her shuttle deftly through the brilliantly colored threads. The sharp bang of the dark, kamooning-wood bar drove the thread in place and left room for another. Back and forth flew the shuttle, and thread after thread was added to the fabric, yet no perceptible addition seemed to be made.

"How long does it take to finish it?" I asked in Malay.

"Twenty days," she answered, with a broad smile, showing her black, filed teeth and *syrah*-stained lips.

The red and brown *sarong* which she wore twisted tightly up under her armpits had cost her almost a month's work; the green and yellow one her chief wore about his waist, a month more; the ones she used as screens to divide the interior into rooms, and those of the bevy of sons and daughters of all ages that crowded about us each cost a month's more; and yet the labor and material combined in each represented less than two dollars of our money at the Bazaar in Singapore.

I had not the heart to take the one that she offered the mistress, but insisted on giving in exchange a pearl-

handled penknife, which the chief took, with many a touch of his forehead, "as a remembrance of the condescension of the *Orang American Rajah*."

Wahpering's wife was not dressed to receive us, for we had come swiftly up the dim lagoon, over which her home was built, and had landed on the sandy beach unannounced. Had she known that we were coming, she would have been dressed as became the wife of the *Punghulo of Pulo Seneng* (Island of Leisure). The long, black hair would have been washed beautifully clean with the juice of limes, and twisted up as a crown on the top of her head. In it would have been stuck pins of the deep-red gold from Mt. Ophir, and sprays of jasmine and *chumpaka*. Under her silken *sarong* would have been an inner garment of white cotton, about her waist a zone of beaded cloth held in front by an oval plate, and over all would have been thrown a long, loose dressing-gown, called the *kabaya*, falling to her knees and fastened down the front to the silver girdle with golden brooches. Her toes would have been covered with sandals cunningly embroidered in colored beads and gold tinsel.

Wahpering, too, might have added to his *sarong* a thin vest, buttoned close up to the neck, a light dimity *baju*, or jacket, and a pair of loose silk drawers. They made no apology for their appearance, but did the honors of the house with a native grace, regaling us with the cool, fresh milk of the cocoanut, and the delicious globes of the mangosteens.

The glare of the noonday sun, here on the equator, is inconceivable. It beats down in bald, irregular waves of heat that seem to stifle every living being and to burn the foliage to a cinder. Even the sharp, insistent whir of the cicada ceases when the thermometer on the sunny side of our palm-thatched bungalow reaches 155°. If I am forced

to go outside, I don my cork helmet, and hold a paper umbrella above it. Even then, after I have gone a half-hour, I feel dizzy and sick. I pass native after native, whose only head covering, if they have any at all save their short-cut black hair, is a handkerchief, stiffened, and tied with a peculiar twist on the head, or a rimless cap with possibly a text of the Koran embroidered on its front. It is only when they are on the sea from early morning to sunset, that they think it worth while to protect their heads with an umbrella-shaped, cane-worked head frame like those worn by the natives of Siam and China. The women I meet simply draw their *sarongs* more closely about their heads as the sun ascends higher and higher into the heavens, and go clattering off down the road in their wooden pattens, unconscious of my envy or wonderment.

The *sarong* is more to the Malay than is the kilt to the Scotchman. It is his dress by day and his covering at night. He uses it as a sail when far out from land in his cockle-shell boat, or as a bag in which to carry his provisions when following an elephant path through the dense jungle.

The checks, in its design, although indistinguishable to the European, differ according to his tribe or clan, and serve him as a means of identification wherever he may be on the peninsula.

The *sarong* and *kris* are distinctly and solely Malayan; they are shared with no other country; they are to be placed side by side with the green turban of the Moslem pilgrim and the cimeter of the Prophet.

A history of one, like the history of the other, embraces all that is tragical or romantic in Malayan story.

The Kris

And how the Malays use it

In an old dog-eared copy of Monteith's Geography, I remember a picture of a half-dozen pirate *prahus* attacking a merchantman off a jungle-bordered shore. A blazing sun hung high in the heavens above the fated ship, and, to my youthful imagination, seemed to beat down on the tropical scene with a fierce, remorseless intensity. The wedge-shaped tops of some palm-thatched and palm-shaded huts could just be seen, set well back from the shore.

I used to think that if I were a boy on that ship, I would slip quietly overboard, swim ashore, and while the pirates were busy fighting, I would set fire to their homes and so deliver the ship from their clutches. Little did I know then of the acres of bewildering mangrove swamps filled with the treacherous crocodiles that lie between the low-water line and the firm ground of the coast.

But always the most striking thing in the little woodcut to me were the curious, snake-like knives that the naked natives held in their hands. I had never seen anything like them before. I went to the encyclopædia and found that the name of the knife was spelled *kris* and pronounced *creese*.

The day-dreams which seemed impossible in the days of Monteith's Geography have since been realized. I am living, perhaps, within sight of the very place where the scene of the picture was laid; for it was supposed to be illustrative of the Malay Peninsula; and, as I write, one of those snake-like *krises* lies on the table before me. It is a handsomer *kris* than those used by the actors in that much-

studied picture of my youth. The sheath and handle are of solid gold—a rich yellow gold, mined at the foot of Mount Ophir, the very same mountain so famous in Bible history, from which King Solomon brought "gold, peacocks' feathers, and monkeys." The wavy, flame-like blade is veined with gold, and its dull silvery surface is damascened with as much care as was ever taken with the old swords of Damascus. It is only an inch in width and a foot in length and does not look half as dangerous as a Turkish cimeter; yet it has a history that would put that of the tomahawk or the scalping-knife to shame. Many a fat Chinaman, trading between the Java islands and Amoy, has felt its keen edge at his throat and seen his rich cargo of spices and bird's-nests rifled, his beloved Joss thrown overboard, and his queer old junk burnt before his eyes. Many a Dutch and English merchantman sailed from Batavia and Bombay in the days of the old East India Company and has never more been heard of until some mutilated survivor returned with a harrowing tale of Malay piracy and of the lightning-like work of the dreaded *kris*.

I do not know whether my *kris* has ever taken life or not. Had it done so, I do not think the Sultan would have given it to me, for a *kris* becomes almost priceless after its baptism of blood. It is handed down from generation to generation, and its sanguine history becomes a part of the education of the young. Next to his Koran the *kris* is the most sacred thing the Malay possesses. He regards it with an almost superstitious reverence. My *kris* is dear to me, not from any superstitious reasons, but because it was given me by his Highness, the Sultan of Johore, the only independent sovereign on the peninsula, and because the gold of its sheath came from the jungle-covered slopes of Mount Ophir.



The making of the kris

"He fashions it from well-hammered and well-tempered Celebes iron"

The maker of the *kris* is a person of importance among the

Malays, and ofttimes he is made by his grateful Rajah a *Dato*, or Lord, for his skill. Like the blades of the sturdy armorers of the Crusades, his blades are considered, as he fashions them from well-hammered and well-tempered Celebes iron, works of art and models for futurity. He is exceedingly punctilious in regard to their shape, size, and general formation, and the process of giving them their beautiful water lines is quite a ceremony. First the razor-like edges are covered with a thin coating of wax to protect them from the action of the acids; then a mixture of boiled rice, sulphur, and salt is put on the blade and left for seven days until a film of rust rises to the surface. The blade is then immersed in the water of a young cocoanut or the juice of a pineapple and left seven days longer. It is next brushed with the juice of a lemon until all the rust is cleared away, and then rubbed with arsenic dissolved in lime-juice and washed with cold spring water. Finally it is anointed with cocoanut oil, and as a concluding test of its fineness and temper, it is said that in the old days its owner would rush out into the *kampong*, or village, and stab the first person he met.

The sheath of the *kris* is generally made of *kamooning* wood, but often of ivory, gold, or silver. The handle, while more frequently of wood or buffalo horn, is sometimes of gold studded with precious stones and worth more than all the other possessions of its owner put together.

The *kris*, too, has its etiquette. It is always worn on the left side stuck into the folds of the *sarong*, or skirt, the national dress of the Malay. During an interview it is considered respectful to conceal it; and its handle is turned with its point close to the body of the wearer, if the wearer be friendly. If, however, there is ill blood existing, and the wearer is angry, the *kris* is exposed, and the point of the handle turned the reverse way.

The *kris* as a weapon of offence and defence is now almost a thing of the past. It is rapidly going the way of the tomahawk and the boomerang—into the collector's cabinet. There is a law in Singapore that forbids its being worn, and outside of Johore and the native states it is seldom seen. It is still used as an executioner's knife by the protected Sultan of Selangor, its keen point being driven into the heart of the victim; but in a few years that practice, too, will be abolished by the humane intervention of the English government.

It is to be hoped that the record of the *kris* is not as bad as it has been painted by some, and that at times in its bloody career it has been on the side of justice and right. The part it took in the piracy that once made the East Indian seas so famous was not always done for the sake of gain, but often for revenge and for independence.

The White Rajah of Borneo

The Founding of Sarawak

In the East Indian seas, by Europeans and natives alike, two names are revered with a singleness and devotion that place them side by side with the national heroes of all countries.

The men that bear the names are Englishmen, yet the

countless islands of the vast Malayan archipelago are populated by a hundred European, African, and Asiatic races.

Sir Stamford Raffles founded the great city of Singapore, and Sir James Brooke, the "White Rajah," carved out of a tropical wilderness just across the equator, in Borneo, the kingdom of Sarawak.

There is no one man in all history with whom you may compare Rajah Brooke. His career was the score of a hero of the footlights or of the dime novel rather than the life of an actual history-maker in this prosaic nineteenth century. What is true of him is also true in a less degree of his famous nephew and successor, Sir Charles Brooke, G. C. M. C., the present Rajah.

One morning in Singapore, as I sipped my tea and broke open one cool, delicious mangosteen after another, I was reading in the daily *Straits Times* an account of the descent of a band of head-hunting Dyaks from the jungles of the Rejang River in Borneo on an isolated fishing *kampong*, or village,—of how they killed men, women, and children, and carried their heads back to their strongholds in triumph, and of how, in the midst of their feasting and ceremonies, Rajah Brooke, with a little company of fierce native soldiery, had surprised and exterminated them to the last man; and just then the sound of heavy cannonading in the harbor below caused me to drop my paper.

In a moment the great guns from Fort Canning answered. I counted—seventeen—and turned inquiringly to the naked *punkah-wallah*, who stood just outside in the shade of the wide veranda, listlessly pulling the rattan rope that moved the stiff fan above me.

His brown, open palm went respectfully to his forehead.

"His Highness, the Rajah of Sarawak," he answered proudly in Malay. "He come in gunboat *Raneé* to the Gymkhana races,—bring gold cup for prizes and fast runners. Come every year, Tuan."

I had forgotten that it was the first day of the long-looked-for Gymkhana races. A few hours later I met this remarkable man, whose thrilling exploits had commanded my earliest boyish admiration.

The kindly old Sultan of Johore, the old rebel Sultan of Pahang, the Sultan of Lingae, in all the finery of their native silks and jewels, the nobles of their courts, and a dozen other dignitaries, were on the grandstand and in the paddock as we entered, yet no one but a modest, gray-haired little man by the side of the English governor had any place in my thoughts. We knew his history. It was as romantic as the wild careers of Pizarro and Cortez; as charming as those of Robinson Crusoe and the dear old Swiss Family Robinson; as tragic as Captain Kidd's or Morgan's; and withal, it was modelled after our own Washington. In him I saw the full realization of every boy's wildest dreams,—a king of a tropical island.

The bell above the judges' pavilion sounded, and a little whirlwind of running griffins dashed by amid the yells of a thousand natives in a dozen different tongues. The Rajah leaned out over the gayly decorated railing with the eagerness of a boy, as he watched his own colors in the thick of the race.

The surging mass of nakedness below caught sight of him, and another yell rent the air, quite distinct from the first, for Malayan and Kling, Tamil and Siamese, Dyak and Javanese, Hindu, Bugis, Burmese, and Lascar, recognized the famous White Rajah of Borneo, the man who, all unaided, had broken the power of the savage head-hunting

Dyaks, and driven from the seas the fierce Malayan pirates. The yell was not a cheer. It was a tribute that a tiger might make to his tamer.

The Rajah understood. He was used to such sinister outbursts of admiration, for he never took his eyes from the course. He was secure on his throne now, but I could not but wonder if that yell, which sent a strange thrill through me, did not bring up recollections of one of the hundred sanguinary scenes through which he and his great uncle, the elder Rajah Brooke, had gone when fighting for their lives and kingdom.

The Sultan of Johore's griffin won, and the Rajah stepped back to congratulate him. I, too, passed over to where he stood, and the kindly old Sultan took me by the hand.

"I have a very tender spot in my heart for all Americans," the Rajah replied to his Highness's introduction. "It was your great republic that first recognized the independence of Sarawak."

As we chatted over the triumph of Gladstone, the silver bill, the tariff, and a dozen topics of the day, I was thinking of the head-hunters of whom I had read in the morning paper. I was thinking, too, of how this man's uncle had, years before, with a boat's crew of English boys, carved out of an unknown island a principality larger than the state of New York, reduced its savage population to orderly tax-paying citizens, cleared the Borneo and Java seas of their thousands of pirate *praus*, and in their place built up a merchant fleet and a commerce of nearly five millions of dollars a year. The younger Rajah, too, had done his share in the making of the state. In his light tweed suit and black English derby, he did not look the strange, impossible hero of romance I had painted him; but there was something in his quiet, clear, well-bred English

accent, and the strong, deep lines about his eyes and mouth, that impressed one with a consciousness of tremendous reserve force. He spoke always slowly, as though wearied by early years of fighting and exposure in the searching heat of the Bornean sun.

We became better acquainted later at balls and dinners, and he was never tired of thanking me for my country's kindness.

In 1819, when the English took Malacca and the Malay peninsula from the Dutch, they agreed to surrender all claims to the islands south of the pirate-infested Straits of Malacca.

The Dutch, contented with the fabulously rich island of Java and its twenty-six millions of mild-mannered natives, left the great islands of Sumatra, Borneo, and Papua to the savage rulers and savage nations that held them.

The son of an English clergyman, on a little schooner, with a friend or two and a dozen sailors, sailed into these little known and dangerous waters one day nineteen years later. His mind was filled with dreams of an East-Indian empire; he was burning to emulate Cortez and Pizarro, without practising their abuses. He had entered the English army and had been so dangerously wounded while leading a charge in India after his superiors had fallen that he had been retired on a pension before his twenty-first year. While regaining his health, he had travelled through India, Malaya, and China, and had written a journal of his wanderings. During this period his ambitions were crowding him on to an enterprise that was as foolhardy as the first voyage of Columbus.

He had spied those great tropical islands that touched the equator, and he coveted them.

After his father's death he invested his little fortune in a schooner, and in spite of all the protests and prayers of his family and friends, he sailed for Singapore, and thence across to the northwest coast of Borneo, landing at Kuching, on the Sarawak River, in 1838.

He had no clearly outlined plan of operations,—he was simply waiting his chance. The province of Sarawak, a dependency of the Sultan of Borneo, was governed by an old native rajah, whose authority was menaced by the fierce, head-hunting Dyaks of the interior. Brooke's chance had come. He boldly offered to put down the rebellion if the Rajah would make him his general and second to the throne. The Rajah cunningly accepted the offer, eager to let the hair-brained young infidel annoy his foes, but with no intention of keeping his promise.

After days of marching with his little crew and a small army of natives, through the almost impenetrable rubber jungles, after a dozen hard-fought battles and deeds of personal heroism, any one of which would make a story, the head-hunters were crushed and some kind of order restored. He refused to allow the Rajah to torture the prisoners,—thereby winning their gratitude,—and he refused to be dismissed from his office. He had won his rank, and he appealed to the Sultan. The wily Sultan recognized that in this stranger he had found a man who would be able to collect his revenue, and much to Brooke's surprise, a courier entered Kuching, the capital, one day and summarily dismissed the native Rajah and proclaimed the young Englishman Rajah of Sarawak.

Brooke was a king at last. His empire was before him, but he was only king because the reigning Sultan relinquished

a part of his dominions that he was unable to control. The tasks to be accomplished before he could make his word law were ones that England, Holland, and the navies of Europe had shirked. His so-called subjects were the most notorious and daring pirates in the history of the world; they were head-hunters, they practised slavery, and they were cruel and blood-thirsty on land and sea. Out of such elements this boy king built his kingdom. How he did it would furnish tales that would outdo Verne, Kingston, and Stevenson.

He abolished military marauding and every form of slavery, established courts, missions, and school houses, and waged war, single-handed, against head-hunting and piracy.

Head-hunting is to the Dyaks what amok is to the Malays or scalping to the American Indians. It is even more. No Dyak woman would marry a man who could not decorate their home with at least one human head. Often bands of Dyaks, numbering from five to seven thousand, would sally forth from their fortifications and cruise along the coast four or five hundred miles, to surprise a village and carry the inhabitants' heads back in triumph.

To-day head-hunting is practically stamped out, as is running amok among the Malays, although cases of each occur from time to time.

As his subjects in the jungles were head-hunters, so those of the coast were pirates. Every harbor was a pirate haven. They lived in big towns, possessed forts and cannon, and acknowledged neither the suzerainty of the Sultan or the domination of the Dutch. They were stronger than the native rulers, and no European nation would go to the great expense of life and treasure needed to break their power. Brooke knew that his title would be but a mockery as long

as the pirates commanded the mouths of all his rivers.

With his little schooner, armed with three small guns and manned by a crew of white companions and Dyak sailors, he gave battle first to the weaker strongholds, gradually attaching the defeated to his standard. He found himself at the end of nine years their master and a king in something more than name. Combined with the qualities of a fearless fighter, he had the faculty of winning the good will and admiration of his foes.

The fierce Suloos and Illanums became his fast friends. He left their chiefs in power, but punished every outbreak with a merciless hand.

One of the many incidents of his checkered career shows that his spirit was all-powerful among them. He had invited the Chinese from Amoy to take up their residence at his capital, Kuching. They were traders and merchants, and soon built up a commerce. They became so numerous in time that they believed they could seize the government. The plot was successful, and during a night attack they overcame the Rajah's small guard, and he escaped to the river in his pajamas without a single follower.

Sir Charles told me one day, as we conversed on the broad veranda of the consulate, that that night was the darkest in all his great uncle's stormy life. The hopes and work of years were shattered at a single blow, and he was an outcast with a price on his head.

The homeless king knelt in the bottom of the *prau* and prayed for strength, and then took up the oars and pulled silently toward the ocean. Near morning he was abreast of one of the largest Suloo forts—the home of his bitterest and bravest foes.

He turned the head of his boat to the shore and landed unarmed and undressed among the pirates. He surrendered his life, his throne, and his honor, into their keeping.

They listened silently, and then their scarred old chief stepped forward and placed a naked *kris* in the white man's hand and kissed his feet.

Before the sun went down that day the White Rajah was on his throne again, and ten thousand grim, fierce Suloos were hunting the Chinese like a pack of bloodhounds.

In 1848 Rajah Brooke decided to visit his old home in England, and ask his countrymen for teachers and missions. His fame had preceded him. All England was alive to his great deeds. There were greetings by enthusiastic crowds wherever he appeared, banquets by boards of trade, and gifts of freedom of cities. He was lodged in Balmoral Castle, knighted by the Queen, made Consul-General of Borneo, Governor of Labuan, Doctor of Laws by Oxford, and was the lion of the hour.

He returned to Sarawak, accompanied by European officers and friends, to carry on his great work of civilization, and to make of his little tropical kingdom a recognized power.

He died in 1868, and was carried back to England for burial, and I predict that at no distant day a grateful people will rise up and ask of England his body, that it may be laid to rest in the yellow sands under the graceful palms of the unknown nation of which he was the Washington.

His nephew, Sir Charles Brooke, who had also been his faithful companion for many years, succeeded him.

Sarawak has to-day a coast-line of over four hundred miles, with an area of fifty thousand square miles, and a

population of three hundred thousand souls. The country produces gold, silver, diamonds, antimony, quicksilver, coal, gutta-percha, rubber, canes, rattan, camphor, beeswax, edible bird's-nests, sago, tapioca, pepper, and tobacco, all of which find their way to Singapore, and thence to Europe and America.

The Rajah is absolute head of the state; but he is advised by a legislative council composed of two Europeans and five native chiefs. He has a navy of a number of small but effective gunboats, and a well-trained and officered army of several hundred men, who look after the wild tribes of the interior of Borneo and guard the great coast-line from piratical excursions; otherwise they would be useless, as his rule is almost fatherly, and he is dearly beloved by his people.

It is impossible in one short sketch to relate a tenth of the daring deeds and startling adventures of these two white rajahs. Their lives have been written in two bulky volumes, and the American boy who loves stories that rival his favorite authors of adventure will find them by going to the library and asking for the "Life of the Rajah of Sarawak."

There is much in this "Life" that might be read by our statesmen and philanthropists with profit; for the building of a kingdom in a jungle of savage men and savage beasts places the name of Brooke of Borneo among those of the world's great men, as it does among those of the heroes of adventure.

One evening we were pacing back and forth on the deck of the Rajah's magnificent gunboat, the *Raneé*. A soft tropical breeze was blowing off shore. Thousands of lights from running rickshas and bullock carts were dancing along the wide esplanade that separates the city of Singapore from the sea. The strange old-world cries from the natives came

out to us in a babel of sound.

Chinese in *sampans* and Malays in *praus* were gliding about our bows and back and forth between the great foreign men-of-war that overshadowed us. The Orient was on every hand, and I looked wonderingly at the slightly built, gray-haired man at my side, with a feeling that he had stepped from out some wild South Sea tale.

"Your Highness," I said, as we chatted, "tell me how you made subjects out of pirates and head-hunters, when our great nation, with all its power and gold, has only been able after one hundred years to make paupers out of our Indians."

"Do you see that man?" he replied, pointing to a stalwart, brown-faced Dyak, who in the blue and gold uniform of Sarawak was leaning idly against the bulwarks. "That is the Dato (Lord) Imaum, Judge of the Supreme Court of Sarawak. He was one of the most redoubtable of the Suloo pirates. My uncle fought him for eight years. In all that time he never broke his word in battle or in truce. When Sir James was driven from his throne by the Chinese, the Dato Imaum fought to reinstate him as his master.

"Civilization is only skin deep, and so is barbarism. Had your country never broken its word and been as just as it is powerful, your red men would have been to-day where our brown men are—our equals."

An hour later I stepped into my launch, which was lying alongside. The American flag at the peak came down, and the guns of the *Raneé* belched forth the consular salute.

I instinctively raised my hat as we glided over the phosphorescent waters of the harbor, for in my thoughts I was still in the presence of one of the great ones of the

earth.

Amok!

A Malayan Story

If you run amok in Malaya, you may perhaps kill your enemy or wound your dearest friend, but you may be certain that in the end you will be *krissed* like a pariah dog. Every man, woman, and child will turn his or her hand against you, from the mother who bore you to the outcast you have befriended. The laws are as immutable as fate.

Just where the great river Maur empties its vast volume of red water across a shifting bar into the Straits of Malacca, stands the *kampong* of Bander Maharani.

The Sultan Abubaker named the village in honor of his dead Sultana, and here, close down to the bank, was the palace of his nephew—the Governor, Prince Sulliman.

A wide, red, well-paved road separated the village of thatch and grass from the palace grounds, and ended at a wharf, up to which a steam-launch would dash from time to time, startling the half-grown crocodiles that slept beneath the rickety timbers.

Sometimes the little Prince Mat, the son of the Governor,

came down to the wharf and played with the children of the captain of the launch, while his *Tuan Penager*, or Teacher, dozed beneath his yellow umbrella; and often, at their play, his Excellency would pause and watch them, smiling kindly.

At such times, the captain of the launch would fall upon his face, and thank the Prophet that he had lived to see that day. “For,” he would say, “some day he may speak to me, and ask me for the wish I treasure.”

Then he would go back to his work, polishing the brass on the railings of his boat, regardless of the watchful eyes that blinked at him from the mud beneath the wharf.

He smiled contentedly, for his mind was made up. He would not ask to be made master of the Sultan’s marvellous yacht, that was sent out from Liverpool,—although the possibility made him catch his breath: he would ask nothing for himself,—he would ask that his Excellency let his son Noa go to Mecca, that he might become a *hadji* and then some day—who knows—Noa might become a *kateeb* in the *attap*-thatched mosque back of the palace.

And Noa, unmindful of his father’s dreaming, played with the little Prince, kicking the *ragga* ball, or sailing miniature *praus* out into the river, and off toward the shimmering straits. But often they sat cross-legged and dropped bits of chicken and fruit between the palm sleepers of the wharf to the birch-colored crocodiles below, who snapped them up, one after another, never taking their small, cruel eyes off the brown faces that peered down at them.

Child-life is measured by a few short years in Malaya. The hot, moist air and the fierce rays of the equatorial sun fall

upon child and plant alike, and they grow so fast that you can almost hear them!

The little Prince soon forgot his childhood companions in the gorgeous court of his Highness, the Sultan of Johore, and Noa took the place of his father on the launch, while the old man silently mourned as he leaned back in its stern, and alternately watched the sunlight that played along the carefully polished rails, and the deepening shadows that bound the black labyrinth of mangrove roots on the opposite shore. The Governor had never noted his repeated protestations and deep-drawn sighs.

“But who cares,” he thought. “It is the will of Allah! The Prince will surely remember us when he returns.”

On the very edge of Bander Maharani, just where the almost endless miles of betel-nut palms shut from view the yellow turrets of the palace, stood the palm-thatched bungalow in which Anak grew, in a few short years, from childhood to womanhood. The hot, sandy soil all about was covered with the flaxen burs of the betel, and the little sunlight that found its way down through the green and yellow fronds drew rambling checks on the steaming earth, that reminded Anak of the plaid on the silken *sarong* that Noa’s father had given her the day she was betrothed to his son.

Up the bamboo ladder and into the little door,—so low that even Anak, with her scant twelve years, was forced to stoop,—she would dart when she espied Noa coming sedately down the long aisle of palms that led away to the fungus-covered canal that separated her little world from the life of the capital city.

There was coquetry in every glance, as she watched him, from behind the carved bars of her low window, drop

contentedly down on the bench beneath a scarred old cocoanut that stood directly before the door. She thought almost angrily that he ought to have searched a little for her: she would have repaid him with her arms about his neck.

From the cool darkness of the bungalow came the regular click of her mother's loom. She could see the worker's head surrounded by a faint halo of broken twilight. Her mind filled in the details that were hidden by the green shadows—the drawn, stooping figure, the scant black hair, the swollen gums, the *syrah*-stained teeth, and sunken neck. She impulsively ran her soft brown fingers over her own warm, plump face, through the luxuriant tresses of her heavy hair, and then gazed out at the recumbent figure on the bench, waiting patiently for her coming.

"Soon my teeth, which the American lady that was visiting his Excellency said were so strong and beautiful, will be filed and blackened, and I will be weaving *sarongs* for Noa."

She shuddered, she knew not why, and went slowly across the elastic bamboo strips of the floor and down the ladder.

Noa watched the trim little figure with its single covering of cotton, the straight, graceful body, and perfectly poised head and delicate neck, the bare feet and ankles, the sweet, comely face with its fresh young lips, free from the red stains of the *syrah* leaf, and its big brown eyes that looked from beneath heavy silken lashes. He smiled, but did not stir as she came to him. He was proud of her after the manner of his kind. Her beauty appealed to him unconsciously, although he had never been taught to consider beauty, or even seek it. He would have married her without a question, if she had been as hideous as his sister, who was scarred with the small-pox. He would

never have complained if, according to Malayan custom, he had not been permitted to have seen her until the marriage day. He must marry some one, now that the Prince had gone to Johore, and his father had given up all hope of seeing him a *hadji*; and besides, the captain of the launch and the old *punghulo*, or chief, Anak's father, were fast friends. The marriage meant little more to the man.

But to Anak,—once the Prince Mat had told her she was pretty, when she had come down to the wharf to beg a small crocodile to bury underneath her grandmother's bungalow to keep off white ants, and her cheeks glowed yet under her brown skin at the remembrance. Noa had never told her she was beautiful!

A featherless hen was scratching in the yellow sand at her feet, and a brood of featherless chicks were following each cluck with an intensity of interest that left them no time to watch the actions of the lovers.

"Why did you come?" she asked in the soft liquid accents of her people.

There was an eagerness in the question that suggested its own answer.

"To bring a message to the *punghulo*," he replied, not noticing the coquetry of the look.

"Oh! then you are in haste. Why do you wait? My father is at the canal."

"It is about you," he went on, his face glowing. "The Prince is coming back, and we are to be married. My father, the captain, made bold to ask his Excellency to let the Prince be present, and he granted our prayer."

She turned away to hide her disappointment. It was the

thought of the honor that was his in the eyes of the province, and not that he was to marry her, that set the lights dancing in his eyes! She hated him then for his very love; it was so sure and confident in its right to overlook hers in this petty attention from a mere boy, who had once condescended to praise her girlish beauty.

"When is the Prince coming?" she questioned, ignoring his clumsy attempt to take her hand.

"During the feast of Hari Raya Hadji," he replied, smiling.

She kicked some sand with her bare toes, amongst the garrulous chickens.

"Tell me about the Prince."

Her mood had changed. Her eyes were wide open, and her face all aglow. She was wondering if he would notice her above the bridesmaids,—if it was not for her sake he was coming?

And then her lover told her of the gossip of the palace,—of the Prince's life in the Sultan's court,—of his wit and grace,—of how he had learned English, and was soon to go to London, where he would be entertained by the Queen.

Above their heads the wind played with the tattered flags of the palms, leaving openings here and there that exposed the steely-white glare of the sky, and showed, far away to the northward, the denuded red dome of Mount Ophir.

The girl noted the clusters of berries showing redly against the dark green of some pepper-vines that clambered up the black *nebong* posts of her home; she wondered vaguely as he talked if she were to go on through life seeing pepper-vines and betel-nut trees, and hot sand and featherless hens, and never get beyond the shadow of the mysterious

mountains.

Possibly it was the sight of the white ladies from Singapore, possibly it was the few light words dropped by the half-grown Prince, possibly it was something within herself,—something inherited from ancestors who had lived when the fleets of Solomon and Hiram sought for gold and ivory at the base of the distant mountains,—that drove her to revolt, and led her to question the right of this marriage that was to seal her forever to the *attap* bungalow, and the narrow, colorless life that awaited her on the banks of the Maur. She turned fiercely on her wooer, and her brown eyes flashed.

"You have never asked me whether I love!"

The Malay half rose from his seat. The look of surprise and perplexity that had filled his face gave place to one of almost childish wonder.

"Of course you love me. Is it not so written in the Koran, —a wife shall reverence her husband?"

"Why?" she questioned angrily.

He paused a moment, trying dimly to comprehend the question, and then answered slowly,—

"Because it is written."

She did not draw away when he took her hand; he had chosen his answer better than he knew.

"Because it is written," that was all. Her own feeble revolt was but as a breath of air among the yellow fronds above their heads.

When Noa had gone, the girl drew herself wearily up the

ladder, and dropped on a cool palm mat near the never ceasing loom. For almost the first time in her short, uneventful life she fell to thinking of herself. She wondered if the white ladies in Singapore married because all had been arranged by a father who forgot you the moment you disappeared within the door of your own house,—if they loved one man better than another,—if they could always marry the one they liked best. She wondered why every one must be married,—why could she not go on and live just as she had,—she could weave and sew?

A gray lizard darted from out its hiding-place in the *attap* at a great atlas moth which worked its brilliant wings; clumsily it tore their delicate network until the air was full of a golden dust.

“I am the moth,” she said softly, and raised her hand too late to save it from its enemy.

The Sultan’s own yacht, the *Pante*, brought the Prince back to Maur, and as it was low tide, the Governor’s launch went out beyond the bar and met him.

The band played the national anthem when he landed on the pier, and Inchi Mohammed, the Tuan Hakim, or Chief Justice, made a speech.

The red gravel walk from the landing to the palace gate was strewn with hibiscus and alamander and yellow convolvulus flowers, and bordered with the delicate maidenhair fern.

Johore and British flags hung in great festoons from the deep verandas of the palace, and the brass guns from the fort gave forth the royal salute.

Anak was in the crowd with her father, the old chief, and her affianced, Noa. She had put on her silk *sarong* and *kabaya*, and some curious gold brooches that were her mother's. In her coal-black hair she had stuck some sprays of the sweet-smelling *chumpaka* flower. On her slender bare feet were sandals cunningly wrought in colored beads. Her soft brown eyes glowed with excitement, and she edged away from the *punghulo's* side until she stood close up in front, so near that she could almost touch the *sarong* of the Tuan Hakim as he read.

The Prince had grown so since he left that she scarcely knew him, and save for the narrow silk *sarong* about his waist, he was dressed in the English clothes of a Lieutenant of his Highness's artillery. In the front of his rimless cap shone the arms of Johore set in diamonds, exactly as his father, the Governor, wore them. He paused and smiled as he thanked the cringing Tuan Hakim.

The blood rushed to the girl's cheeks, and she nearly fell down at his feet. She realized but dimly that Noa was plucking at her *kabaya*, wishing her to go with him to see the bungalow that his father was building for them.

"The posts are to be of polished *nebong"* he was saying, "the wood-work of *maranti* wood from Pahang; and there is to be a cote, ever so cunningly woven of green and yellow bamboo, for your ring-doves, under the *attap* of the great eaves above the door."

She turned wearily toward her lover, and the bright look faded from her comely face. With a half-uttered sigh she drew off her sandals and tucked them carefully beneath the silver zone that held her *sarong* in place.

"Anak," he said softly, as they left the hot, red streets, filled with lumbering bullock-carts and omnipresent

rickshas, "why do you look away when I talk of our marriage? Is it because the Koran teaches modesty in woman, or is it because you are over-proud of your husband when you see him among other men?"

But the girl was not listening.

He looked at her keenly, and as he saw the red blood mantle her cheek, he smiled and went on:—

"It was good of you to wear the *sarong* I gave you, and your best *kabaya* and the flowers I like in your hair. I heard more than one say that it showed you would make a good wife in spite of our knowing one another before marriage."

"You think that it was for you that I put on all this bravery?" she asked, looking him straight in the face. "Am I not to be your wife? Can I not dress in honor of the young Prince and—Allah?"

He turned to stammer a reply. The hot blood mounted to his temples, and he grasped the girl's arm so that she cried out with pain.

"You are to be my wife, and I your master. It is my wish that you should ever dress in honor of our rulers and our Allah, for in showing honor to those above you, you honor your husband. I do not understand you at all times, but I intend that you shall understand me. *Sudah!*"

"*Tuan Allah Suka!*" (The Lord Allah has willed it), she murmured, and they plodded on through the hot sand in silence.

After his return they saw the Prince often, and once when Anak came down to the wharf to bring a *durian* to the captain of the launch from her father, the old *punghulo*, she met him face to face, and he touched her cheek with his

jewelled fingers, and said she had grown much prettier since he left.

Noa was not angry at the Prince, rather he was proud of his notice, but a sinister light burned in his eyes as he saw the flushed face and drooping head of the girl.

And once the Prince passed by the *punghulo's* home on his way into the jungle in search of a tiger, and inquired for his daughter. Anak treasured the remembrance of these little attentions, and pondered over them day after day, as she worked by her mother's side at the loom, or sat outside in the sand, picking the flossy burs from the betel-nuts, watching the flickering shadows that every breeze in the leaves above scattered in prodigal wastefulness about and over her.

She told herself over and over, as she followed with dreamy eyes the vain endeavors of a chameleon to change his color, as the shadows painted the sand beneath him first green and then white, that her own hopes and strivings were just as futile; and yet when Noa would sit beside her and try to take her hand, she would fly into a passion, and run sobbing up the ladder of her home. Noa became moody in turn. His father saw it and his mates chaffed him, but no one guessed the cause. That it should be for the sake of a woman would have been beyond belief; for did not the Koran say, "If thy wife displease thee, beat her until she see the sin of her ways"? One day, as he thought, it occurred to him, "She does not want to marry me!" and he asked her, as though it made any difference. There were tears in her eyes, but she only threw back her head and laughed, and replied as she should:—

"That is no concern of ours. Is your father, the captain, displeased with my father's, the *punghulo's,* dowry?"

And yet Noa felt that Anak knew what he would have said.

He went away angry, but with a gnawing at his heart that frightened him,—a strange, new sickness, that seemed to drive him from despair to a longing for revenge, with the coming and going of each quick breath. He had been trying to make love in a blind, stumbling way; he did not know it,—why should he? Marriage was but a bargain in Malaya. But Anak with her finer instincts felt it, and instead of fanning this tiny, unknown spark, she was driving it into other and baser channels.

In spite of her better nature she was slowly making a demon out of a lover,—a lover to whom but a few months before she would have given freely all her love for a smile or the lightest of compliments.

From that day until the day of the marriage she never spoke to her lover save in the presence of her elders,—for such was the law of her race.

She submitted to the tire-women who were to prepare her for the ceremony, uttering no protest as they filed off her beautiful white teeth and blackened them with lime, nor when they painted the palms of her hands and the nails of her fingers and toes red with *henna*. She showed no interest in the arranging of her glossy black hair with jewelled pins and *chumpaka* flowers, or in the draping of her *sarong* and *kabaya*. Only her lacerated gums ached until one tear after another forced its way from between her blackened lids down her rouged cheeks.

There had been feasting all day outside under the palms, and the youths, her many cousins, had kicked the *ragga* ball, while the elders sat about and watched and talked and chewed betel-nut. There were great rice curries on brass plates, with forty *sambuls*> within easy reach of all,

luscious mangosteens, creamy *durians* and mangoes, and betel-nuts with lemon leaves and lime and spices. Fires burned about among the graceful palms at night, and lit up the silken *sarongs* and polished *kris* handles of the men, and gold-run *kabayas* of the women.

The Prince came as he promised, just as the old Kadi had pronounced the couple man and wife, and laid at Anak's feet a wide gold bracelet set with sapphires, and engraven with the arms of Johore. He dropped his eyes to conceal the look of pity and abhorrence that her swollen gums and disfigured features inspired, and as he passed across the mats on the bamboo floor he inwardly cursed the customs of his people that destroyed the beauty of its women. He had lived among the English of Singapore, and dined at the English Governor's table.

A groan escaped the girl's lips as she dropped back among the cushions of her tinsel throne. Noa saw the little tragedy, and for the first time understood its full import. He ground his teeth together, and his hand worked uneasily along the scabbard of his *kris*.

In another moment the room was empty, and the bride and groom were left side by side on the gaudily bedecked platform, to mix and partake of their first betel-nut together. Mechanically Noa picked the broken fragments of the nut from its brass cup, from another a *syrah* leaf smeared with lime, added a clove, a cardamom, and a scraping of mace, and handed it to his bride. She took it without raising her eyes, and placed it against her bleeding gums. In a moment a bright red juice oozed from between her lips and ran down the corner of her distorted mouth. Noa extended his hand, and she gave him the half-masticated mass. He raised it to his own mouth, and then for the first time looked the girl full in the face.

There was no love-light in the drooping brown eyes before him. The *syrah*-stained lips were slightly parted, exposing the feverish gums, and short, black teeth. Her hands hung listlessly by her side, and only for the color that came and went beneath the rouge of her brown cheeks, she might have been dead to this last sacred act of their marriage vows.

"Anak!" he said slowly, drawing closer to her side. "Anak, I will be a true husband to you. You shall be my only wife —"

He paused, expecting some response, but she only gazed stolidly up at the smoke-begrimed *attap* of the roof.

"Anak—" he repeated, and then a shudder passed through him, and his eyes lit up with a wild, frenzied gleam,

A moment he paused irresolute, and then with a spring he grasped the golden handle of his *kris* and with one bound was across the floor, and on the sand below among the revellers.

For an instant the snake-like blade of the *kris* shone dully in the firelight above his head, and then with a yell that echoed far out among the palms, it descended straight into the heart of the nearest Malay.

The hot life-blood spurted out over his hand and naked arm, and dyed the creamy silk of his wedding *baju* a dark red.

Once more he struck, as he chanted a promise from the Koran, and the shrill, agonized cry of a woman broke upon the ears of the astonished guests.

Then the fierce sinister yell of "Amok! amok!" drowned the woman's moans, and sent every Malay's hand to the

handle of his *kris*.

"Amok!" sprang from every man's lips, while women and children, and those too aged to take part in the wild saturnalia of blood that was to follow, scattered like doves before a hawk.

With the rapidity of a Malayan tiger, the crazed man leaped from one to another, dealing deadly strokes with his merciless weapon, right and left. There was no gleam of pity or recognition in his insane glance when he struck down the sister he had played with from childhood, neither did he note that his father's hand had dealt the blow that dropped his right arm helpless to his side. Only a cry of baffled rage and hate escaped his lips, as he snatched his falling knife with his left hand. Another blow, and his father fell across the quivering body of his sister.

"O Allah, the all-merciful and loving kind!" he sang, as the blows rained upon his face and breast. "O Allah, the compassionate."

The golden handle of his *kris* shone like a dying coal in the centre of a circle of flamelike knives; then with one wild plunge forward, into the midst of the gleaming points, it went out.

"*Sudah!*—It is finished," and a Malay raised his steel-bladed *limbing* to thrust it into the bare breast of the dying man.

The young Prince stepped out into the firelight and raised his hand. The long, shrill wail of a tiger from far off toward Mount Ophir seemed to pulsate and quiver on the weird stillness of the night.

Noa opened his eyes. They were the eyes of a child, and a

faint, sweet smile flickered across the ghastly features and died away in a spasm of pain.

A picture of their childhood days flashed through the mind of the Prince and softened the haughty lines of his young face. He saw, through it all, the wharf below the palace grounds,—the fat old *penager* dozing in the sun,—the raft they built together, and the birch-colored crocodiles that lay among the sinuous mangrove roots.

"Noa," he whispered, as he imperiously motioned the crowd back.

The dying man's lips moved. The Prince bent lower.

"She—loved—you. Yes—" Noa muttered, striving to hold his failing breath,—"love is from—Allah. But not for—me;—for English—and—Princes."

They threw his body without the circle of the fires.

The tense feline growl of the tiger grew more distinct. The Prince's hand sought the jewelled handle of his *kris*. There was a swift rush in the darkness, a crashing among the rubber-vines, a short, quick snarl, and then all was still.

If you run amok in Malaya, you may kill your enemy or your dearest friend, but you will be *krissed* in the end like a pariah dog. Every man, woman, and child will turn his hand against you, from the mother who bore you to the outcast you have befriended.

The laws are as immutable as fate.

Lepas's Revenge

The Tale of a Monkey

There were many monkeys—I came near saying there were hundreds—in the little clump of jungle trees back of the bungalow. We could lie in our long chairs, any afternoon, when the sun was on the opposite side of the house, and watch them from behind the bamboo "chicks" swinging and playing in the maze of rubber-vines.

They played tag and high-spy, and a variety of other games. When they were tired of playing, they fell to quarrelling, scolding, and chasing each other among the stiff, varnished leaves, making so much noise that I could not get my afternoon nap, and often had to call to the *syce* to throw a stone into the branches. Then they would scuttle away to the topmost parts of the great trees and there join in giving me a rating that ought to have made me ashamed forever to look another monkey in the face.

One day, I went out and threw a stick at them myself, and the next day I found my shoes, which the Chinese "boy" had pipe-clayed and put out in the sun to dry, missing; and the day after I found the netting of my mosquito house torn from top to bottom.

So I was not in the best of humors when I was awakened, one afternoon, by the whistling of a monkey close to my chair. I reached out quickly for my cork helmet which I had thrown down by my side. As it was there, I looked up in surprise to see what had become of my visitor.

There he sat up against the railing of the veranda with his

legs cramped up under him, ready to flee if I made a threatening gesture. His face was turned toward me, with the thin, hairless skin of its upper lip drawn back, showing a perfect row of milk-white teeth that were chattering in deadly terror. The whole expression of his face was one of conciliation and entreaty.

I knew that it was all make-believe, so I half closed my eyes and did not move. The chattering stopped. The little fellow looked about curiously, drew his mouth up into a pucker, whistled once or twice to make sure I was not awake, and reached out his bony arm for a few crumbs of cake that had fallen near.

He was not more than a foot in height. His diminutive body seemed to have been fitted into a badly worn skin that was two sizes too large for him, and the scalp of his forehead moved about like an overgrown wig.

He was the most ordinary kind of gray, jungle monkey, not even a *wah-wah* or spider face.

“Well,” I said, after we had thoroughly inspected each other, “where are my shoes?”

Like a flash the whistling ceased, and with a pathetic trembling of his thin upper lip he commenced to beg with his mouth, and to put up his homely little hands in mute appeal.

For a moment I feared he would go into convulsions, but I soon discovered that my sympathy, had been wasted.

Then I noticed, for the first time, that there was a leather strap around his body just in front of his back legs, and that a string was attached to it, which ran through the railings and off the veranda. I looked over, and there, squatting on

his sandalled feet, was a Malay, with the other end of the string in his hand.

He arose, smiling, touched his forehead with the back of his brown palm, and asked blandly:—

"Tuan, want to buy?"

The calm assurance of the man amused me.

"What, that miserable little monkey?" I said. "Do you take me for a tourist? Look up in those trees and you will see monkeys that know boiled rice from *padi*."

The man grinned and showed his brilliantly red teeth and gums.

"Tuan see. This monkey very wise," and he made a motion with his stick. The little fellow sprang from the railing to his bare head, and sat holding on to his long black hair.

"See, Tuan," and he made another motion, and the monkey leaped to the ground and commenced to run around his master, hopping first on one foot and then on the other, raising his arms over his head like a ballet dancer. After every revolution he would stop and turn a handspring.

The Malay all the time kept up a droning kind of a song in his native tongue, improvising as he went along.

The tenor of it was that one Hamat, a poor Malay, but a good Mohammedan, who had never been to Mecca, wanted to go to become a Hadji. He had no money but he had a good monkey that was very dear to him. He had found it in a distant jungle, beyond Johore, when a little baby; had brought it up like one of his own children and had taught it to dance and salaam.

Now he must sell the monkey to the great Tuan, or Lord, that the money might help take him to Mecca. The monkey must dance well and please the mighty Tuan.

As the little fellow danced, he kept one eye on me as though he understood it all.

“How old is he?” I asked, becoming interested.

“Just as old as your Excellency would like,” he replied, bowing.

“Is he a year old?”

“If the Tuan please.”

“Well, how much do you want for him?”

“What your Excellency can give.”

“Twenty-five dollars?” I asked.

His face lit up from chin to forehead. He hitched nervously at the folds of his *sarong*, and changed the quid of red betel-nut from one corner of his mouth to the other.

“Here, Hamat,” I said, laughing, “here is five dollars; take it; when you come back from Mecca with a green turban come and see me. If I am sick of the monkey, you can have him back.”

So commenced our acquaintance with Lepas. We got into the habit of calling him Lepas, because it was the Malay for “let go,” which definition we broadened until it became a term of correction for every form of mischief. He was such a restless, active little imp, with hands into everything and upon everything, that it was “Lepas!” from morning to night.

He soon learned the word's twofold meaning. If we said "Lepas" sternly, he subsided at once; but when we called it pleasantly he came running across the room and leaped into our laps.

It did not take Lepas as long to forget his former master as it did to forget his former habits. In truth, his civilization was never more than skin deep.



Just a gray, jungle monkey

"Lepas would sit for hours cuddled up in the mistress's lap"

He would sit for hours cuddled up in the mistress's lap, playing with her work and making deft slaps at passing

flies, until he had thoroughly convinced her of his perfect trustworthiness. Then, the moment her back was turned, he would slip away to her bureau, and such a mess as he would make of her ribbons and laces!

I think he liked the servants better than he did us. He would dance and turn handsprings and salaam for them, but never for the mistress or myself. Such tricks, he seemed to think, were beneath his new position in society.

He had a standing grudge against me, however, for insisting on his bath in the big Shanghai jar every day, and took delight in rolling in the red dust of the road the moment he was through.

It was not long before he had a feud with the monkeys in the trees, back of the house. He would stand on the ground, within easy reach of the house, and as saucily as you please, till they were worked up into a white heat of rage over his remarks.

Once he caught a baby monkey that had become entangled in the wiry *lallang* grass under the trees, and dragged it screeching into the house. Before we could get to him he had nearly drowned it by treating it to a bath,—an act, I suppose, intended to convey to me his opinion of my humane efforts to keep him clean.

I expected as a matter of course to lose another pair of shoes or something, in payment for this unneighborly behavior, but the colony in the trees seemed to know that I was innocent. It was not long before they caught the true culprit, and gave him such a beating that he was quiet and subdued for days.

But Lepas was a lovable little fellow with all his mischief. Every afternoon when I came home from the office, tired

out with the heat and the fierce glare of the sun, he would hop over to my chair, whistle soothingly, and make funny little chirrups with his lips, until I noticed him.

Then he would crawl quietly up the legs of the chair until he reached my shoulder, where he would commence with his cool little fingers to inspect my eyes and nose, and to pick over carefully each hair of my mustache and head.

So we forgave him when he pulled all the feathers out of a ring-dove that was a valued present from an old native rajah; when he turned lamp-oil into the ice cream, and when he broke a rare Satsuma bowl in trying to catch a lizard. He was always so penitent after each misadventure!

We had heard that Hamat had sailed for Jedda with a shipload of pilgrims and were therefore expecting him back soon; but we had decided not to give up Lepas. He had become a sort of necessity about the house.

Next door to us, lived a high official of the English service. He was a sour, cross old man and did not like pets. Even the monkeys in the trees knew better than to go into his "compound," or inclosure.

But Lepas started off on a voyage of discovery one day, and not only invaded his compound, but actually entered his house. The official caught him in the act of hiding his shaving-set between the palm thatch of the roof and the cheese-cloth ceiling. Recognizing Lepas, he did not kill him, but took him by his leathern girdle and soused him in his bath-tub, until he was so near dead that it took him hours to crawl home.

Lepas went around with a sad, injured expression on his wrinkled little face, for days. Not even a mangosteen sprinkled with sugar could awaken his enthusiasm.

He went so far as to make up with the monkeys in the trees, and once or twice I caught him condescending to have a game of leap-frog with them. I made up my mind that he had determined to turn over a new leaf, but the *syce* shook his head knowingly and said:—

"Lepas all the time thinking. He thinks bad things."

And so it proved.

One night the mistress gave a very big dinner party. The high official from next door was there. So were several other high officials of Singapore, the general commanding her Majesty's troops, and the foreign consuls and members of Legislative Council.

It was a hot night, and the *punkah-wallah* outside kept the *punkah*, or mechanical fan, switching back and forth over our heads with a rapidity that made us fear its ropes would break, as very often happened.

Suddenly there was a crash, and a champagne glass struck squarely in the high official's soup and spattered it all over his white expanse of shirt front. We all looked up at the *punkah*. At the same instant a big, soft mango smashed in the high official's face and changed its ruddy red color to a sickly yellow.

The women screamed, and the men jumped up from the table. Then began a regular fusillade of wine glasses and tropical fruits.

Sometimes they hit the high official from next door, at whom they all seemed to be aimed, but more often they fell upon the table, among the glass and dishes. In a moment everything was in wild confusion, and the mistress's beautifully decorated table looked as though a

bomb had exploded on it.

The Chinese "boys" made a rush for the end of the room, and there, up on the sideboard, among the glass, pelting his enemy, the high official, as fast as he could throw, was Lepas.

A finger bowl struck the butler full in the face, and gave the monkey time to make his escape out into the darkness through the wide-open doors.

We saw nothing more of Lepas for a week or more; we had, indeed, about given him up, wondering as to his whereabouts, when one afternoon, as I was taking my usual post-tiffin siesta on the cool side of the great, wide-spreading veranda, I heard a timid whistle, and looked up to see Lepas seated on the railing, as sad and humble as any truant schoolboy.

His hair was matted and faded and his face was dirty. His form had lost some of the plumpness that had come to it with good living, but there was the same wicked twinkle in his eyes, and the same hypocritical deceit in his bearing as of old.

I reached out my hand to take him, but he hopped a few feet away and began to beg with his teeth.

"Lepas," I said, "you have a bad heart. I wash my hands of you. When Hamat comes back you can go to him and be an ordinary, low caste monkey. Now go! I never want to see you again!"

Lepas puckered up his lips and whistled mournfully for a few moments, but seeing no sign of forgiveness in my face he jumped down and began to turn handsprings and dance with the most demure grace.

I took no notice of him, and after a few vain efforts to attract my attention, he hopped dejectedly off the veranda across the lawn, and disappeared among the *timboso* trees and rubber-vines.

Two weeks later Hamat returned from Mecca. He paid me a visit in state—white robe and green turban. I shook hands and called him by his new title of nobility, Tuan Hadji, but he did not refer to Lepas.

Before many minutes he commenced to look wistfully about. I pointed to the trees back of the house. He went out under them and called two or three times.

There was a great chattering among the rubber-vines, and in a moment down came Lepas and sprang to his old master's shoulder as happy as a lover.

I never saw Lepas but once again, and that was one evening on the ocean esplanade. He was in the centre of an admiring circle of half-nude Malay and Hindu boys, going through his quaint antics, while Hamat squatted before him beating on a crocodile-hide drum and singing a plaintive, monotonous song.

When it was finished, Lepas took an empty cocoanut shell and went out into the crowd to collect pennies.

I threw in a dollar. Lepas salaamed low as he snatched it out and bit it to test its genuineness. It was his latest accomplishment. Then he hid himself among the laughing crowd.

That Lepas knew me, I could tell by the droop in his eye and the quick glance he gave to the right and left, to see if there was room to escape in case I made an effort to avenge my wrongs.

I had no desire, however, to renew the acquaintance, and was quite willing to let by-gones be by-gones.

King Solomon's Mines

Being an Account of an Ascent of Mount Ophir in Malaya, by His Excellency, the Tuan Hakim of Maur, and the Writer

"And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to King Solomon."—1 Kings IX. 28.

"For the King's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram; every three years once came the ships of Tarshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks."—2 Chronicles VIII. 21.

The rose tints of a tropical sunrise had broken through the heavy bamboo *chicks* that jealously guarded the rapidly fleeting half-lights of my room: there came three deferential taps at the door, and the smiling, olive-tinted face of Ah Minga appeared at the opening. "*Tabek*, Tuan," he saluted, as he raised the mosquito curtains, and placed a

tray of tea and mangosteens on a table by my side.

I sprang to the floor and across the heavily rugged room, and pulled up the offending *chick*.

Across the palace grounds, fresh from their morning bath, across the broad river Maur, for the nonce black in the shadow of the jungle, across the gilded tops of the jungle, forty miles away as the crow flies, rested the serrated peak of Mount Ophir.

Directly below me, a soldier in a uniform of duck and a rimless cap with a gold band was pacing up and down the gravelled walk. A little farther on a bevy of women and children were bathing in the tepid waters of the river, while a man in an unpainted *prau* was keeping watch for a possible crocodile.

The sun was rising directly behind the peak, a ball of liquid fire. I drew in a long draught of the warm morning air.

A Malay in a soft silken *sarong*, which fell about his legs like a woman's skirt, stood in the door.

"The Prince is awaiting the Tuan Consul," he said, with a graceful salaam.

I hurriedly donned my suit of white, drank my tea, and followed him along the grand salon, down a broad flight of steps, through a marble court, and into the dining room.

A great white *punkah* was lazily vibrating over the heavy rosewood table.

Unko Sulliman, the Prince Governor of Maur, came forward and gave me his hand.

"It will be a hard climb and a hard day's work?" he said,

pleasantly, in good English.

“I have done worse,” I answered.

“But not under a Malayan sky. However, it is your wish, and his Highness the Sultan has granted it. The Chief Justice will accompany you, and now you had better start before the sun is high.”

I turned to the Tuan Hakim, or Chief Justice, with a gesture of unconcealed pleasure. We had shot crocodiles the day previous along the banks of the Maur, and I had found him a good shot and an agreeable companion. While not as handsome a man or as striking a representative of his race as the Unko, or Prince, he was a scholar, and could aid me more than any one else in my exploration of the ancient gold workings about the base of the famous mountain.

The launch was awaiting us at the pier in front of the Residency, and we took our places in the bow, and arranged our guns as our half-naked crew worked her slowly into mid-stream. We hoped to get some snap shots at the crocodiles that lined the banks as we steamed swiftly up the river.

“I am inclined to agree with Josephus, that yonder mountain is the Mount Ophir of Solomon, when I look at this river. It is equal to our Hudson, and could easily carry ships twice the size of any he or Huram ever floated.”

The Tuan Hakim nodded, and kept his eyes fastened on the nearest shore.

The course of the great river seemed to stretch out before us in an endless line of majestic circles. From shore to shore, at high tide, it was a mile in breadth, and so deep

that his Highness's yacht, the *Pante*, of three hundred tons' burden, could run up full fifty miles.

For a moment we caught a view of the wooden minarets of the little mosque at Bander Maharani; then we dashed on into the heart of another great curve.

"What is it your Koran says that the wise king's ships brought from Ophir?" he asked, never taking his eyes off the mangrove-bound shore.

"Gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks," I replied, quoting literally from Chronicles.

"*Biak* (good)! Gold and silver we have plenty. Your English companies are taking it out of the land by the *pikul* In the old days, before the Portuguese came, the handle of every warrior's *kris* was of ivory. Now our elephants are dying before the rifle of the sportsman. Soon our jungles will know them no more. Apes—" and he pointed at the top of a giant *marbow*, where a troop of silver *wah-wahs* were swinging from limb to limb. "The glorious argus pheasant you have seen."

"*Boyah*, Tuan!" the man at the wheel sung out.

I grasped my Winchester Express. Just ahead, half hidden by a black labyrinth of scaffold-like mangrove roots, lay the huge, mud-covered form of a crocodile.

The Tuan Hakim raised his hand, and the launch slowed down and ran in under the bank.

"Now!" he whispered, and our rifles exploded in unison.

A great splash of slimy red mud fell full on the front of my spotless white jacket, another struck in the water close by the side of the boat. The wounded crocodile had sprung

into the air from his tail up, and dropped back into his wallow with a resounding thud. In another instant he was off the slippery bank and within the security of the mud-colored water.

I saw that my companion had more to tell me, possibly a native tradition of the fabled riches that were concealed within the heart of the historic mountain that was for the moment framed in a setting of green, directly ahead. I put a fresh cartridge into the barrel, and leaned back in my deck chair.

The Chief Justice extracted a manila from his case and handed it to me.

“In the days when Tunku Ali III. ruled over Maur, from Malacca to the confines of Johore, the Portuguese came, and Albuquerque with his ships of war and soldiers in iron armor sought to wrest from our people their cities and their riches. My ancestor was a *dato*,—our *laksamana*, high admiral, of his Highness’s fleet. His galley was built of burnished teak, the lining of its cabin was of sandalwood, —algum wood your Koran calls it,—and the turret in its stern was covered with plates of solid gold. You will find record of it to this day in the state papers of Acheen.

“For fully a hundred and forty years did the Emperor of Johore and his valiant allies, the King of Acheen and the Sultan of Maur, seek to retake Malacca from the Portuguese. The Dato Mamat was the last *laksamana* of the fleet. With him died the war and the secret of Mount Ophir.”

“The secret!” I questioned, as the Tuan Hakim paused.

“For one hundred and forty years were we at war with the invaders. Three generations were born and died with arms

in their hands. No work was done on the land, save by women and children. Still we had plenty of gold with which to fit out fleet after fleet, with which to arm our soldiers and feed our people.

"It came from yonder mountain. Not even the Sultan knew its hiding-place. *That* was only trusted to one family, and handed from father to son by word of mouth.

"Long before the days of Solomon the Wise did my family hold that secret for the state. It was one of them that gave the four hundred and twenty talents to the *laksamana* of Huram's fleet. Your Koran has made record of the gift. He did not know from whence it came. He asked, and we told him from the *Ophirs*, which means from the gold mines. Then it was that he called the mountain that raised its head four thousand feet above the sea, and was the first object his lookout saw as they neared the coast, 'Mount Ophir.'

"No man, however so bold, ventured within a radius of fifteen miles around the foot of the mountain. It was haunted by evil spirits. No man save the *laksamana*, who went twice a year and brought away to his *prau*, which was moored on the bank of the Maur thirty miles from the mountains, ten great loads of pure gold, each time over one hundred *bugels*. I know not as to the truth, but it is told that there was one tribe consecrated to the mining of the gold, not one of whom had ever been outside the shadow of the mountain: that when the great admiral ceased to come, they blocked up the entrance to the mines, planted trees about the spot, and waited. One after another died, until not one was left.

"Such is the tradition of my family, Tuan."

"But the great *laksamana*?" I asked. "I know of the ancient riches of Malacca. Barbosa tells us that gold was so

common that it was reckoned by the *bhar* of four hundred weight."

My companion contemplated the end of his manila. "Do you know how died his Highness, Montezuma of Mexico, Tuan?"

I bowed.

"So died my ancestor one hundred years later. I will tell you of it, that you may write his name in your histories by the side of the name of the murdered Sultan of Mexico."

The eyes of the little man flashed, and he looked squarely into mine for the first time. Possibly he may have detected a smile on my face, at the thought of placing this leader of a band of pirates side by side in history with the once ruler of the richest empire in the New World, for he paused in the midst of his narrative and said rapidly:—

"Must I tell you what your own writers tell of the rulers of our country, to make you credit my tale? It is all here," he said, pointing to his head. "Everything that relates to my home I know. King Emmanuel of Portugal wrote to his High Kadi at Rome, that his general, the cruel Albuquerque, had sailed to the Aurea Chersonese, called by the natives Malacca, and found an enormous city of twenty-five thousand houses, that abounded in spices, gold, pearls, and precious stones. Was Montezuma's capital greater?" he triumphantly asked.

"It was as great then as Singapore is today. Albuquerque captured it, and built a fortress at the mouth of the river, making the walls fifteen feet thick, all from the ruins of our mosques. This was in 1513."

"Forgive me," I said hastily, "if I have seemed to cast

doubt on the relative importance of your country."

There was a Malay *kampong*, or village, to our right. Under the heavy green and yellow fronds of a cocoanut grove were a half-dozen picturesque palm-thatched houses. They were built up on posts six feet from the ground, and a dozen men and children scampered down their rickety ladders, as a shrill blast from our whistle aroused them from their slumbers. Pressed against the wooden bars of their low, narrow windows, we could make out the comely, brown faces of the women. The *punghulo*, or chief, walked sedately out to the beach, and touched his forehead to the ground as he recognized his superior. The sunlight broke through the enwrapping cocoanuts, and brought out dazzling white splotches on the sandy floor before the houses. We passed a little space of wiry *lallang* grass, which was waving in the faint breeze, and radiating long, irregular lines of heat, that under our glasses resembled the marking of watered silk, and were once more abreast the green walls of the impenetrable jungle.

"The Dato Mamat captured a Portuguese ship within a man's voice from the harbor of Malacca. On it was the foreign Governor's daughter. She was dark, almost as dark as my people. Her eyes were black as night, with long, drooping lashes, and her hair fell about her shapely neck, a mass of waving curls. She was tall and stately, and her bearing was haughty. The mighty *Laksamana*, who had fought a hundred battles, and had a hundred wives picked from the princesses of the kingdom,—for there were none so noble but felt honored in his smiles,—loved this dark-skinned foreigner. It was pitiful!

"His great fleet, which was to have swept the very name of the Portuguese from the face of the earth, lay idle before the harbor. Its captains were burning with ambition, but the Admiral would not give the command, and they dare not

disobey.

“Day after day went by while the great man hung like a pariah dog on the words of his haughty captive. She scorned his words of love, laughed at his prayers, and sneered at his devotion. Day after day the sun beat down on the burnished decks of the war *praus*. Night after night the evening gun in the besieged fort sent forth its mocking challenge: still the *Dato* made no motion. Oh, but it was pitiful! One by one the *praus* slipped away,—first those from Acheen, and then those from Johore,—but the valiant *Laksamana* saw them not. He was blind to all save one. Then she spoke: ‘If thou lovest me as thou boastest, and would win my smiles, send me to my father; then go and bring me of this gold of Ophir,—for the *Dato* had laid his heart bare before her,—enough to sink yon boat. The daughter of a Braganza does not unite herself with a pauper. When the moon is full again, I will expect you.’

“So did the *Laksamana*, to the everlasting shame of Islam. When the moon was full he returned in his shining *prau* before the walls of Malacca, He brought from Ophir, of gold more than enough; of the pearls of Ceylon he brought a *chupah* full to the brim. He robbed his great palace, that he might lay at the feet of the Portuguese a fortune such as Solomon only ever saw. And yet the captains of his fleet cared not for the gold, so long as the mighty *Dato* saved his honor. When he left for the quay, on which stood the Governor, his daughter, and the priests of their religion, they said not a word, for he passed by with averted face; but each man grasped the jewelled handle of his *kris*, and swore to Allah under his breath that should but one hair of the mighty Admiral’s head be lacking when he returned, they would cut the false heart from the woman and feed it to the dogs.

“So spoke the captains; but ere the breath had passed their

lips their chief was a prisoner, and the guns from the fort hurled defiance at the betrayed.

"It was pitiful! Allah was avenged.

"Fiercely raged the battle, and when there was a breach in the walls, and the captain *besar* had ordered the attack, the Portuguese held the mighty *Laksamana* over the walls, and reviled the allied fleets with words of derision.

"Not one moved, and all was still. Suddenly the Admiral raised his head, and gazed out and down at his followers. Then he spoke, and the sound of his voice reached far out to the most distant *prau* that lay becalmed within the shadow of *casuarina*-shaded Puli.

"'*Allah il Allah*, I have sinned, and I must die. No more shall my name be known in the land. I am no longer *laksamana*; neither am I a *dato*. Allah is just. Tuan Allah Suka!'

"A foreigner smote him in the mouth, and a great cry arose from without the walls.

"The war went on; but day after day did the Governor send a message to the *Laksamana* in the dungeon. 'Reveal the spot where thy gold is hidden, and thy life and liberty are granted.'

"Day by day the *Dato* replied, 'My life is a pollution in the nostrils of Allah. Take it.'

"So they laid the great chief on the stones of his cell, bound hand and foot, and one by one did they break the joints of his toes, his fingers, and then the joints of his legs and arms. When they had finished, and he still lived, the woman came to him and mocked him, but the Admiral closed his eyes and prayed. 'O Allah, the all-merciful and

the loving kind, forgive me for my erring heart. Thou knowest that it goes out to this woman still. Let not my country suffer for my deeds. I gave unto thy servant Solomon of the gold that has made us great. If thou canst, thou wilt whisper the secret of our nation to one of thy chosen people, that they may have means whereby to fight thy battles.'

"And then the woman raised her hand, and with one stroke of the axe an attendant severed from his body the head of the once mighty *Laksamana* of the fleets of Johore, Acheen and Maur.

"So died the secret of Ophir. So fell Malacca forever into the hands of the foreigner."

The Tuan Hakim's voice trembled as he closed. During the tragic recital he had dropped into the soft, melodious chant of his nation. At times he would lapse into Malay, and the boatmen would push forward and listen with unconcealed excitement. Then, as he returned to English, they would drop back into their places, but never take their eyes off the face of the speaker. Only our China "boys" took no interest in the past of Maur. It was tiffin time, and they were anxious to set before us our lunch of rice curry, gula Malacca, whiskey and soda.

The sun was directly above us, and the fierce, steely glare of the Malayan sky and water dazzled our eyes. Mount Ophir looked as far ahead as ever. The winding course of the river seemed at times to take us directly away from it.

Just as we had finished our meal, and had lighted our manilas, the steersman turned the little launch sharply about, and headed directly for the shore. In a moment we had shot under and through the deep fringe of mangrove trees, and had emerged into the jungle. On all sides the

trees rose, columnar and straight, and the ground was firm, although densely covered with ferns and vines.

The launch stopped, and the chief turned to me. “Now for the climb. We have thirty miles to the base of the mountain. We will push on ten miles, and spend the night at a Malay village. The next day we will try and reach the base of the mountain.”

I looked about me. We might have been surrounded by prison walls, for all hope there seemed to be of our getting an inch into the jungle.

Our servants gathered up our rather extensive impedimenta, and sprang into the water. We were forced to follow suit, and begin our day’s march with wet feet. A few steps up the stream we came upon an old elephant track and plunged boldly in,—and it was in! For three miles we labored through a series of the most elaborate mud-holes that I have ever seen. The elephants in breaking a path through the jungle are extremely timid in their boldness. The second one always steps in the footprints of the first. Year after year it is the same, until in course of time the path is marked by a series of pitfalls, often two feet in depth; and as it rains nearly every day they become a seething, slimy paste of mud.

Our heavy cloth shoes and stockings did not protect us from the attacks of innumerable leeches; for when we at last reached an open bit of forest and sat down to rest, we found dozens of them attached to our legs and even on our bodies. They were small, and beautifully marked with stripes of bright yellow.

It was twilight when we neared the welcome *kampong*. We had sent a runner ahead to notify the *punghulo* of our arrival, and as we finished our struggle with the last thorny

rattan, and tripped over the last rubber-vine, we could hear the shouting of men and the barking of dogs. Evidently we were expected.

The *kampong* might have been any other in the kingdom, and the little old weazened *punghulo*, who came bowing and smiling forward, might have been at the head of any one of a hundred other *kampongs*,—they were all so much alike. A half-dozen *attap* bungalows, built under a cocoanut grove, all facing toward a central plaza; a score of dogs for each bungalow; a flock of featherless fowls scratching and wallowing beneath them, and a bevy of half-naked children playing with a rattan ball within the light of a central fire,—made up the details of a little picture of Malayan home life that had become very familiar to me within the last three years.

Our servants at once set about preparing supper before the fire, while we for politeness' sake compounded a mouthful of betel-nut and *syrah* leaf from the *punghulo's* state box.

The next morning we set out for our twenty miles' tramp, along a narrow jungle path, accompanied by some ten natives of the village whom my companion had retained to cut a path for us up the mountain. It was a long, tiresome journey, and we were heartily glad when it was ended, and we were encamped on the rocky banks of a fern-hid stream.

Twice during our day's march had we crossed deep, ragged depressions in the earth, which were overgrown with a jungle that seemed to be coequal in age with the surrounding trees. We did not pause to examine them, although our natives pointed them out with the expressive word *mas* (gold). We promised to do that at a later date. On the border of the creek I found some gold-bearing rock, and while the Tuan Hakim was engaged in securing some

superb specimens of the great atlas moth, I sat down and crushed some fragments of it, and obtained enough gold to satisfy me that the rock would run four ounces to the ton.

It was a beautiful night. We lay under our mosquito netting, and gazed up through the interlacing branches of the trees at the star-strewn sky, and smoked our manilas in weary content. The long, full "coo-ee" of the stealthy argus pheasant sounded at intervals in distant parts of the forest. It might have been the call of the orang-utan, or the wild hillmen of the country, for they have imitated the call of this most glorious of birds.

The shrill, never ceasing whir of the cicada hardly attracted our attention; while the whistle and crash of a monkey that was inspecting us from his perch among the trees above caused me to peer upward, in hopes of catching a glimpse of his grayish outlines.

I had not had an opportunity of asking my companion for the details of his tragic story. I turned to him, and found him watching me attentively. "Were you listening to the call of the *coo-ee*?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered.

"It is the queen of birds. I will get you one. I have never shot one. They only come out at night, and then only to disappear, but we can trap them. It will die in captivity. That is why Solomon could not keep them, and sent for new ones every three years."

"What became of the woman?" I asked.

"The body of the *Laksamana* was thrown over the walls by the Portuguese," he said moodily. "It was embalmed and laid away. Two months from that day the woman was

walking outside the walls. The war was over. There was no more gold. Three of my people sprang upon her and the Portuguese she was to marry." He paused for a moment and looked up at the stars, then went on in a cold, matter-of-fact tone. "They were lashed to the headless body of the man they had murdered, and thrown into the royal tiger-cage, by order of his Highness, Ali, Sultan of Maur."

I raised my curtain and threw the stub of my cigar out into the darkness, a smothered exclamation of horror escaping my lips.

"It was the will of Allah. Good night."

It was nearly nine o'clock the next morning before we started. Our Malays had gone on at daybreak, to cut a path up the base of the mountain to where the open forest began.

We ascended steadily up a moderate slope for several miles, keeping the ravine on our left. It was comparatively easy work after we had left the jungle behind. After crossing a level plateau we once more found ourselves in a forest so dense that our men had to use their *parangs* again. The heat of the jungle was intense, and we suffered severely from the stings of a fly that is not unlike a cicada in shape.

From the jungle we emerged into an immense stone field, —*padang-batu*, the Malays called it. It extended along the mountain side as far as we could see, in places quite bare, at others deeply fissured and covered with a most luxuriant vegetation. We tramped at times waist deep through ferns, some green, some dark red, and some lined with yellow, clumps of the splendid *Dipteris Horsfieldi* and *Matonia pectinala*, with their slender stems and wide-spreading palmate fronds towering two feet above our heads. The

delicate maidenhair lay like a rich carpet beneath our feet, while hundreds of magnificent climbing pitcher-plants doused us with water as we knocked against them. Our sympiesometer showed us that we were twenty-eight hundred feet above the sea.

Beyond the *padang-batu* we entered a forest of almost Alpine character, dwarfed and stunted. For several hours we worked along ridges, descended into valleys, and ascended almost precipitous ledges, until we finally reached a peak that was separated from the true mountain by a deep, forbidding cañon.

Several of the older men of the party gave out, and we were forced to leave them with half our baggage and what water was left: there was a spring, they told us, near the summit.

The scramble down the one side of the cañon, and up the other, was a hard hour's work. Its rocky, almost perpendicular sides were covered with a bushy vegetation on top of a foundation of mosses and dead leaves, so that it afforded us more hindrance than help.

Just below the summit we came to where a projecting rock gave us shelter, and a natural basin contained flowing water. Dropping my load, and hardly waiting to catch my breath, I was on my way up the fifty feet that lay between us and the top. In another moment I had mounted the small, rocky, rhododendron-covered platform, and stood, the first of my party, on the summit of Mount Ophir. The little American flag that I had brought with me I waved frantically above my head, much to the amusement of my attendants.

Four thousand feet below, to the east, stretched the silver sheen of the Indian Ocean. The smoke of a passing steamer

lay like a dark stain on the blue and white of the sky. Close into the shore was the little capital town of Bander Maharani, connecting itself with us by a long, snake-like ribbon of shimmering light,—the great river Maur.

To the north and west successive ranges of hill and valley, divided by the glistening river, and all covered by an interminable jungle of vivid green, fell away until lost in the cloudless horizon.

For a moment I stood and gazed out over the vast expanse that lay before me, my mind filled with the wild, unwritten poetry of its jungles and its people; then I turned to my companion.

“It is beautiful!”

He shrugged his shoulders.

“But not equal to the view from our own Mount Washington.”

“Then why take so much trouble to secure it? Mount Pulei is as high, and there is a good road to its top.”

I laughed. “Mount Pulei or Mount Washington is not Ophir.”

“True!” he answered, opening his eyes in surprise at the seeming absurdity of my statement. “He that told you they were speaketh a lie.”

We spent the night on the summit, and watched the sun drop into the midst of the sea, away to the west. It was cool and delightful after the moist, heat-laden atmosphere of the lowlands, and a strong breeze freed us from the swarm of tiger mosquitoes that we had learned to expect as the darkness came on.

Where the Ophir of the Bible really is, will ever be a question of doubt. To my mind it embraces the entire East —the Malay Peninsula, Ceylon, India, and even China,— Ophir being merely a comprehensive term, possibly taken from this Mount Ophir of Johore, which signified the most central point of the region to which Solomon's ships sailed. For all ages the gold of the Malay Peninsula has been known; from the earliest times there has been intercourse between the Arabians and the Malays, while the Malayan was the very first of the far Eastern countries to adopt the Mohammedan religion and customs.

All the articles mentioned in the Biblical account of Mount Ophir are found in and about Malacca in abundance, while on the coast of Africa two of them, peacocks and silver, are missing.

If the Hebrew word *thukyim* is translated peacocks, and not parrots, then Solomon's ships must have turned east after passing the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and not south along the coast of Africa toward Sofala. For peacocks are only found in India and Malaya.

It is a singular fact that in the language of the *Orang Bennu*, or aborigines of the Malay Peninsula, that word "peacocks," which in the modern Malay is *marrak*, is in the aboriginal *chim marak*, which is the exact termination of the Hebrew *tuchim*. Their word for bird is *tchem*, another surprising similarity.

The morning sun brought us to our feet long before it was light in the vast spaces beneath our eyes. The jungle held its reddening rays for a moment; they flamed along the course of a half-hidden river; we stood out clear and distinct in their glorious effulgence, and then the broken, denuded crags and ragged ravines of the *padang-batu* absorbed them in its black fastnesses.

The gold of Mount Ophir was all about us. The air, the stones, the very trees, seemed to have been transformed into the glorious metal that the little fleets of Solomon and Huram sailed so far to seek. The Aurea Chersonese was a breathing, pulsating reality.

Busuk

The Story of a Malayan Girlhood

They called her Busuk, or “the youngest” at her birth. Her father, the old *punghulo*, or chief, of the little *kampong*, or village, of Passir Panjang, whispered the soft Allah Akbar, the prayer to Allah, in her small brown ear.

The subjects of the *punghulo* brought presents of *sarongs* run with gold thread, and not larger than a handkerchief, for Busuk to wear about her waist. They also brought gifts of rice in baskets of cunningly woven cocoanut fibre; of bananas, a hundred on a bunch; of *durians*, that filled the bungalow with so strong an odor that Busuk drew up her wrinkled, tiny face into a quaint frown; and of cocoanuts in their great green, oval shucks.

Busuk’s old aunt, who lived far away up the river Maur, near the foot of Mount Ophir, sent a yellow gold pin for the hair; her husband, the Hadji Mat, had washed the gold from the bed of the stream that rushed by their bungalow.

Busuk's brother, who was a sergeant in his Highness's the Sultan's artillery at Johore, brought a tiny pair of sandals all worked in many-colored beads. Never had such presents been seen at the birth of any other of Punghulo Sahak's children.

Two days later the Imam Paduka Tuan sent Busuk's father a letter sewn up in a yellow bag. It contained a blessing for Busuk. Busuk kept the letter all her life, for it was a great thing for the high priest to do.

On the seventh day Busuk's head was shaven and she was named Fatima; but they called her Busuk in the *kampong*, and some even called her Inchi Busuk, the princess.

From the low-barred window of Busuk's home she could look out on the shimmering, sunlit waters of the Straits of Malacca. The loom on which Busuk's mother wove the *sarongs* for the *punghulo* and for her sons stood by the side of the window, and Busuk, from the sling in which she sat on her mother's side, could see the fishing *praus* glide by, and also the big lumber *tonkangs*, and at rare intervals one of his Highness's launches.

Sometimes she blinked her eyes as a vagrant shaft of sunlight straggled down through the great green and yellow fronds of the cocoanut palms that stood about the bungalow; sometimes she kept her little black eyes fixed gravely on the flying shuttle which her mother threw deftly back and forth through the many-colored threads; but best of all did she love to watch the little gray lizards that ran about on the palm sides of the house after the flies and moths.

She was soon able to answer the lizards' call of "gecho, gecho," and once she laughed outright when one, in fright of her baby-fingers, dropped its tail and went wiggling away like a boat without a rudder. But most of the time she swung and crowed in her wicker cradle under the low rafters.

When Busuk grew older, she was carried every day down the ladder of the house and put on the warm white sand with the other children. They were all naked, save for a little chintz bib that was tied to their necks; so it made no difference how many mudpies they made on the beach nor how wet they got in the tepid waters of the ocean. They had only to look out carefully for the crocodiles that glided noiselessly among the mangrove roots.

One day one of Busuk's playmates was caught in the cruel jaws of a crocodile, and lost its hand. The men from the village went out into the labyrinth of roots that stood up above the flood like a huge scaffolding, and caught the man-eater with ropes of the *gamooty* palm. They dragged it up the beach and put out its eyes with red-hot spikes of the hard billion wood.

Although the varnished leaves of the cocoanuts kept almost every ray of sunlight out of the little village, and though the children could play in the airy spaces under their own houses, their heads and faces were painted with a paste of flour and water to keep their tender skins from chafing in the hot, moist air.

At evening, when the fierce sun went down behind the great banian tree that nearly hid Mount Pulei, the *kateeb* would sound the call to prayer on a hollow log that hung

up before the little palm-thatched mosque. Then Busuk and her playmates would fall on their faces, while the holy man sang in a soft, monotonous voice the promises of the Koran, the men of the *kampong* answering. "*Allah il Allah*," he would sing, and "Mohammed is his prophet," they would answer.

Every night Busuk would lie down on a mat on the floor of the house with a little wooden pillow under her neck, and when she dared she would peep down through the open spaces in the bamboo floor into the darkness beneath. Once she heard a low growl, and a great dark form stood right below her. She could see its tail lashing its sides with short, whip-like movements. Then all the dogs in the *kampong* began to bark, and the men rushed down their ladders screaming, "*Harimau! Harimau!*" (A tiger! A tiger!) The next morning she found that her pet dog, Fatima, named after herself, had been killed by one stroke of the great beast's paw. Once a monster python swung from a cocoanut tree through the window of her home, and wound itself round and round the post of her mother's loom. It took a dozen men to tie a rope to the serpent's tail, and pull it out.

Busuk went everywhere astride the *punghulo's* broad shoulders as he collected the taxes and settled the disputes in the little village. She went out into the straits in the big *prau* that floated the star and crescent of Johore over its stern, to look at the fishing-stakes, and was nearly wrecked by a great water-spout that burst within a few feet of them.

Then she went twice to Johore, and gazed in open-eyed wonder at the palaces of the Sultan and at the fort in which her uncle was an officer.

"Some day," she thought, "I may see his Highness, and he may notice me and smile." For had not his Highness spoken twice to her father and called him a good man? So whenever she went to Johore she put on her best *sarong* and *kabaya*> and in her jetty black hair she put the pin her aunt had given her, with a spray of sweet-smelling *chumpaka* flower.

When she was four years old she went to the *penager* to learn to read and write. In a few months she could outstrip any one in the class in tracing Arabic characters on the sand-sprinkled floor, and she knew whole chapters in the Koran.

So the days were passed in the little *kampong* under the gently swaying cocoanuts, and the little Malayan girl grew up like her companions, free and wild, with little thought beyond the morrow. That some day she was to be married, she knew; for since her first birthday she had been engaged to Mamat, the son of her father's friend, the *punghulo* of Bander Bahru.

She had never seen Mamat, nor he her; for it was not proper that a Malay should see his intended before marriage. She had heard that he was strong and lithe of limb, and could beat all his fellows at the game called *ragga*. When the wicker ball was in the air he never let it touch the ground; for he was as quick with his head and feet, shoulders, hips, and breast, as with his hands. He could swim and box, and had once gone with his father to the seaports on New Year's Day at Singapore, and his own *prau* had won the short-distance race.

Mamat was three years older than Busuk, and they were to be married when she was fifteen.

At first she cried a little, for she was sad at the thought of

giving up her playmates. But then the older women told her that she could chew betel when she was married, and her mother showed her a little set of betel-nut boxes, for which she had sent to Singapore. Each cup was of silver, and the box was cunningly inlaid with storks and cherry blossoms. It had cost her mother a month's hard labor on the loom.

Then Mamat was not to take her back to his father's bungalow. He had built a little one of his own, raised up on palm posts six feet from the ground, so that she need not fear tigers or snakes or white ants. Its sides were of plaited palm leaves, every other one colored differently, and its roof was of the choicest *attap*, each leaf bent carefully over a rod of rattan, and stitched so evenly that not a drop of rain could get through.

Inside there was a room especially for her, with its sides hung with *sarongs*, and by the window was a loom made of *kamooning* wood, finer than her mother's. Outside, under the eaves, was a house of bent rattan for her ring-doves, and a shelf where her silver-haired monkey could sun himself.

So Busuk forgot her grief, and she watched with ill-concealed eagerness the coming of Mamat's friends with presents of tobacco and rice and bone-tipped *krises*. Then for the first time she was permitted to open the camphor-wood chest and gaze upon all the beautiful things that she was to wear for the one great day.

Her mother and elder sisters had been married in them, and their children would, one after another, be married in them after her.

There was a *sarong* of silk, run with threads of gold and silver, that was large enough to go around her body twice

and wide enough to hang from her waist to her ankles; a belt of silver, with a gold plate in front, to hold the *sarong* in place; a *kabaya*, or outer garment, that looked like a dressing-gown, and was fastened down the front with golden brooches of curious Malayan workmanship; a pair of red-tipped sandals; and a black lace scarf to wear about her black hair. There were earrings and a necklace of colored glass, and armlets, bangles, and gold pins. They all dazzled Busuk, and she could hardly wait to try them on.

A buffalo was sacrificed on the day of the ceremony. The animal was "without blemish or disease." The men were careful not to break its fore or hind leg or its spine, after death, for such was the law. Its legs were bound and its head was fastened, and water was poured upon it while the *kadi* prayed. Then he divided its windpipe. When it was cooked, one half of it was given to the priests and the other half to the people.

All the guests, and there were many, brought offerings of cooked rice in the fresh green leaves of the plantain, and baskets of delicious mangosteens, and pink mangoes and great jack-fruits. A curry was made from the rice that had forty *sambuls* to mix with it. There were the pods of the moringa tree, chilies and capsicums, prawns and decayed fish, chutneys and onions, ducks' eggs and fish roes, peppers and cucumbers and grated cocoanuts.

It was a wonderful curry, made by one of the Sultan's own cooks; for the Punghulo Sahak spared no expense in the marriage of this, his last daughter, and a great feast is exceedingly honorable in the eyes of the guests.

Busuk's long black hair had to be done up in a marvellous

chignon on the top of her head. First, her maids washed it beautifully clean with the juice of the lime and the lather of the soap-nut; then it was combed and brushed until every hair glistened like ebony; next it was twisted up and stuck full of the quaint golden and tortoise-shell bodkins, with here and there a spray of jasmine and *chumpaka*.

Busuk's milky-white teeth had to be filed off more than a fourth. She put her head down on the lap of the woman and closed her eyes tight to keep back the hot tears that would fall, but after the pain was over and her teeth were blackened, she looked in the mirror at her swollen gums and thought that she was very beautiful. Now she could chew the betel-nut from the box her mother had given her!

The palms of her hands and the nails of her fingers and toes were painted red with henna, and the lids of her eyes touched up with antimony. When all was finished, they led her out into the great room, which was decorated with mats of colored palm, masses of sweet-smelling flowers and maidenhair fern. There they placed her in the chair of state to receive her relatives and friends.

She trembled a little for fear Mamat would not think her beautiful, but when, last of all, he came up and smiled and claimed the bit of betel-nut that she was chewing for the first time, and placed it in his mouth, she smiled back and was very happy.

Then the *kadi* pronounced them man and wife in the presence of all, for is it not written, "Written deeds may be forged, destroyed, or altered; but the memory of what is transacted in the presence of a thousand witnesses must remain sacred? *Allah il Allah!*" And all the people

answered, "*Suka! Suka!*" (We wish it! We wish it!)

Then Mamat took his seat on the dais beside the bride, and the *punghulo* passed about the betel-box. First, Busuk took out a *syrah* leaf smeared with lime and placed in it some broken fragments of the betel-nut, and chewed it until a bright red liquid oozed from the corners of her mouth. The others did the same.

Then the women brought garlands of flowers—red allamandas, yellow convolvulus, and pink hibiscus—and hung them about Busuk and Mamat, while the musicians outside beat their crocodile-hide drums in frantic haste.

The great feast began out in the sandy plaza before the houses. There was cock-fighting and kicking the *ragga* ball, wrestling and boxing, and some gambling among the elders.

Toward night Busuk was put in a rattan chair and carried by the young men, while Mamat and the girls walked by her side, a mile away, where her husband's big *cadjang*-covered *prau* lay moored. It was to take them to his bungalow at Bander Bahru. The band went, too, and the boys shot off guns and fire-crackers all the way, until Busuk's head swam, and she was so happy that the tears came into her eyes and trickled down through the rouge on her cheeks.

So ended Busuk's childhood. She was not quite fifteen when she became mistress of her own little palm-thatched home. But it was not play housekeeping with her; for she must weave the *sarongs* for Mamat and herself for clothes and for spreads at night, and the weaving of each cost her twenty days' hard labor. If she could weave an extra one from time to time, Mamat would take it up to Singapore and trade it at the bazaar for a pin for the hair or a

sunshade with a white fringe about it.

Then there were the shell-fish and prawns on the sea-shore to be found, greens to be sought out in the jungle, and the *padi*, or rice, to be weeded. She must keep a plentiful supply of betel-nut and lemon leaves for Mamat and herself, and one day there was a little boy to look after and make tiny *sarongs* for.

So, long before the time that our American girls are out of school, and about the time they are putting on long dresses, Busuk was a woman. Her shoulders were bent, her face wrinkled, her teeth decayed and falling out from the use of the *syrah* leaf. She had settled the engagement of her oldest boy to a little girl of two years in a neighboring *kampong*, and was dusting out the things in the camphor-wood chest, preparatory to the great occasion.

I used to wonder, as I wandered through one of these secluded little Malay villages that line the shores of the peninsula and are scattered over its interior, if the little girl mothers who were carrying water and weaving mats did not sometimes long to get down on the warm, white sands and have a regular romp among themselves,—playing "Cat-a-corner" or "I spy"; for none of them were over seventeen or eighteen!

Still their lives are not unhappy. Their husbands are kind and sober, and they are never destitute. They have their families about them, and hear laughter and merriment from one sunny year to another.

Busuk's father-in-law is dead now, and the last time I visited Bander Bahru to shoot wild pig, Mamat was

punghulo, collecting the taxes and administering the laws.

He raised the back of his open palm to his forehead with a quiet dignity when I left, after the day's sport, and said, "*Tabek!* Tuan Consul. Do not forget Mamat's humble bungalow." And Busuk came down the ladder with little Mamat astride her bare shoulders, with a pleasant "*Tabek! Tuan!* (Good-by, my lord.) May Allah's smile be ever with you."

A Crocodile Hunt

At the foot of Mount Ophir

The little pleasant-faced Malay captain of his Highness's three-hundred ton yacht *Pante* called softly, close to my ear, "Tuan—Tuan Consul, Gunong Ladang!" I sprang to my feet, rubbed my eyes, and gazed in the direction indicated by the brown hand.

I saw not five miles off the low jungle-bound coast of the peninsula, and above it a great bank of vaporous clouds, pierced by the molten rays of the early morning sun. As I looked around inquiringly, the captain, bowing, said: "Tuan," and I raised my eyes. Again I saw the lofty mountain peak surmounting the cushion of clouds, standing out bold and clear against the almost fierce azure of the Malayan sky.

"Mount Ophir!" burst from my lips. The captain smiled and went forward to listen to the linesman's "two fathoms, sir, two and one half fathoms, sir, two fathoms, sir"; for we were crossing the shallow bar that protects the mouth of the great river Maur from the ocean.

The tide was running out like a mill-race. The *Pante* was backing from side to side, and then pushing carefully ahead, trying to get into the deep water beyond, before low tide.

Suddenly there was a soft, grating sound and the captain came to me and touched his hat.

"We are on the bar, sir. Will you send a despatch by the steam-cutter to Prince Suliman, asking for the launch? We cannot get off until the night tide."

The *Pante* had so swung around that we could plainly see the big red *istana*, or palace, of Prince Suliman close to the sandy shore, surrounded by a grove of graceful palms. With the aid of our glasses the white and red blur farther up the river resolved itself into the streets and quays of the little city of Bander Maharani, the capital of the province of Maur in dominions of his Highness Abubaker, Sultan of Johore. Above and overshadowing all both in beauty and historical interest was the famous old mountain where King Solomon sent his diminutive ships for "gold, silver, peacocks, and apes."

By the time the ladies were astir, the mists had vanished and Gunong Ladang, or as it is styled in Holy Writ Mount Ophir, presented to our admiring gaze its massive outlines, set in a frame of green and blue. The dense jungle crept halfway up its sides and at the point where the cloud stratum had rested but an hour before, it merged into a tangled network of vines and shrubs which in their turn

gave place to the black, red rock that shone like burnished brass.

If our minds wandered away from visions of future crocodile-shooting to dreams of the past wealth that had been taken from the ancient mines that honeycombed the base of the mountain, it is hardly to be wondered at. If *Dato* or "Lord" Garlands told us queer stories of woods and masonry that antedated the written history of the country, stories of mines and workings that were overgrown with a jungle that looked as primeval as the mountain itself, he was to be excused on the plea that we, waiting on a sandy bar with the metallic glare of the sea in our eyes, were glad of any subject to distract our thoughts.

The Resident's launch brought out Prince Mat and the Chief Justice, both of whom spoke English with an easy familiarity. Both had been in Europe and Prince Mat had dined with Queen Victoria. One night at table he related the incidents of that dinner with a delightful exactness that might have pleased her Britannic Majesty could she have listened.

I waited only long enough to see the ladies installed in a suite of rooms in the Residency, then donned a suit of white duck, stepped into a river launch in company with Inchi Mohamed, the Chief Justice, and steamed out into the broad waters of the Maur.

The southernmost kingdom of the great continent of Asia is the little Sultanate of Johore, ruled over by one of the most enlightened Princes of the East. Fourteen miles from Singapore, just across the notorious old Straits of Malacca, is his capital and the palace of the Sultan.

We had been guests of the State for the past two weeks. Its ruler, among other kind attentions to us, had suggested a

visit to his out province Maur and a crocodile hunt along the banks of the broad river that wound about the foot of Mount Ophir.

Fifteen hours' steam in his beautiful yacht along the picturesque shores of Johore brought us to the realization of a long-cherished dream,—the seeing for ourselves the mountain whose exact location had been a subject of conjecture for so many centuries. Were I a scholar and explorer and not a sportsman, I might again and more explicitly set forth facts which I consider indubitable proof that the Mount Ophir of Asia and not the Mount Ophir of Africa is, as I have already claimed, the Mount Ophir of the Bible. But here, I wish only to narrate the record of a few pleasant days spent at its foot.

The Maur River, at its mouth, is a mile across; it is so deep that one can run close up to its muddy banks and peer in under the labyrinth of mangrove roots that stand like a rustic scaffold beneath its trunks, protecting them from the highest flood-tides.

It was some time before I could pick out a crocodile as he lay sleeping in his muddy bath, showing nothing above the slime except the serrated line of his great back, which was so incrusted that, but for its regularity, it might pass for the limb of a tree or some fantastically shaped root.

"There you are!" said the Chief Justice, pointing at the bank almost before we had reached the opposite side. I strained my eyes and raised the hammer of my "50 x 110" Winchester; for I was to have a shot at my first live crocodile.

We drew nearer and nearer the shore and yet I failed to see anything that resembled an animal of any sort. The little launch slowed down and the crew all pointed toward the

bank. I cannot now imagine what I expected then to see, but something must have been in my mind's eye that blinded my bodily sight; for there, right before me, was a little fellow not over three feet long.

He had just come up from the river, and his hide was clean and almost a dark birch color. His head was raised and he was regarding us suspiciously from his small green eyes.

I put down my rifle in disgust, and took up my revolver. I had no idea of wasting a hundred and ten grains of powder on a baby. I took careful aim and fired. The revolver was a self-cocker, and yet before I could fire again, he had whirled about and was out of reach. He was gone and I drew a long breath. The Malays said I struck him. If I did, I had no means of proving it.

The only way to bag crocodiles is to kill them outright or nearly so. If they have strength enough to crawl into the river and die, they will come to the surface again two days later; but the chances are that they will get under a root, or that in some way you will lose them. Out of forty or fifty big and small ones that we hit only five floated down past the Residency.

I also soon found out that my hundred and ten grain cartridges were none too large for even the smaller crocodiles. As for those eighteen and twenty feet long, it was necessary that the Chief Justice and I should fire at the same time and at the same spot in order to arrest the big saurians in their wild scramble for the water.

We had tried some half-dozen good shots at small fellows, varying from two to five feet in length, when I began to lose interest in the sport; so I turned to watch a colony of little gray, jungle monkeys, that were swinging and chattering and scolding among the mangrove trees.

One of them picked a long dart-shaped fruit off the tree and essayed to drop it on the head of his mate below. I was about to call my companion's attention to it, when I heard a crash among the roots near where the missile had fallen, and a crocodile, so large that I distrusted my senses, turned his great log-like head to one side and gazed up at the frightened monkeys. I raised my hand, and the launch paused not over twenty yards from where he lay patiently waiting for one of the monkeys to drop within reach of his great jaws.

The sun had dried the mud on his back until the entire surface reminded me of the beach of a muddy mill-pond that I used to frequent as a boy.

"*Boyah besar!*" (A royal crocodile) repeated our Malays under their breaths.

The Chief Justice and I fired at the same time, and the massive fellow who, but a moment before, had looked to be as stiff and clumsy as a bar of pig iron, now seemed to be made of india-rubber and steel springs. I should not have been more surprised had the great *timboso* tree, beside which he lay, arisen and danced a jig. He seemed to spring from the middle up into the air without the aid of either his head or his tail. Then he brought his tail around in a circle and struck the skeleton roots of the mangrove with such force as to dislodge a small monkey in its top, which fell whistling with fright into the lower limbs, while the crocodile's great jaws, which seemed to measure a third of his length, opened and shut viciously, snapping off limbs and roots like straws.

"He sick!" shouted the Chief Justice. "Fire quick."

I threw the cartridge from the magazine into the barrel, and raised the gun to my shoulder just as the huge saurian

struck the water. My bullet caught him underneath, near the back legs. My companion's must have had more effect, for the crocodile stopped as though stunned. I had time to drop my gun and snatch up my revolver.

It was an easy shot. The bullet sped true to its mark and entered one of the small fiery eyes. The huge frame seemed to quiver as though a charge of electricity had gone through it and then stiffened out,—dead.

Our Malay boys got a rope of tough *gamooty* fibres around the great head, and we towed our prize out into the stream just as the Resident's launch, bearing the Prince and the ladies, steamed up the river to watch the sport.

A crowd of servants got the crocodile up on the bank near the palace grounds and drew it two hundred yards to their quarters. Now comes the strangest part of the story.

My servants had half completed the task of skinning him, for I wished to send his hide to the Smithsonian, when the muezzin sounded the call to prayers from the little mosque near by. In an instant the devout Mohammedans were on their faces and the crocodile in his half-skinned state was left until a more convenient time. At six o'clock the next morning I was awakened by a knock at my door:—

"Tuan, Tuan Consul, come see *boyah* (crocodile)."

I got up, wrapped a *sarong* about me, put my feet into a pair of grass slippers, and followed my guide out of the palace, through the courts to where the crocodile had been the night before, but no crocodile was to be seen. My guide grinned and pointed to a heavy trail that looked like the track of a stone-boat drawn by a yoke of oxen.

We followed it for a hundred yards in the direction of the

river, and came upon the crocodile, covered with blood and mud. His own hide hung about him like a dress, and his one eye opened and shut at the throng of wondering natives about. It was not until he had been put out of his misery and his hide taken entirely off that we felt confident of his *bona fide* demise.

One day I had a real adventure while out shooting, which, like many real adventures, was made up principally of the things I thought and suffered rather than of the things I did. Hence I hardly know how to write it out so that it will look like an "adventure" and not a mere mishap.

My companion had told me of a trail some thirty miles up the river that led into the jungle about three miles, to some old gold workings that date back beyond the written records of the State. So one day we drew our little launch close up under the bank of the river, and I sprang ashore, bent on seeing for myself the prehistoric remains. Contrary to the advice of the Chief Justice, I only took a heavy hunting-knife with me, and it was more for slashing away thorns and rattans than for protection.

It was the heat of the day, and the dense jungle was like a furnace. Before I had gone a mile I began to regret my enthusiasm. I found the path, but it was so overgrown with creepers, parasites, and rubber-vines that I had almost to cut a new one. Had it not been for the company of a small English terrier, Lekas,—the Malay for "make haste,"—I believe I should have turned back.

However, I found the old workings, and spent several hours making calculations as to their depth and course, taking notes as to the country formation, and assaying some bits of refuse quartz. Rather than struggle back by the path, I determined to follow the course of a stream that went through the mines and on toward the coast. So I

whistled for Lekas and started on.

For the first half-hour everything went smoothly. Then the stream widened out and its clay bottom gave place to one of mud, which made the walking much more difficult. At last I struck the mangrove belt, which always warns you that you are approaching the coast.

As long as I kept in the centre of the channel, I was out of the way of the network of roots; but now the channel was getting deeper and my progress becoming more labored. It was impossible to reach the bank, for the mangroves on either side had grown so thick and dense as to be impenetrable.

When I had perhaps achieved half the distance, the thought suddenly crossed my mind—how very awkward it would be to meet a crocodile in such a place! One couldn't run, that was certain, and as for fighting, that would be a lost cause from the first.

Right in the midst of these unpleasant cogitations I heard a quiet splash in the water, not far behind, that sent my heart into my mouth. In a moment I had scrambled on to a mangrove root and had turned to look for the cause of my fears.

For perhaps a minute I saw nothing, and was trying to convince myself that my previous thoughts had made me fanciful, when, not many yards off, I saw distinctly the form of a huge crocodile swimming rapidly toward me. I needed no second look, but dashed away over the roots.

Before I had gone half a dozen yards I was down sprawling in the mud. I got entangled, and my terror made me totally unable to act with any judgment. Despair nerved me and I turned at bay with my long hunting-knife in my

hand. How I longed for even my revolver!



A crocodile hunt on the maur

“I turned at bay with my long hunting knife in my hand”

Whatever the issue, it could not be long delayed. The uncouth, hideous form, which as yet I had only seen dimly, was plain now. I took my stand on one of the largest roots, steadied myself by clasping another with my left hand, and waited.

My chances, if it did not seem a mockery to call them such, were small indeed. I might, by singular good luck, deprive my adversary of sight; but hemmed in as I was by a tangled mass of roots, I felt that even then I should be but little better off.

All manner of thoughts came unbidden to my mind. I could see Inchi Mohamed propped up on cushions in the launch reading "A Little Book of Profitable Tales" that had just been sent me by its author. I started to smile at the tale of *The Clycopeedy*. Then I caught sight of the peak of Mount Ophir through a notch in the jungle and all sorts of absurd hypotheses in regard to its authenticity flashed through my mind. All this takes time to relate, but those who have stood in mortal peril will know how short a time it takes to think.

From the moment I left the water, but a few seconds had elapsed and the saurian was not two yards from me. The abject horror and hopelessness of that moment was something I can never forget. Suddenly Lekas came floundering through the mud; a second more, and he perceived my enemy when almost within reach of his jaws.

Barking furiously, Lekas began to back away. One breathless moment, and the reptile turned to follow this new prey. I sank down among the roots regardless of the slime and watched the crocodile crawl deliberately away, with the gallant little dog retreating before him, keeping up a succession of angry barks.

When I arrived at the mouth of the creek, weak, faint, and covered from head to foot with mud, I found the Chief Justice awaiting me. The barking of the dog had attracted his attention and he had steamed up to see what was the matter.

I had not strength left to stroke the head of the brave little fellow who had thus twice done me a most welcome service. I had, indeed, but just strength enough to spring in, throw myself down on the cushions, and let my "boys" pull off my clothes and bring me a suit of clean pajamas and cool grass slippers.

A New Year's Day in Malaya

And some of its Picturesque Customs

My Malay *syce* came close up to the veranda and touched his brown forehead with the back of his open hand.

"*Tuan*" (Lord), he said, "have got oil for harness, two one-half cents; black oil for *cudah's* (horse) feet, three cents; oil, one cent one-half for bits; oil, seven cents for *cretah* (carriage). Fourteen cents, Tuan."

I put my hands into the pockets of my white duck jacket

and drew out a roll of big Borneo coppers.

The *syce* counted out the desired amount, and handed back what was left through the bamboo *chicks*, or curtains, that reduced the blinding glare of the sky to a soft, translucent gray. I closed my eyes and stretched back in my long chair, wondering vaguely at the occasion that called for such an outlay in oils, when I heard once more the quiet, insistent "Tuan!" I opened my eyes.

"No got red, white, blue ribbon for whip."

"*Sudah chukup!*" (Stop talking) I commanded angrily. The *syce* shrugged his bare shoulders and gave a hitch to his cotton *sarong*.

"Tuan, to-morrow New Year Day. Tuan, *mem* (lady) drive to Esplanade. Governor, general, all white tuans and mems there. Tuan Consul's carriage not nice. Shall *syce* buy ribbons?"

"Yes," I answered, tossing him the rest of the coppers, "and get a new one for your arm."

I had forgotten for the moment that it was the 31st of December. The *syce* touched his hand to his forehead and salaamed.

Through the spaces of the protecting *chicks* I caught glimpses of my Malay *kebun*, or gardener, squatting on his bare feet, with his bare knees drawn up under his armpits, hacking with a heavy knife at the short grass. The mottled crotons, the yellow allamanda and pink hibiscus bushes, the clump of Eucharist lilies, the great trailing masses of orchids that hung among the red flowers of the stately flamboyant tree by the green hedge, joined to make me forget the midwinter date on the calendar. The time

seemed in my half-dream July in New York or August in Washington.

Ah Minga, the "boy" in flowing pantalets and stiffly starched blouse, came silently along the wide veranda, with a cup of tea and a plate of opened mangosteens. I roused myself, and the dreams of sleighbells and ice on window-panes, that had been fleeting through my mind at the first mention of New Year's Day by the *syce*, vanished.

Ah Minga, too, mentioned, as he placed the cool, pellucid globes before me, "To-mollow New Year Dlay, Tuan!"

On Christmas Day, Ah Minga had presented the mistress with the gilded counterfeit presentment of a Joss. The servants, one and all, from Zim, the cookee, to the wretched Kling *dhobie* (wash-man), had brought some little remembrance of their Christian master's great holiday.

In respecting our customs, they had taken occasion to establish one of their own. They had adopted New Year's as the day when their masters should return their presents and good will in solid cash.

At midnight we were awakened by a regular Fourth of July pandemonium. Whistles from the factories, salvos from Fort Canning, bells from the churches, Chinese tom-toms, Malay horns, rent the air from that hour until dawn with all the discords of the Orient and a few from Europe. By daylight the thousands of natives from all quarters of the peninsula and neighboring islands had gathered along the broad Ocean Esplanade of Singapore in front of the Cricket Club House, to take part in or watch the native sports by land and sea.

The inevitable Chinaman was there, the Kling, the

Madrasman, the Sikh, the Arab, the Jew, the Chitty, or Indian money-lender,—they were all there, many times multiplied, unconsciously furnishing a background of extraordinary variety and picturesqueness.

At ten o'clock the favored representatives of the Anglo-Saxon race took their place on the great veranda of the Cricket Club, and gave the signal that we would condescend to be amused for ten hours. Then the show commenced. There were not over two hundred white people to represent law and civilization amid the teeming native population.

In the centre of the beautiful esplanade or playground rose the heroic statue of Sir Stamford Raffles, the English governor who made Singapore possible. To my right, on the veranda, stood a modest, gray-haired little man who cleared the seas of piracy and insured Singapore's commercial ascendency, Sir Charles Brooke, Rajah of Sarawak. A little farther on, surrounded by a brilliant suite of Malay princes, was the Sultan of Johore, whose father sold the island of Singapore to the British.

The first of the sports was a series of foot-races between Malay and Kling boys, almost invariably won by the Malays, who are the North American Indians of Malaysia —the old-time kings of the soil. They are never, like the Chinese, mere beasts of burden, or great merchants, nor do they descend to petty trade, like the Indians or Bengalese. If they must work they become horsemen.

Next came a jockey race, in which a dozen long-limbed Malays took each a five-year-old child astride his shoulders, and raced for seventy-five yards. There were sack-races and greased-pole climbing and pig-catching.

Now came a singular contest—an eating match. Two

dozen little Malay, Kling, Tamil, and Chinese boys were seated at regular intervals about an open circle by one of the governor's aids. Not one could touch the others in any way. Each had a dry, hard ship-biscuit before him. A pistol shot and two dozen pairs of little brown fists went pit-a-pat on the two dozen hard biscuits, and in an instant the crackers were broken to powder.

Then commenced the difficult task of forcing the powdered pulp down the little throats. Both hands were called into full play during the operation, one for crowding in, the other for grinding the residue and patting the stomach and throat. Each little competitor would shyly rub into the warm earth, or hide away in the folds of his many-colored *sarong*, as much as possible, or when a rival was looking the other way, would snap a good-sized piece across to him.

The little brown fellow who won the fifty-cent piece by finishing his biscuit first simply put into his mouth a certain quantity of the crushed biscuit, and with little or no mastication pushed the whole mass down his throat by sheer force.

The minute the contest was decided, all the participants, and many other boys, rushed to a great tub of molasses to duck for half-dollars. One after another their heads would disappear into the sticky, blinding mass, as they fished with their teeth for the shining prizes at the bottom.

Successful or otherwise, after their powers were exhausted they would suddenly pull out their heads, reeking with the molasses, and make for the ocean, unmindful of the crowds of natives in holiday attire who blocked their way.

Then came a jinrikisha race, with Chinese coolies pulling Malay passengers around a half-mile course. Letting go the

handles of their wagons as they crossed the line, the coolies threw their unfortunate passengers over backward.

Tugs of war, wrestling matches, and boxing bouts on the turf finished the land sports, and we all adjourned to the yachts to witness those of the sea. There were races between men-of-war cutters, European yachts, rowing shells, Chinese sampans, and Malay *colehs* with great, dart-like sails, so wide-spreading that ropes were attached to the top of the masts, and a dozen naked natives hung far out over the side of the slender boat to keep it from blowing over. In making the circle of the harbor they would spring from side to side of the boat, sometimes lost to our view in the spray, often missing their footholds, and dragging through the tepid water.

Between times, while watching the races, we amused ourselves throwing coppers to a fleet of native boys in small dugouts beneath our bows. Every time a penny dropped into the water, a dozen little bronze forms would flash in the sunlight, and nine times out of ten the coin never reached the bottom.

Last of all came the trooping of the English colors on the magnificent esplanade, within the shadow of the cathedral; the march past of the sturdy British artillery and engineers, with their native allies, the Sikhs and Sepoys; then the *feu-de-joie*, and New Year's was officially recognized by the guns of the fort.

That night we danced at Government House,—we exiles of the Temperate Zone,—keeping up to the last the fiction that New Year's Day under a tropic sky and within sound of the tiger's wail was really January first. But every remembrance and association was, in our homesick thoughts, grouped about an open arch fire, with the sharp, crisp creak of sleigh-runners outside, in a frozen land

fourteen thousand miles away.

In the Burst of the Southwest Monsoon

A Tale of Changhi Bungalow

We had been out all day from Singapore on a wild-pig hunt. There were eight of us, including three young officers of the Royal Artillery, besides somewhere between seventy and a hundred native beaters. The day had been unusually hot, even for a country whose regular record on the thermometer reads 150 degrees in the sun.

We had tramped and shot through jungle and *lallang* grass, until, when night came on, I was too tired to make the fourteen miles back across the island, and so decided to push on a mile farther to a government "rest bungalow." I said good-by to my companions and the game, and accompanied only by a Hindu guide, struck out across some ploughed lands for the jungle road that led to and ended at Changhi.

Changhi was one of three rest bungalows, or summer resorts, if one can be permitted to mention summer in this land of perpetual summer. They were owned and kept open by the Singapore Government for the convenience of

travellers, and as places to which its own officials can flee from the cares of office and the demands of society. I had stopped at Changhi Bungalow once for some weeks when my wife and a party of friends and all our servants were with me. It was lonely even then, with the black impenetrable jungle crowding down on three sides, and a strip of the blinding, dazzling waters of the uncanny old Straits of Malacca in front.

There were tigers and snakes in the jungle, and crocodiles and sharks in the Straits, and lizards and other things in the bungalow. I thought of all this in a disjointed kind of a way, and half wished that I had stayed with my party. Then I noticed uneasily that some thick oily-looking clouds were blotting out the yellow haze left by the sun over on the Johore side. A few big hot drops of rain splashed down into my face, as I climbed wearily up the dozen cement steps of the house.

The bamboo *chicks* were all down, and the shutter-doors securely locked from the inside, but there was a long rattan chair within reach, and I dropped into it with a sigh of satisfaction, while my guide went out toward the servant-quarters to arouse the Malay *mandor*, or head gardener, whom H. B. M.'s Government trusted with this portion of her East Indian possessions.

As might have been expected, that high functionary was not to be found, and I was forced to content myself, while my guide went on to a neighboring native police station to make inquiries. I unbuttoned my stiff *kaki* shooting-jacket, lit a manila, which my mouth was too dry to smoke, and gazed up at the ceiling in silence.

It was stiflingly hot. Even the cicadas in the great jungle tree, that towered a hundred and fifty feet above the house, were quiet. Every breath I took seemed to scorch me, and

the balls of my eyes ached. The sky had changed to a dull cartridge color.

A breeze came across the hot, glaring surface of the Straits, and stirred the tops of a little clump of palms, and died away. It brought with it the smell of rain.

For a moment there was a dead stillness,—not even a lizard clucked on the wall back of me; then all at once the thermometer dropped down two or three degrees, and a tearing wind struck the bamboo curtains and stretched them out straight; the tops of the massive jungle trees bent and creaked; there was a blinding flash and a roar of thunder, and all distance was lost in darkness and rain. It was one of the quick, fierce bursts of the southwest monsoon.

I did not move, although wet to the skin.

Presently I could make out three blurred figures fighting their way slowly against the storm across the compound. One was the guide; the second was the *mandor*, naked save for a cotton *sarong* around his waist; the third was a stranger.

The trio came up on the veranda—the stranger hanging behind, with an apologetic droop of his head. He was a white man, in a suit of dirty, ragged linen. It took but one look to place him. I had seen hundreds of them “on the beach” in Singapore,—there could be no mistake. “Loafer” was written all over him—from his ragged, matted hair to the fringe on the bottom of his trousers. He held a broken cork helmet, that had not seen pipe-clay for many a month, in his grimy hands, and scraped one foot and ducked his dripping head, as I turned toward him with a gruff,—

“Well?”

“Beg pardon, sir,” he said, in a harsh, rasping voice, “but I heard that the American Consul was here. I am an American.”

He looked up with a watery leer in his eyes.

“Go on,” I said, without offering to take the hand of my fellow-countryman.

He let his arm fall to his side.

“I ain’t got any passport; that went with the rest, and I never had the heart to ask for another.”

He gave a bad imitation of a sob.

“Never mind the side play,” I commented, as he began to rumble in the bottomless pocket of his coat. “I will supply all that as you go along. What is it you want?”

He withdrew his hand and wiped his eyes with his sleeve.

“Come in out of the rain and you won’t need to do that,” I said, amused at this show of feeling.

“I thought as how you might give a countryman a lift,” he whined.

I smiled and stepped to the door.

“Boy, bring the gentleman a whiskey and soda.”

The “boy” brought the liquor, while I commenced to unstrap and dry my Winchester.

My fellow-countryman did not move, but stood nervously tottering from one leg to the other, as I went on with my task. He coughed once or twice to attract my attention.

"Beg pardon, sir, but I meant work—good, honest work. Work was what I wanted, to earn this very glass of whiskey for my little gal. She's sick, sir, sick—sick in a hut at the station."

"Your little what?" I asked in amazement.

"My little gal, sir. She's all that's left me. If you'll trust me with the glass, I'll take it to her. Can't give you no security, I'm afraid, only the word of a broken-down old father, who has got a little gal what he loves better than life!"

My long experience with tramps and beach-combers was at fault. No words can convey an idea of the pathos and humility he threw into his tone and actions. The yearning of the voice, the almost divine air of self-abnegation, the subdued flash of pride here and there that suggested better days, the hopeless droop of the arms, and the irresolute tremble of the corners of his mouth would have appealed to the heart of a heathen idol. That one of his caste should refuse a glass of "Usher's Best," and be willing to brave the burst of a southwest monsoon to take it to any one—child, mother, or wife—was incredible.

"Drink it," I said roughly. "You will need it before you get to the station. Boy, bring me my waterproof and an umbrella. Now out you go. We'll see whether this 'little gal' is male or female,—seven or seventy."

The loafer snatched up his helmet with an avidity that admitted of no question as to his earnestness.

We made a wild rush down across the oozing compound, through a little strip of dripping jungle, over a swaying foot-bridge that spanned the muddy Sonji Changhi, and along the sandy floor of a cocoanut grove. On the outskirts

of a station we came upon a deserted bungalow, that was trembling in the storm on its rotten supports.

We went up its rickety ladder and across its open bamboo floor, to the darkest corner, where, on an old mat under the only dry spot in the hut, lay a bundle of rags.

My companion dropped down among the decayed stumps of pineapples and cocoanut refuse, and commenced to croon in a hoarse voice, “Daddy come,—Daddy come,—poor dearie,” and made a motion as though to put the bottle to a small, dirty white face that I could just make out among the rags.

I pushed him aside and gathered the unconscious little burden up into my arms. There was no time for sentiment. Every minute I expected the miserable old shelter would go over.

We made our way as best we could back through the darkness and driving blasts of rain. The loafer followed with a long series of “God bless you’s.” He essayed once or twice to hold the umbrella over his “little gal’s” head, but each time the wind turned it inside out, and he gave it up with an air of feeble inconsequence that characterized all his movements.

I put my burden down on a couch in the dining room, and chafed her hands and feet, while the boy brought a beer bottle filled with hot water.

It was a sweet little face, pinched and drawn, with big hazel eyes, that looked up into mine as my efforts sent the blood coursing through her veins. She was between five and six years old. A mass of dark brown hair, unkempt and matted, fell about her face and shoulders.

I wrapped a rug about her. She was asleep almost before I had finished.

A little later I roused her, and she nestled her damp little head against my shoulder as I gave her some soup; but her eyelids were heavy, and it seemed almost cruel to keep her awake, even for the food she so badly needed. The father had shuffled about uneasily during my motherly attentions, and seemed relieved when I was through.

While the boy brought a steaming hot curry and a goodly supply of whiskey and soda, I turned the self-confessed father of the big hazel eyes into the bath-room.

With the grime and dirt off his face he was pale and haggard. There were big blue marks under his shifting gray eyes and his hair hung ragged and singed about his ears.

He had discarded his dirty linen for a blue-flannel bathing-suit that some former high official of H. B. M. service had left behind. There were traces of starvation or dissipation in every movement. His hand trembled as he conveyed the hot soup to his blue lips.

Gradually the color came back to his sunken cheeks, and by the time he had laid in the second plate of curry and drank two whiskey and sodas he looked comparatively sleek and respectable. Even his anxiety for the little sleeper seemed to fade out of his weak face.

I had been watching him narrowly during the meal. I could not make up my mind whether he was a clever actor or only an unfortunate; he might be the latter, and still be what I was certain of,—a scamp.

The wind whistled and roared about the great verandas and into the glassless windows with all the vehemence of a

New England snowstorm. It caught our well-protected *punkah*-lamps, and turned their broad flames into spiral columns of smoke. Ever and again a flash of lightning flared in our eyes, and revealed the water of the narrow straits lashed into a white fury.

I should have been thankful for the company of even a dog on such a night, and think the loafer felt it, for I could see that he was more at ease with every crash of thunder. I tiptoed over to the "little gal," and noted her soft, regular breathing and healthful sleep, undisturbed by the fierce storm outside.

I lit a manila, and handed one to my companion. We puffed a moment in silence, while the boy replenished our glasses.

"Now," I said, tipping my chair back against the wall, "tell me your story."

My guest's face at once assumed the expression of the professional loafer. My faith in him began to wane.

"I am an American," he began glibly enough under the combined effects of the whiskey and dinner, "an old soldier. I fought with Grant in the Wilderness, and—"

"Of course," I interrupted, "and with Sherman in Georgia. I have heard it all by a hundred better talkers than you. Suppose you skip it."

I did not look up, but I was perfectly familiar with the expression of injured innocence that was mantling his face.

He began again in a few minutes, but his voice had lost some of its engaging frankness.

"I am the son of a kind and indulgent mother,—God bless

her. My father died before I knew him—"

I moved uneasily in my chair.

He hurried on:—

"I fell in bad ways in spite of her saintly love, and ran away to sea."

"Look here, my friend," I said, "I am sorry to spoil your little tale, but it is an old one. Can't you give me something new? Now try again."

He looked at me unsteadily under his thin eyebrows, shuffled restlessly in his seat, and said with something like a sob in his voice:—

"Well, sir, I will. You have been kind to me and taken my little gal in; you saved her life, and, for a change, I'll tell you the truth."

He drew himself up a little too ostentatiously, threw his head back, and said proudly:—

"I am a gentleman born."

"Good," I laughed. "Now you are on the right track, and besides you look it."

"Ah! you may sneer," he retorted, "but I tell you the truth."

His face flushed and his lip quivered. He brought his fist down on the table.

"I tell you my father,—ah! but never mind my father." His voice failed him.

"Certainly," I replied. "Only get on with your story."

"I came out to India from Boston as a young man," he continued, "either in '66 or '68, I forget which."

"Try '67," I suggested.

"It was not '67," he exclaimed angrily, "it was either '66 or '68."

"Or some other date. However, that's but a detail. Proceed."

"Sir, you can make sport of me, but what I am telling you is God's truth. May I be struck dead if one lie passes my lips. I came out to plant coffee; I thought, like many others, that I had only to cut down the jungle and put in coffee plants, and make my everlasting fortune."

"And didn't you?" I asked, glancing at his dilapidated old helmet that hung over the corner of the sideboard.

"Look at me!" he burst forth, springing upon his feet, his breast heaving under his blue pajamas.

"Pardon the question," I answered. "Go on, you are doing bravely."

He sank back into his chair with a commendable air of dignity.

"I had a little money of my own," he continued, "and opened up an estate. It promised well, but I soon came to the end of my small capital. I thought I could go to Calcutta and Bombay and Simla, and cultivate my mind by travel and society, while the bushes were growing. Well it ended in the same old way. I got into the *chitties'* hands—they are worse than Jews—at two per cent a month on a mortgage on my estate. Then I went back to it with a determination to pay up my debt, make my estate a

success, and after that to see the world. I worked, sir, like a nigger, and for a time was able to meet my naked creditor, from month to month, hoping all the time against hope for a bumper crop."

"I understand," I said. "Your bumper crop did not come, and your *chitty* did. Where does she come in?" I nodded in the direction of the little sleeper.

He glanced uneasily in the same direction, and a tear gathered in his eye.

"I married on credit, sir, the daughter of an English army officer. It was infernal. But, sir, you would have done likewise. Live under the burning sun of India for four years, struggle against impossibilities and hope against hope, and then have a pair of great hazel eyes look lovingly into yours and a pair of red lips turned up to yours,—and tell me if you would not have closed your eyes to the future, and accepted this precious gift as though it were sent from above?"

The pale, shrunken face of the speaker glowed, and his faded eyes lit up with the light of love.

"We were happy for a time, and the little gal was born, but the bumper crop did not come. Then, sir, I sold farm tools and my horse, and sent the wife to a hill station for her health. I kept the little gal. I stayed to work, as none of my natives ever worked. It was a gay station to which she went. You know the rest,—she never came back. That ended the struggle. I would have shot myself but for the little one. I took her and we wandered here and there, doing odd jobs for a few months at a time. I drifted down to Singapore, hoping to better myself, but, sir, I am about used up. It's hard—hard."

He buried his head in his long, thin fingers, and sat perfectly still.

There was a sound outside above the roar of the wind and the rain. At first faint and intermittent, it grew louder, and continuous, and came close. There was no mistaking it,—the march of booted men.

“What’s that?” asked my companion, with a start.

“Tommy Atkins,” I replied, “the clang of the ammunition boot as big as life.”

His face grew ashy white, and he looked furtively around the room.

“What’s the matter?” I exclaimed, but as I asked, I knew.

I opened the bath-room door and shoved him in.

“Go in there” I said, “and compose some more fairy tales.”

He was scarcely out of sight when the front door was thrown open, and a corporal’s guard, wet yet happy, marched into the room.

The corporal stood with his back to the door, and gave himself mental words of command,—“Eyes left, eyes right,”—then, as a last resource,—“eyes under the table.” He had not noticed the little bundle in the dark corner. He drew himself up and gave the military salute.

“Beg pardon, sir, but we are out for a deserter from the 58th,—Bill Hulish,—we ’ave tracked him ’ere, and with the compliments of the commanding hofficer, we’ll search the ’ouse.”

“Search away,” I answered, as I heard the outside bath-

room door open and close softly.

They returned empty-handed, but not greatly disappointed.

“Wet night, corporal,” I ventured.

“One of the worst as ever I knew, sir,” he replied, eying the whiskey bottle and the two half-drained glasses.

“’Ad a long march, sir, fourteen miles.”

I pushed the bottle toward him, and with a deprecatory salute he turned out a stiff drink.

“’Ere’s to yer ’ealth, sir, an’ may ye always ’ave an extra glass ready for a visitor.”

I smiled, and motioned for his men to do likewise, and then, because he was a man of sweet composure and had not asked any questions as to the extra glass and chair, told him that his bird had flown.

“Bad ’cess to him, sir, ’e’s led us a pretty chase for these last four weeks. If ’e was only a deserter I wouldn’t mind, but ’e’s a kidnapper. Leastways, Tommy Loud’s young’n turned up missin’ the day he skipped, an’ we ain’t seen nothin’ of ’er since.”

“Is this she?” I asked, leading him to the cot.

Hardly looking at the child, he raised her in his arms and kissed her.

“God be praised, sir,” he said with a show of feeling. “We ’ave got her back. I think her mother would ’ave died if we ’ad come back again without her,—but, O my little darlin’, you look cruel bad. Drugged, sir, that’s what she is. Drugged to keep ’er quiet and save food. The blag’ard!”

"But what did he take her for?" I asked.

"Bless you, sir," replied the corporal, "she was his stock in trade. I reckon she's drawn many dibs out of other people's pockets that would 'ave been nestlin' there to-day if it 'adn't 'a' bin for 'er."

Then a broad grin broke over his ruddy features, and he looked at me quizzically.

"But 'e was a great play hactor, sir."

"And a poet," I added enthusiastically.

"'E could beat Kipling romancin', sir." He checked himself, as though ashamed of awarding such meed of praise to his ex-colleague.

"But we must be goin'; orders strict. With your permission, sir, I will leave her with a guard of one man for to-night, and send the ambulance for her in the morning."

He drew up his little file, saluted, and marched out into the rain and wind, with all the cheerfulness of a duck.

I could hear them singing as they crossed the compound and struck into the jungle road:—

> "Oh, it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that,
> an' 'Tommy, go away';
> But it's 'Thank you, Mister Atkins,'
> when the band begins to play,
> The band begins to—"

A peal of thunder that shook the bungalow from its *attap* roof to its *nebong* pillars drowned the melody and drove

me inside.

A Pig Hunt

In the Malayan Jungle

The thermometer stood at 155 degrees in the sun. The dry *lallang* grass crackled and glowed and returned long irregular waves of heat to the quivering metallic dome above.

The sensitive mimosa, at our feet, had long since surrendered to the fierce wooing of the sun-god, submissively folding its leaves and then its branches and putting aside its morning dress of green for one more in keeping with the color of the earth and sky. Even the clamorous cicada had hushed its insistent whir.

We were dressed in brown *kaki* suits. Wide-spreading cork helmets were filled with the stiff varnished leaves of the mango, and wet handkerchiefs were draped from underneath their rims; yet, after an hour of exposure, our flesh ached—it was tender to the touch. The barrel of my Express scorched my hand, and I wrapped my *camerabuna* about it. But then it was no hotter than any other day. In fact, we never gave a thought to the weather.

We were formed in a line, perhaps two miles in length, in a

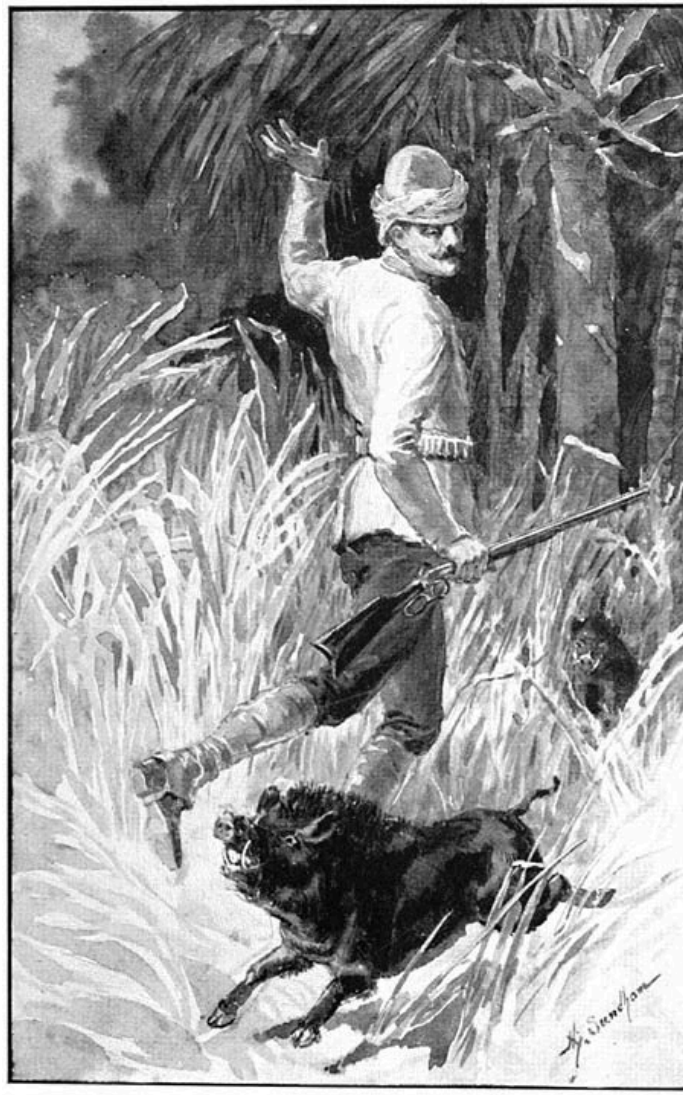
deserted pepper plantation, fronting a jungle of *timboso* trees and rubber-vines. I squatted patiently under the checkered shade of a neglected coffee tree and kept my eyes fixed on the seemingly impenetrable walls of the jungle. A hundred feet to the right and the left, under like protection, were two of my companions, determined like myself to be successful in three points,—to have the first shot at the pigs, to avoid getting shot, or shooting a neighbor. But our minds rose above mental cautions with the first faint halloos of the Hindu *shikaris* on the opposite side of the jungle. In another moment the babel gave place to a confusion of shrieks, howls, yells, laughs, barking of dogs, beating of tins, blowing of horns, explosions of crackers, and a din that represents all that is wild and untamable in three nations. It is a weird, almost appalling prologue. Those laughs!—they are a study—they fairly chill the blood—they would make the fortune of a comic actor—so intense, thrilling, surprising, and seemingly filled with a ghoulish glee. Over and over they would break out clear and distinct above the *tintamarre*. I have never been able to find out whether it belongs to the Malay or the Kling or the Tamil.

The yelling became more distinct. A troop of brown and silver *wah-wahs* swung with their long arms out to the very edge of the jungle and then up to the tops of the highest trees, the while uttering the full, clear note from which they take their name; followed by a troop of gray little jungle monkeys, whistling and scolding at the unwonted disturbance. A colony of cicadas on the limbs of a great *gutta* tree awoke into life and pierced our ears with buzz-saw strains.

In an instant we were all alert,—the heat was forgotten. At any minute a herd of pigs might dart out and on to us, or possibly our drivers might rouse a tiger. The screaming ascended to a delirious pitch—the pigs were discovered! I

threw my cartridge from the magazine into the barrel. It was a 50×95 Express and I had perfect confidence that one ball to a pig was sufficient.

The yelling grew nearer until, with a sudden deploy, one hundred Klings and Malays dashed out into the open, close on the heels of a dozen wild pigs. We could just see their black backs above the grass, as they broke down a little ravine in single file, led by a big, hoary boar with tusks. They were three hundred yards off, but I could not resist the temptation. I brought my rifle to my shoulder and fired twice in rapid succession. Two or three more shots were heard beyond. I threw out the shells as the herd lunged on me. It was so sudden that I was dazed, but fortunately so were the pigs, with the exception of a wary old leader, who made into the jungle behind, almost between my legs. One little fellow threw himself on his haunches for an instant and stared at me. I came to my senses first and put a ball into his wondering eyes. My second shot was so near that it tore away a pound of meat from his shoulder and killed him instantly.



A pig hunt in the jungle

"The wary old leader made into the jungle behind"

The firing had opened up all along the line. The drivers

were pushing in nearer and nearer, beating the grass and clumps of bushes, seemingly regardless of the widely flying balls. I suspect they held our prowess in contempt. I know they looked it, when it was discovered that out of the dozen pigs they had raised, we had allowed over half to escape. Then, too, their lives were insured, in a way; for they knew that their deaths would cost us twenty big Mexican dollars.

Pig-hunting is the one big-game hunt that can be indulged in on the Malay Peninsula without great preparation and danger. Deer and tapirs are scarce. Tigers, or *harimau* as the Malays call them, abound, but live in the depths of the almost inaccessible jungle, and come forth only at rare intervals, except in the case of the man-eaters, who are usually ignominiously caught in pitfalls, very seldom affording true sport. Elephants are still hunted in the native states north of Singapore, but the sport is too expensive for the generality of sportsmen. One of the peculiar attributes of the Malayan tiger is his decided *penchant* for Chinese flesh, repeatedly striking down Chinese coolies in the fields to the exclusion of the Malays or Europeans who are working by their side. Perhaps once a month, a tiger or his skin will be brought into the city by natives, and several times at night I have heard them in the jungle; but to my knowledge only three have been shot by European sportsmen during my residence in the island. So wild pigs really remain the one item of big game.

The pigs live in the jungle bordering plantations in which they can range for pineapples, sweet potatoes, and tapioca root. They are the ordinary wild hog, black in color, and fleet of foot. The older ones have good-sized tusks and show fight when cornered. The lone sportsman has very little chance of obtaining a shot, so they are hunted in large companies of from five to fifteen guns. Such parties generally organize a hunt at least once a week and leave

Singapore early in the morning for an all-day shoot.

The pig hunts organized by the officers of the Royal Artillery are the largest, and as a description of one is a description of all, I will take one up in regular order, rather than quote from many.

We left Singapore at six o'clock in the morning in a four-horse dray. As the sun had not reached the tops of the trees, the atmosphere was mild and pleasant. A half-hour took us outside the great cosmopolitan city, of three hundred thousand inhabitants. The low, cool bungalows with their wide-spreading lawns gave place to the grass-thatched huts of the Chinese coolies, and the omnipresent eating-stalls. A hard-packed road carried us through almost endless cocoanut groves. At intervals a Malay *kampong*, or village, was revealed in the heart of the grove, its queer *attap*-thatched houses raised a man's height from the ground, and connected with it by rickety ladders. Dozens of nude little children played under the shadow of the palms, while the comely faces and *syrah*-stained teeth of their mothers peeped at us from behind low barred windows. The cocoanut groves were superseded by tapioca, pepper, and coffee plantations. At regular distances were neat stations, manned by Malay and Sikh police. The roads over which we dashed were in perfect repair. In another hour we were nine miles from Singapore and near our first "beat."

Major Rich had sent his *shikaris* on the night before to collect beaters, so that when we arrived we were welcomed by a small army of Klings, Tamils, and Malays, and the usual sprinkling of pariah dogs. A wild, strange set are these beaters. They toil not, neither do they spin. Their wives do that occasionally, making a few *sarongs* for home use and an odd one for the market. Cocoanuts, pineapples, a little patch of paddy with a dozen half-wild

chickens, and perchance, if they are not Mohammedans, a pig with its litter, afford them sustenance. For their day's beating they were to receive fifteen cents apiece. They were all ranged in line and counted, after which we took up our march through a plantation of tapioca, the brush standing about level with our heads. Chinese coolies were working about its roots keeping down the great pest of Malayan farmers,—*lallang* grass. The tapioca was broken in places by a few acres of pepper vines and again by neglected coffee shrubs.

Our procession was truly formidable. Fifty or more natives went on ahead making a path. Then we followed, fifteen in number, each with a native to carry his gun. The rear was brought up by twoscore more and half as many dogs. Three-quarters of an hour's walk brought us to our first beat. The head *shikaris* placed us in an open position, from fifty to one hundred yards apart, facing the jungle. The beaters, in the meantime, had gone by a long detour around the jungle to drive whatever it contained within reach of our guns.

In the second of these beats (I described the first in the opening of this chapter) a deer ran out far in advance of the pigs. We caught but a fleeting glimpse of it above the grass. My gun and that of my neighbor went off simultaneously. The deer disappeared. We rushed to the spot and found the leaves dyed with blood. Then commenced a chase, which, although fruitless, was well worth the exertion. All the panorama of tropical life seemed to lay in our tracks. For an half-hour we traversed the rolling plain with its burden of grass. Some smoker dropped a match in it, and in an instant it was all ablaze, spreading away like a whirlwind, burning only the very tips, toward a distant jungle. Then we dove into a bosky wood by a narrow winding path, and through a stream of water. The path was like a tunnel, the dense foliage

shutting it in on both sides and above. The thorns of the rattans reached down and tore our clothes, and long trailing rubber-vines caught up our helmets and held our feet. In a marshy bit of jungle, a small colony of unwieldy sago palms found root, while pitcher-plants and orchids hung from almost every limb. Clumsy gray iguanas and long-tailed lizards of a brilliant green rushed up the trunks of lichen-covered trees. Troops of monkeys went scattering away on all sides, and black squirrels chattered on in the perfect security of the dim obscurity. In a bit of sandy bottom, a silken-haired, zebra-striped tapir scuttled away ere we were half alive to his presence.

Outside was the metallic glare of the Malayan sun once more, now at its height, and another march was before us, over the burning hot *mésa*. At one o'clock we came upon a half-neglected plantation. The bloody trail of the deer led through it. In the centre of the plantation we found a huge wedge-shaped *attap* house for drying pepper, and there we rested.

Our tiffin baskets were six miles away in the dray, and sending after them was out of the question. So we foraged for eatables. Cocoanuts were easily obtained from trees all about, and a little whiskey mixed with its milk made a very refreshing drink. Pineapples, small oranges, limes, papayas, custard apples, and bananas were in large quantities. Our drivers added to this bill of fare by roasting the sweet-potato-like roots of the tapioca. After this impromptu lunch they compounded their quids of areca-nut and lime, and were ready once more to beat up an adjacent jungle for deer, pig, or tiger.

As before, we were soon in position in the open before the jungle and the beaters were yelling at the top of their voices.

I was half dozing in the sun, trying to smoke a Manila cigar that my mouth was too dry to draw, when I was aroused by my neighbor, who called my attention to a file of pigs at the extreme end of the line. I could just see what was going on from the knoll on which I was standing. They were received by Major Rich, one of his subalterns, and his Hindu gun-carrier. One of the file fell at the first volley, two more broke through the line, and the remaining six or seven, led by a fierce old fellow, from whose long tusks the foam dripped, turned up the line and charged point-blank on the next gunner, who fired and missed, but succeeded in keeping them between the line and the jungle. The fourth gun brought down the second pig and wounded the boar in the shoulder. Frantic with rage and pain, the old fellow tore up the ground and grass with his tusks and then, seeming to give up all idea of escape, wheeled sharply around and with his back bristles standing erect and his mouth open, charged directly on to the fifth, who was in the act of throwing the cartridge into the barrel. Taken completely by surprise, the officer gave one lusty yell and started to run in line with the gun on his right. The boar was gaining on him at every step when he tripped and fell. The report of No. 6's Winchester Express rang out almost simultaneously. For an instant we held our breaths, wondering whether the man or boar had been hit. It was a splendid shot and took a steady hand. The boar's shoulder was shattered and his heart reached. Two or three angry grunts and he lay quiet. He weighed close to three hundred pounds. The bristles on his back were white with age. All in all, he was not nice to look at.

As half of our beaters were Mohammedans and so forbidden to touch pork, the burden of carrying our pigs the six miles through *lallang* grass, jungle and swamp land, came hard on our Brahmists. We knew that the only way to make them work was to call them "Sons of dogs"

and walk off and leave them with a parting injunction to "get in by the time we did if they wanted their wages."

This we did without deigning to notice their pathetic gestures, heart-rending appeals and protestations to the "Sons of the Heaven-Born" that they could not lift one hundredth part of such burdens.

In the Court of Johore

The Crowning of a Malayan Prince

Tunku Ibrahim was just past seventeen when his father, the Sultan Abubaker, chose to recognize him as his heir and Crown Prince of Johore.

From the day when the little prince had been deemed old enough to leave his mother and the women's palace until the day he had entered the native artillery as a lieutenant, he had been schooled and trained by the English missionaries and the Tuan Kadi, or Mohammedan high priest, as becomes a son of so illustrious a father.

Tunku Ibrahim had made one trip to England when he was fifteen years old, and with his little cousin, the *Tunku*, or Prince, Othman, had dined with the Queen at Windsor.

So, when the Sultan returned from a long stay at Carlsbad

and found that the Sultana was dead and that Ibrahim had shot up into a man, he said:—

"I am getting to be an old man and may die at any time. I will call all my nobles and people to the palace, and they shall see me place the crown on Ibrahim's head. Then if I die, he will rule, and the British will not take his country from him as long as he is wise and kingly."

Whereupon his Highness sent out invitations to the Governor and all the foreign consuls in Singapore to be his guests and witness the crowning of his son.

We started in quaint little box-like carriages, called *gharries*, long before the fierce Malayan sun had risen above the palms, accomplishing the fourteen miles across the beautiful island in little over an hour.

The diminutive Deli ponies, not larger than Newfoundland dogs, broke into a run the moment we closed the lattice doors, and it was all their half-naked drivers could do to keep their perches on the swaying shafts.

When we arrived at the little half-Malay, half-Chinese village of Kranji, on the shores of the famous old Straits of Malacca, our ponies were panting with heat, and the sun beat down on our white cork helmets with a quivering, naked intensity.

Close up to the shore we found a long, keel boat manned by a dozen Malays in canary-colored suits. An aide-de-camp in a gorgeous uniform of gold and blue came forward and touched his forehead with the back of his brown palm and said in good English:—

"His Highness awaits your excellencies."

We stepped into the boat. The men lightly dipped their

spear-shaped paddles in the tepid water, the rattan oarlocks squeaked shrilly, and the light prow shot out into the strait. We could see the *istana*, or palace, close down to the opposite shore, with the royal standard of white, with black star and crescent in centre, floating above it.

For a moment I felt as though I had invaded some dreamland of my childhood.

As our boat drew up to the iron pier that extended from the broad palace steps out into the straits, the guns from the little fort on the hill above the town boomed out a welcome and the flags of our several countries were run to the tops of the poles. A squad of native soldiers presented arms, and we were conducted up the stone steps, to the cool, dim corridors of the reception or waiting room. Malays in red fezzes and silken *sarongs* that hung about their legs like skirts conducted us along a marble hall to our rooms in a wing of the palace. Crowds were already gathering outside on the palace grounds, and we could look down from our windows and watch them as we bathed, dressed, and drank tea.

The Chinese in their holiday pantaloons and shirts of pink, lavender, and blue silk: outnumbered all the other races; for, strange as it may seem, this Malay Sultan numbers among his 250,000 or 300,000 subjects 175,000 Chinamen. They are as loyal and a great deal more industrious than the Malays, and many of them, styled *Baboos*, do not even know their native tongue.

The Malays, dressed in gayly colored *sarongs* and *bajus* (jackets), with little rimless caps on their heads, squatted on their heels and chewed betel-nut, with eyes half closed and mouths distended.

The Arab traders and shopkeepers were grouped about in

little knots, gravely conversing and watching the files of *gharries* or carriages, and even rickshaws, that were bringing Malay *unkus* (princes not of the royal blood), *patos* (peers), holy men, and rich Chinese mandarins to the steps that led up to the plaza before the throne-room.

The palace was two stories high, long and narrow. The interior rooms were separated from the outer walls by wide, airy corridors. The lattice-work windows were without glass and were arranged to admit the breezes from the ocean and ward off the searching rays of the equatorial sun. In these dusky corridors were long rattan chairs, divans, and tables covered with refreshments, and along its walls were arranged weapons of war and chase, Japanese suits of straw armor, Javanese shields, and Malay *krises* and *limbings*.

In a little court at the end of our corridor, where a fountain splashed over a clump of lotus flowers and blue water lilies, a long-armed silver *wah-wah* monkey played with a black Malay cat that had a kink in its tail like the joint in a stovepipe, and chased the clucking little gray lizards up the polished walls.

The gorgeous aide stared in poorly concealed wonderment, when he entered to conduct us to the grand salon, at my plain evening dress suit, destitute of gold lace or decorations, but he was too polite to say anything, and I humbly followed my uniformed colleagues through the long suite of rooms. It would have been useless for me to have tried to explain the great American doctrine of "Jeffersonian simplicity." He would have shrugged his narrow shoulders, which would have meant, "When you are among Romans, you should do as Romans do."

In the grand salon, more than in any other part of the palace, one feels that he is in the home of an Oriental

prince whose tastes far outrun his own dominions.

Velvet carpets from Holland, divans from Turkey, rugs from Bokhara, tapestries from Persia, and lace from France mingle with embroideries from China, cut glass from England, and rare old Satsuma ware from Japan. On a grand square German piano is a mass of music in which the masterpieces of all countries have equal rights with the national anthem of Johore.

Going directly through a mass of Oriental drapery, we are in the throne-room, where are gathered the nobility of the little Sultanate.

Amid the crash of music and the booming of guns the Sultan took his seat in one of the gilded chairs on the dais, with the English Governor on his left. Ranged about the burnished walls of the great room, several files deep, were the nobility of the kingdom, the ministers of state, and officers of the army and navy, the space back of them being filled with Chinese mandarins and *towkoys*, and rich native merchants in their picturesque costumes. In front of the nobility, standing in the form of a square, were the sons of the *datos* each bearing golden, jewel-studded *chogans*, spears, *krises,* and maces. Inside the square stood the fifteen consuls. Back of the throne were four young princes, two bearing each the golden bejewelled *kris* of the Malay, another the golden sword of state, and the fourth the cimeter of the Prophet.

Up to the steps of the throne came the young prince, dressed in the uniform of a lieutenant of artillery, with the royal order of Darjah Krabat ablaze with jewels on his breast. He was slightly taller than his father, the Sultan, straight, graceful, and handsome, with big, brown eyes and strongly marked features. He was nervous and agitated, and his lips trembled as he bent on one knee and kissed his

Highness's hand.

Above our heads in the gilded walls, behind a grated opening, were Inche Kitega, the Sultan's beautiful Circassian wife, and the women of the court. We could see their black eyes as they peered curiously down. It was only when the Dato Mentri, or Prime Minister, stood up and asked his people if they wished the young *Tunku* to be their future lord that we could hear their shrill voices mingling with the "*Suku, suku*" ("We wish it, we wish it"), of the men.

It is only the wives of the nobles that are secluded in the *istana isaras*, or women palaces, according to Mohammedan law; the women of the poor are as free as the more civilized countries of Europe. They bask in the sun with their brown babies on their laps, or wander among the cocoanuts that always surround their palm-thatched homes, happy and contented, with no thought for the morrow. The trees furnish them their food, and a few hours before their looms of dark *kamooning* wood each week keep them supplied with their one article of dress—the *sarong*. They never heard of the Bible, but they are very religious, and at sunrise and sunset, at the deep-toned boom of the hollow log that hangs before their little thatched mosques, they fall on their faces and pray to "Allah, the All Merciful and Loving Kind."

When the Crown Prince had stepped modestly back among his brothers and cousins, a holy man in green robes and turban came forward and read an address in Arabic. He recited the glories of the Prophet, the promises of the Koran, and then told of the ancient greatness of Johore,—how it once ruled the great peninsula that forever points like a lean, disjointed finger down into the heart of the greatest archipelago of the world,—how its ruler was looked up to and made treaties with, by the kings of

Europe,—of the coming of the thieving Portuguese and the brutal Dutch,—of the dark, bloody years when the deposed descendants of the once proud Emperors of Johore turned to piracy,—of the new days that commenced when that great Englishman, Sir Stamford Raffles, founded Singapore,—down to the glorious reign of the present just ruler, Abubaker.

Our eyes wandered from time to time out through the cool marble courts and tried vainly to pierce the botanic chaos that crowded close up to the palace grounds. Banian and sacred waringhan trees covered great stretches of ground, and dropped their fantastic roots into the steaming earth like living stalactites. The fan-shaped, water-hoarding traveller's palm formed a background for the brilliant magenta-colored bougainvillea. The dim, translucent depths of an orchid-house lured us on, or a great pond covered with the sacred lotus, blue lilies, and the flush-colored cups of the superb Victoria regia commanded our admiration. Palms, flowering shrubs, ferns, and creepers rioted on all sides. Monkeys swung above in the ropelike tendrils of the rubber-vines, and spotted deer gamboled beneath the shade of mango trees.

The brilliant audience listened with bated breath to the dramatic recital of their nation's story. Even we, who did not understand a word, were impressed by their flushed faces and eager attention, and when the band in the columned corridors beyond broke forth into the national anthem of Johore and the vast concourse outside took up the shouts of fealty that began within, I, for one, felt an almost irresistible desire to join in the shouts and do honor to the kindly old Sultan and his graceful son.

After his Highness, the Sultan, had spoken, through the mouth of his Prime Minister, to the nobles, and commended his son to their care, we crowded forward and

congratulated him in the names of our respective countries.

We filed through the grand salon, with its luxurious medley of divans, tapestries, and rugs, through a great hall whose walls were hung with heroic-sized paintings of the English royal family, down a flight of steps, across the marble reception room, and into the open doors of the royal dining room.

From its polished ceiling of black billion wood hung great white *punkahs*, which half-nude Indians on the outside kept gently swaying back and forth.

In the centre of the vast table stood a golden urn filled with delicate maidenhair ferns and dragon orchids. Against a great plate-glass mirror, at the far end, rested massive salvers of gold, engraven with the arms of Johore, and in its flawless depths shone the jewels that decked the entering throng and the splendid service of plate that dazzled our eyes.

Around his Highness's throat was a collar of diamonds and on his hands and in the decorations that covered his breast were diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, of almost priceless value. Each button of his coat and low-cut vest was a diamond, and from the front of his rimless cap waved a plume of diamonds. On his wrists were heavy gold bracelets of Malayan workmanship, and his fingers were cramped with almost priceless rings. In his buttonhole blazed a diamond orchid. The handle and scabbard of his sword were a solid mass of precious stones. Altogether this little known Oriental potentate possessed $10,000,000 worth of diamonds, the second largest collection on earth.

In personal appearance his Highness compared favorably with the best representatives of the Anglo-Saxon race. He was five feet eight in height, well built, with clean-cut,

kindly features, in color nearer the Spanish type than the Indian. His hands and feet were small, forehead high and full, lips thin, and nose aquiline, his hair and mustache iron gray. He spoke good English, and was able to converse in French and German. In every-day dress he affected the English Prince Albert suit, to which he added a narrow silk *sarong* and a rimless black cap.

Besides being a lover of jewels, his Highness was a lover of good horseflesh and of yachts. His stud comprised two hundred horses, among which were fleet Arabians, sturdy little Deli ponies, thoroughbred Australians, and Indian galloways. Twice a year he offered a cup at the Singapore jockey races, and entered a half dozen of his best runners. At his tent on the grounds he dispensed champagne, ices, and cakes, and his native band of thirty pieces played alternately with the regimental band from the English barracks.

His three hundred ton steam-launch was built on the Clyde. Besides the Sultan's saloon on the lower deck, which was furnished befitting a king, there were cabins for ten people. The promenade deck was under an awning, and was furnished with a heavy rosewood dining-table and long chairs. She carried four guns of long range.

The revenue of Johore amounts to six million dollars a year, to which the Sultan's private property in Singapore adds nearly a half million more. The bulk of the national revenue is raised from opium, spirits, and gambling. The scheme of taxation is simple, but most effective. Any Chinaman who has a longing for the pipe pays into his Highness's treasury one dollar a month, and is granted a permit to buy and smoke opium; another monthly dollar and he is licensed to drink.

The gambling privilege is given to the highest bidder, and

he has the monopoly for the kingdom. There is also a small export tax on gambier and tin. On the other hand, any immigrant that wishes to settle and open a farm of any kind is given all the ground he can work, rent free, to have and to hold as long as he keeps it under cultivation. Should he leave, it reverts with all its improvements to the crown.

The government is autocratic, but tempered and kept in sympathy with the English ideas of justice as seen in the great colonies that surround it.

The dinner throughout was European, save for the one national dish, curry. Every Malay, from the poorest fisherman along the mangrove-fretted lagoon to the chef of his Highness's kitchen, justly boasts of the excellence of his curry and the number of *sambuls* he can make.

First came a golden bowl filled with rice, as white and as light as snow; then another, in which was a gravy of yellow curry powder, choice bits of fowl, and plump, fresh slices of egg-plant. Then came the *sambuls*, or condiments, more than forty varieties, in little circular dishes of Japanese ware on big silver trays. There were fish-roes, ginger, and dried fish, or "Bombay duck," duck's eggs hashed with spices, chutney, peppers, grated cocoanut, anchovies, browned crumbs, chicken livers, fried bananas, barley sprouts, onions, and many more, that were mixed and stirred into the spongy rice until your taste was baffled and your senses bewildered.

We knew that the curry was coming, so we passed courses that were as expensive and rare in this equatorial land as the fruit of the *durians* would be in New York,—mutton from Shanghai, turkey from Siam, beef from Australia, and oysters from far up the river Maur. We felt that besides being a pleasure to ourselves it was a compliment to our royal host to partake generously of his national dish.

"This service," said the old Tuan Hakim, or chief justice, pointing to the gold plate off which we were dining, "is the famous Ellinborough plate that once belonged to that strange woman, Lady Ellinborough. His Highness attended the auction of her things in Scotland. Do you see the little Arabic character on the rim of each? It is the late Sultana's name. His Highness telegraphed to her for the money to pay for it, and she telegraphed back two hundred thousand dollars, with the request that her name be engraved on each. Then she presented them to her husband. The Sultana was very rich in her own right, and left the Sultan over two million dollars when she died."

Throughout the long dinner the native band played the airs of Europe and America, intermixed with bits of weird Malayan song. After we had lighted our cigars from the golden censer, the British Governor arose and proposed the health of the Sultan and the young heir apparent. His Highness raised his glass of pineapple juice to his lips in acknowledgment, and said smilingly to me as the Prime Minister said the magic word that stirs every Englishman's heart,—

"The Queen!"

"Your people think all Orientals very bad."

I protested.

"Oh, yes, you do; that is why you send so many missionaries among us. But," he went on pleasantly, "look around my table. Not one of my court has touched the wine. A Mohammedan never drinks. Can you say as much for your people?"

Then he raised his glass once more to his lips and said quietly, while his eyes twinkled at my confusion:—

"Tell your great President that Abubaker, Sultan of Johore, drank his health in simple pineapple juice."

As the sun sank behind the misty dome of Mount Pulei we embarked once more at the broad palace steps in the royal barges, amid the booming of guns and the strains of the international "God Save the Queen," "My Country, 'tis of Thee," and bared our heads to the royal standard of Johore that floated so proudly above the palace, thankful for this short peep into the heart of an Oriental court.

So the young Prince received the crown from the hands of his father. To-day, the bones of that grand old statesman, the Sultan of Johore, rest beside those of his royal fathers within the shadow of the mosque.

In 1819 when Sir Stamford Raffles purchased the island on which Singapore now stands from the father of the late Sultan of Johore, the royal palace was a palm-thatched bungalow, the country an unbroken jungle, and the inhabitants pirates and fishermen by turns; the notorious Strait of Malacca was infested with long, keen, swift pirate *praus*, and the snake-like *kris* menaced the merchant marine of the world.

The advancement of the United States has not been more rapid since that date than the advancement of Johore. The *attap istana*, or palace, has given place to a series of palaces that rival those of many a much better-known country; the jungle has given place to plantations of gambier, tea, coffee, and pepper; the few elephant tracks and forest paths, to a network of macadamized roads and projected railways; and the native *praus*, to English-built barks and deeply laden cargo steamers.

Two hundred thousand hard-working, money-making Chinese have been added to the thirty-five thousand Malay aborigines, and the revenue of this remnant of an empire is far greater than was the revenue of the original state.

It remains to be seen whether the young Sultan will follow in the footsteps of his father and preserve to Johore the distinction of being, with the one exception of Siam, the only independent native kingdom in southern Asia. One misstep and he will become but a dependency of the great British Empire, a king only in name.

In the Golden Chersonese

A Peep at the City of Singapore

Could an American boy, like a prince in the Arabian Nights, be taken by a genie from his warm bed in San Francisco or New York and awakened in the centre of Raffles Square, in Singapore, I will wager that he would be sadly puzzled to even give the name of the continent on which he had alighted.

Neither the buildings, the people, or the vehicles would aid him in the least to decide.

Enclosing the four sides of the little banian-tree shaded park in which he stands are rows of brick, white-faced, high-jointed go-downs. Through their glassless windows great white *punkahs* swing back and forth with a ceaseless regularity. Standing outside of each window, a tall, graceful *punkah-wallah* tugs at a rattan withe, his naked limbs shining like polished ebony in the fierce glare of the Malayan sun.

For a moment, perhaps, the boy thinks himself in India, possibly at Simla, for he has read some of Rudyard Kipling's stories.

Back under the portico-like verandas, whose narrow breadths take the place of sidewalks, are little booths that look like bay windows turned inside out. On the floor of each sits a Turk, cross-legged, or an Arab, surrounded by a heterogeneous assortment of wares, fez caps, brass finger-bowls, a praying rug, a few boxes of Japanese tooth-picks, some rare little bottles of Arab essence, a betel-nut box, and a half dozen piles of big copper cents, for all shopkeepers are money-changers.

The merchant gathers his flowing party-colored robes about him, tightens the turban head, and draws calmly at his water-pipe while a bevy of Hindu and Tamil women bargain for a new stud for their noses, a showy amulet, or a silver ring for their toes.

Squatting right in the way of all passers is a Chinese travelling restaurant that looks like two flour barrels, one filled with drawers, the other containing a small charcoal fire. The old *cookee*, with his queue tied neatly up about his shaven head, takes a variety of mixtures from the drawers,—bits of dried fish, seaweed, a handful of spaghetti, possibly a piece of shark's fin, or better still a lump of bird's nest, places them in the kettle, as he yells from time to time, "*Machen, machen*" (eating, eating).

Next to the Arab booth is a Chinese lamp shop, then a European dry-goods store, an Armenian law office, a Japanese bazaar, a foreign consulate.

A babble of strange sounds and a jargon of languages salute the astonished boy's ears.

In the broad well-paved streets about him a Malay *syce*, or driver, is trying to urge his spotted Deli pony, which is not larger than a Newfoundland dog, in between a big, lumbering two-wheeled bullock-cart, laden with oozing

bags of vile-smelling gambier, and a great patient water buffalo that stands sleepily whipping the gnats from its black, almost hairless hide, while its naked driver is seated under the trees in the square quarrelling and gambling by turns.

The *gharry*, which resembles a dry-goods box on wheels, set in with latticed windows, smashes up against the ponderous hubs of the bullock-cart. The meek-eyed bullocks close their eyes and chew their cuds, regardless of the fierce screams of the Malay or the frenzied objurgations of their driver.

But no one pays any attention to the momentary confusion. A party of Jews dressed in robes of purple and red that sweep the street pass by, without giving a glance at the wild plunging of the half-wild pony. A Singhalese jeweller is showing his rubies and cat's-eyes to a party of Eurasian, or half-caste clerks, that are taking advantage of their master's absence from the godown to come out into the court to smoke a Manila cigarette and gossip. The mottled tortoise-shell comb in the vender's black hair, and his womanish draperies, give him a feminine aspect.

An Indian *chitty*, or money-lender, stands talking to a brother, supremely unconscious of the eddying throng about. These *chitties* are fully six feet tall, with closely shaven heads and nude bodies. Their dress of a few yards of gauze wound about their waists, and red sandals, would not lead one to think that they handle more money than any other class of people in the East. They borrow from the great English banks without security save that of their caste name, and lend to the Eurasian clerks just behind them at twelve per cent a month. If a *chitty* fails, he is driven out of the caste and becomes a pariah. The caste make up his losses.

Dyaks from Borneo idle by. Parsee merchants in their tall, conical hats, Chinese rickshaw runners and cart coolies, Tamil road-menders, Bugis, Achinese, Siamese, Japanese, Madras serving-men, negro firemen, Lascar sailors, throng the little square,—the agora of the commercial life of the city.

Such is Singapore, embracing all the races of Asia and Europe. Is it any wonder that the American boy is bewildered, standing there under the great banian tree with a Malay in *sarong* and *kris* by his side, singing with his *syrah*-stained lips the glorious promises of the Koran?

Look on the map of Asia for the southernmost point of the continent, and you will find it at the tip of the Malay Peninsula,—a giant finger that points down into the heart of the greatest archipelago in the world. At the very end of this peninsula, like a sort of cut-off joint of the finger, is the little island of Singapore, which is not over twenty-five miles from east to west, and does not exceed fifteen miles in width at its broadest point.

The famous old Straits of Malacca, which were once the haunts of the fierce Malayan pirates, separate the island from the mainland and the Sultanate of Johore.

The shipping that once worked its way through these narrow straits, in momentary fear that its mangrove-bound shores held a long, swift pirate *prau*, now goes further south and into the island-guarded harbor before Singapore.

Nothing can be more beautiful than the sea approach to Singapore. As you enter the Straits, the emerald-green of a bevy of little islands obstructs the vision, and affords a

grateful relief to the almost blinding glare of the Malayan sky, and the metallic reflections of the ocean.

Some seem only inhabited by a graceful waving burden of strange, tropical foliage, and by a band of chattering monkeys; on others you detect a Malay *kampong*, or village, its umbrella-like houses of *attap*, close down to the shore, built high up on poles, so that half the time their boulevards are but vast mud-holes, the other half—Venice, filled with a moving crowd of *sampans* and fishing *praus*. A crowd of bronzed, naked little figures sport within the shadow of a maze of drying nets, and flee in consternation as the black, log-like head and cruel, watchful eyes of a crocodile glide quietly along the mangrove roots.

On another island you discern the grim breastworks and the frowning mouth of a piece of heavy ordnance.

Soon the island of Singapore reveals itself in a long line of dome-like hills and deep-cut shadows, whose stolid front quickly dissolves. The tufted tops of a sentinel palm, the wide-spreading arms of the banian, clumps of green and yellow bamboo, and the fan-shaped outlines of the traveller's palm become distinguishable. As the great, red, tropical sun rises from behind the encircling hills, the monotony of the foliage is relieved in places by objects which it all but hid from view. The granite minaret of the Mohammedan mosque, the carved dome of a Buddhist temple, the slender spire of an English cathedral, the bold projections of Government House, and the wide, white sides of the Municipal buildings all hold the eye.

Then a maze of strange shipping screens the nearing shore —the military masts and yards of British and Dutch men-of-war, the high-heeled, shoe-like lines of Chinese junks, innumerable Malay and Kling *sampans*, and great, unwieldy Borneo *tonkangs*.

For six miles along the wharves and for six miles back into the island extend the municipal limits of the city. Two hundred thousand people live within these limits; while outside, over the rest of the island along the sea-coast, in fishing villages, and in the interior on plantations of tapioca and pepper, live a hundred thousand more. Of these three hundred thousand over one hundred and seventy thousand are Chinese and only fifteen hundred are Europeans.

Grouped about Raffles Square, and facing the Bund, are the great English, German, and Chinese houses that handle the three hundred million dollars' worth of imports and exports that pass in and out of the port yearly, and make Singapore one of the most important marts of the commercial world.

Beyond, and back from the Square, is Tanglin, or the suburbs, where the government officials and the heads of these great firms live in luxurious bungalows, surrounded by a swarm of retainers.

Let us drive from Raffles Square through this cosmopolitan city and out to Tanglin. Beginning at Cavanagh Bridge, at one end of which stands the great Singapore Club and the Post Office, is the ocean esplanade,—the pride of the city. It encloses a public playground of some fifteen acres, reclaimed from the sea at an expense of over two hundred thousand dollars. Every afternoon when the heat of the day has fallen from 150° to 80°, the European population meets on this esplanade park to play tennis, cricket, and football, and to promenade, gossip, and listen to the music of the regimental or man-of-war band.

The drive from the sea, up Orchard Road to the Botanic Gardens, carries you by all the diversified life of the city. The Chinese restaurant is omnipresent. By its side sits a

naked little bit of bronze, with a basket of sugar-cane—each stick, two feet long, cleaned and scraped, ready for the hungry and thirsty rickshaw coolies, who have a few quarter cents with which to gratify their appetites. On every veranda and in every shady corner are the Kling and Chinese barbers. They carry their barber-shops in a kit or in their pockets, and the recipient of their skill finds a seat as best he may. The barber is prepared to shave your head, your face, trim your hair, braid your queue, and pull the hairs out of your nose and ears.

There is no special quarter for separate trades. Madras tailor shops rub shoulders with Malay blacksmith shops, while Indian wash-houses join Manila cigar manufactories.

Once past the commercial part of the ride, the great bungalows of the European and Chinese merchants come into view. The immediate borders of the road itself reveal nothing but a dense mass of tropical verdure and carefully cut hedges, but at intervals there is a wide gap in the hedge, and a road leads off into the seeming jungle. At every such entrance there are posts of masonry, and a plate bearing the name of the manor and its owner.

At the end of a long aisle of palms and banians you see a bit of wide-spreading veranda, and the full-open doors of a cool, black interior. Acres of closely shaven lawns, dotted with flowering shrubs of the brightest reds, deepest purples, and fieriest solferinos, beds of rich-hued foliage plants, and cool, green masses of ferns meet your eye.

Perhaps you spy the inevitable tennis-court, swarming with players, and bordered with tables covered with tea and sweets. Red-turbaned Malay *kebuns*, or gardeners, are chasing the balls, and scrupulously clean Chinese “boys” are passing silently among the guests with trays of eatables.

Dozens of *gharries* dodge past. Hundreds of rickshaws pull out of the way.

A great landau, drawn by a pair of thoroughbred Australian horses, driven by a Malay *syce*, and footman in full livery, and containing a bare-headed Chinese merchant, in the simple flowing garments of his nation, dashes along. The victoria and the dog-cart of the European, and the universal palanquin of the Anglo-Indian, form a perfect maze of wheels.

Suddenly the road is filled with a long line of bullock-carts. You swing your little pony sharply to one side, barely escaping the big wooden hub of the first cart. The *syce* springs down from behind, and belabors the native bullock driver, who, paying no attention to the blows rained upon his naked back, belabors his beasts in turn, calling down upon their ungainly humps the curses of his religion. The scene is so familiar that only a "globe-trotter" would notice it. Yet to me there is nothing more truly artistic, or more typically Indian in India, than a long line of these bullock-carts, laden with the products of the tropics,—pineapples, bananas, gambier, coffee,—urged on by a straight, graceful driver, winding slowly along a palm and banian shaded road. We would meet such processions at every turning, but never without recalling glorious childish pictures of the Holy Land and Bible scenery as we painted them, while our father read of a Sunday morning out of the old "Domestic Bible,"—we children pronounce it "*Dom*-i-stick,"—how the Lord said unto Moses, "Go take twenty fat bullocks and offer them as a sacrifice." As we would see these "twenty fat bullocks" time and again, I confess, with a feeling of reluctance, that some of the gilt and rose tint was rubbed from our childish pictures, and that a realistic artist drawing from the life before him would not deck out the patient subject in quite our extravagant colors.

The color of the Indian bullock varies. Some are a dirty white, some a cream color, some almost pink, and a few are of the darker shades. They are about the size of our cows, seldom as large as a full-grown ox. Their horns, which are generally tipped with curiously carved knobs, and often painted in colors, are as diversified in their styles of architecture as are the horns of our cattle, though they are more apt to be straight and V-shaped. Their necks are always "bowed to the yoke," to once more use biblical phraseology, and seem almost to invite its humiliating clasp. Above their front legs is the mark of their antiquity, the great clumsy, flabby, fleshy, tawny hump, always swaying from side to side, keeping time to every plodding step of its sleepy owner. This seemingly useless mountain of flesh serves as a cushion against which rests a yoke. Not the natty yoke of our rural districts, but a simple pole, with a pin of wood through each end, to ride on the outside of the bullocks' necks. The burden comes against the projecting hump when the team pulls. To the centre of this yoke is tied, with strong withes of rattan, the pole of a cart, that in this nineteenth century is generally only to be seen in national museums, preserved as a relic of the first steps in the art of wagon building. And yet as a cart it is not to be despised: all the heavy traffic of the colonies is done within its rude board sides. It has two wheels, with heavy square spokes that are held on to a ponderous wooden axle-tree by two wooden pins. A platform bottom rests on the axle-tree, and two fence-like sides.

The genie of the cart, the hewer of wood and drawer of water, is a tall, wiry, bronze-colored Hindu. He has a yard of white gauze about his waist, and another yard twisted up into a turban on his head. The dictates of fashion do not interest him. He does not plod along year in and year out behind his team for the pittance of sixty cents per day, to squander on the outside of his person. Not he. He has a

wife up near Simla. He hopes to go back next year, and buy a bit of ground back from the hill on the Allabadd road from his father-in-law, old Mohammed Mudd. They have cold weather up in Simla, and he knows of a certain gown he is going to buy of a Chinaman in the bazaar. But his bullocks lag, and he saws on the *gamooty* rope that is attached to their noses, and beats them half consciously with his rattan whip. Ofttimes he will stand stark upright in the cart for a full half-hour, with his rattan held above his head in a threatening attitude, and talk on and on to his animals, apotheosizing their strength and patience, telling them how they are sacred to Buddha, how they are the companions of man, and how they shall have an extra *chupa* of paddy when the sun goes down, and he has delivered to the merchant *sahib* on the quay his load of gambier; or he reproves them for their slowness and want of interest, and threatens them with the rod, and tells them to look how he holds it above them. If in the course of the harangue one of the dumb listeners pauses to pick a mouthful of young *lallang* grass by the roadside, the softly crooning tones give place to a shriek of denunciation.

The agile Kling springs down from his improvised pulpit, and rushes at the offender, calls him the offspring of a pariah dog, shows him the rattan, rubs it against his nose, threatening to cut him up with it into small pieces, and to feed the pieces to the birds. Then he discharges a volley of blows on the sleek sides of the offender, that seem to have little more effect than to raise a cloud of tiger gnats, and to cause the recipient to bite faster at the tender herbs.

As the bullock-cart that has blocked our way, and at the same time inspired this description, shambles along down the shady road, and out of the reach of the *syce's* arms, the driver slips quietly up the pole of the cart until a hand rests on either hump, and commences to talk in a half-aggrieved, half-caressing tone to his team. Our *syce*

translates. “He say bullock very bad to go to sleep before the palanquin of the Heaven-Born. If they no be better soon, their souls will no become men. He say he sorry that they make the great American *sahib* angry.”

The singular trio passes on, the driver praising and reprimanding by turns in the soft, musical tongue of his people, the historic beasts swinging lazily along, regardless of their illustrious past, all unconscious of the fact that their names are embalmed in sacred writ and Indian legend, and rounding a corner of the broad, red road, are lost to view amid the olive-green shadows of a clump of gently swaying bamboo. To me, for the moment, they seem to disappear, like phantoms, into the mists of the dim centuries, from out of which my imagination has called them forth.

Soon you are at the wide-open gates of the Botanic Garden. A perfect riot of strange tropical foliage bursts upon the view. The clean, red road winds about and among avenues of palms, waringhans, dark green mangosteens, casuarinas, and the sweet-smelling hibiscus, all alike covered with a hundred different parasitic vines and ferns. Artificial lakes and moats are filled with the giant pods of the superb Victoria regia, and the flesh-colored cups of the lotus.

In the translucent green twilight of the flower-houses a hundred varieties of the costly orchids thrive—not costly here. A shipload can be bought of the natives for three cents apiece.

Walks carry you out into the dim aisles of the native jungle. Monkeys, surprised at your footsteps, spring from limb to limb, and swing, chattering, out of sight in a mass of rubber-vines. Splendid macadamized roads, that are kept in perfect repair by a force of naked Hindus and an

iron roller drawn by six unwilling, hump-backed bullocks, spread out over the island in every direction. Leave one at any point outside the town, and plunge into the bordering jungle, and you are liable to meet a tiger or a herd of wild boar. The tigers swim across the straits from the mainland, and occasionally strike down a Chinaman. It is said that if a Chinaman, a Malay, and a European are passing side by side through a field, the tiger will pick out the Chinaman to the exclusion of the other two.

Acres upon acres of pineapples stretch away on either hand, while patches of bananas and farms of coffee are interspersed with spice trees and sago swamps.

This road system is the secret of the development of the agriculture, and one of the secrets of the rapid growth of the great English colonies. Were it not for the great black python, that lies sleeping in the road in front of you, or the green iguana that hangs in a *timboso* tree over your head, or a naked runner pulling a rickshaw, you might think you were travelling the wide asphaltum streets of Washington.

The home of the European in Singapore is peculiar to the country. The parks about their great bungalows are small copies of the Botanic Gardens—filled with all that is beautiful in the flora of the East. From five to twenty servants alone are kept to look after its walks and hedges and lawns.

A bungalow proper may consist of but a half-dozen rooms, and yet look like a vast manor house. It is the generous sweep of the verandas running completely around the house that lends this impression. Behind its bamboo *chicks* you retire on your return from the office. The Chinese "boy" takes your pipe-clayed shoes and cork helmet, and brings a pair of heelless grass slippers. If a friend drop in, you never think of inviting him into your richly furnished

drawing-room, but motion him to a long rattan chair, call "Boy, bring the master a cup of tea," and pass a box of Manila cigars.

Bungalows are one story high, with a roof of palm thatch, and are raised above the ground from two to five feet by brick pillars, leaving an open space for light and air beneath. Nearly every day it rains for an hour in torrents. The hot, steaming earth absorbs the water, and the fierce equatorial sun evaporates it, only to return it in a like shower the next day. So every precaution must be taken against dampness and dry-rot.

In every well-ordered bungalow seven to nine servants are an absolute necessity, while three others are usually added from time to time. The five elements, if I may so style them, are the "boy," or boys, the cook and his helpers, the horseman, the water-carrier, the gardener, and the maid. The adjuncts are the barber, the wash man, the tailor, and the watchman. In a mild way, you are at the mercy of these servants. Their duties are fixed by caste, one never intruding on the work of another. You must have all or none. Still this is no hardship. Only newcomers ever think, of trying to economize on servant bills. The record of the thermometer is too appalling, and you speedily become too dependent on their attentions.

The Chinese "boy"—he is always the "boy" until he dies —is the presiding genius of the house. He it is who brings your tea and fruit to the bedside at 6 A.M., and lays out your evening suit ready for dinner, puts your studs in your clean shirt, brings your slippers, knows where each individual article of your wardrobe is kept, and, in fact, thinks of a hundred and one little comforts you would never have known of, had he not discovered them. He is your *valet de chambre*, your butler, your steward and your general agent, your interpreter and your directory. He

controls the other servants with a rod of iron, but bows to the earth before the mem, or the master. For his ten Mexican dollars a month he takes all the burdens from your shoulders, and stands between you and the rude outside polyglot world. He is a hero-worshipper, and if you are a *Tuan Besar*—great man—he will double his attentions, and spread your fame far and wide among his brother majordomos.

But a description of each member of the *ménage* and their duties would be in a large measure the description of the odd, complex life of the East.

The growth of Singapore since its founding by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819 would do honor to the growth of one of our Western cities.

Within three months after the purchase of the ground from the Sultan of Johore, Raffles wrote to Lord Warren Hastings, the Governor:—

"We have a growing colony of nearly five thousand souls," and a little later one of his successors wrote apologetically to Lord Auckland, discussing some project relating to Singapore finance;—

"These details may appear to your Lordship petty, but then everything connected with these settlements is petty, except their annual surplus cost to the Government of India."

To-day the city and colony has a population of over one million, and a revenue of five million dollars—a magnificent monument to its founder's foresight!

From a commercial and strategic stand-point, the site of the city is unassailable. When the English and the Dutch

divided the East Indies by drawing a line through the Straits of Malacca,—the English to hold all north, the Dutch all south,—the crafty Dutchman smiled benignly, with one finger in the corner of his eye, and went back to his coffee and tobacco trading in the beautiful islands of Java and Sumatra, pitying the ignorance of the Englishman, who was contented with the swampy jungles of an unknown and savage neck of land, little thinking that inside of a half century all his products would come to this same despised district for a market, while his own colonies would retrograde and gradually pass into the hands of the English.

Singapore is one of the great cities of the world, the centre of all the East Indian commerce, the key of southern Asia, and one of the massive links in the armored chain with which Great Britain encircles the globe.

A Fight with Illanum Pirates

The Yarn of a Yankee Skipper

The *Daily Straits Times* on the desk before me contained a vivid word picture of the capture of the British steamship *Namoa* by three hundred Chinese pirates, the guns of Hong Kong almost within sight, and the year of our Lord 1890 just drawing to a close. The report seemed incredible.

I pushed the paper across the table to the grizzled old captain of the *Bunker Hill* and continued my examination of the accounts of a half-dozen sailors of whom he was intent on getting rid. By the time I had signed the last discharge and affixed the consular seal he had finished the article and put it aside with a contemptuous “Humph!” expressive of his opinion of the valor of the crew and officers. I could see that he was anxious for me to give him my attention while he related one of those long-drawn-out stories of perhaps a like personal experience. I knew the symptoms and sometimes took occasion to escape, if business or inclination made me forego the pleasure. To-day I was in a mood to humor him.

There is always something deliciously refreshing in a sailor’s yarn. I have listened to hundreds in the course of my consular career, and have yet to find one that is dull or prosy. They all bear the imprint of truth, perhaps a trifle overdrawn, but nevertheless sparkling with the salt of the sea and redolent of the romance of strange people and distant lands. In listening, one becomes almost dizzy at the rapidity with which the scene and personnel change. The icebergs and the aurora borealis of the Arctic give place to the torrid waters and the Southern Cross of the South Pacific. A volcanic island, an Arabian desert, a tropical jungle, and the breadth and width of the ocean serve as the theatre, while a Fiji Islander, an Eskimo, and a turbaned Arab are actors in a half-hour’s tale. In interest they rival Verne, Kingston, or Marryat. All they lack is skilled hands to dress them in proper language.

I

The Captain's Yarn

The captain helped himself to one of my manilas and began:—

I've nothing to say about the fate of the poor fellows on the *Namoa*, seeing the captain was killed at the first fire, but it looks to me like a case of carelessness which was almost criminal. The idea of allowing three hundred Chinese to come aboard as passengers without searching them for arms. Why! it is an open bid to pirates. Goes to show pretty plain that these seas are not cleared of pirates. Sailing ships nowadays think they can go anywhere without a pound of powder or an old cutlass aboard, just because there is an English or Dutch man-of-war within a hundred miles. I don't know what we'd have done when I first traded among these islands without a good brass swivel and a stock of percussion-cap muskets.

Let me see; it was in '58, I was cabin boy on the ship *Bangor*. Captain Howe, hale old fellow from Maine, had his two little boys aboard. They are merchants now in Boston. I've been sailing for them on the *Elmira* ever since. We were trading along the coast of Borneo. Those were great days for trading in spite of the pirates. That was long before iron steamers sent our good oaken ships to rot in the dockyards of Maine. Why, in those days you could see a half-dozen of our snug little crafts in any port of the world, and I've seen more American flags in this very harbor of Singapore than of any other nation. We had come into Singapore with a shipload of ice (no scientific ice factories then), and had gone along the coast of Java and Borneo to load with coffee, rubber, and spices, for a return voyage. We were just off Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, and about loaded, when the captain heard that gold had been discovered somewhere up near the head of

the Rejang. The captain was an adventurous old salt, and decided to test the truth of the story; so, taking the long-boat and ten men, he pulled up the Sarawak River to Kuching and got permission of Rajah Brooke to go up the Rejang on a hunting expedition. The Rajah was courteous, but tried to dissuade us from the undertaking by relating that several bands of Dyaks had been out on head-hunting expeditions of late, and that the mouth of the Rejang was infested by Illanum pirates. The captain only laughed, and jokingly told Sir James that if the game proved scarce he might come back and claim the prize money on a boat-load of pirate heads.

We started at once,—for the captain let me go; we rowed some sixty miles along the coast to the mouth of the Rejang; then for four days we pulled up its snakelike course. It was my first bit of adventure, and everything was strange and new. The river's course was like a great tunnel into the dense black jungle. On each side and above we were completely walled in by an impenetrable growth of great tropical trees and the iron-like vines of the rubber. The sun for a few hours each day came in broken shafts down through the foliage, and exposed the black back of a crocodile, or the green sides of an iguana. Troops of monkeys swung and chattered in the branches above, and at intervals a grove of cocoanut broke the monotony of the scenery. Among them we would land and rest for the day or night, eat of their juicy fruit, and go on short excursions for game. A roasted monkey, some baked yams, and a delicious rice curry made up a royal bill of fare, and as the odor of our tobacco mixed with the breathing perfume of the jungle, I would fall asleep listening to sea-yarns that sometimes ran back to the War of 1812.

II

At the end of the fifth day we arrived at the head of the Rejang. Here the river broke up into a dozen small streams and a swamp. A stockade had been erected, and the Rajah had stationed a small company of native soldiers under an English officer to keep the head-hunting Dyaks in check. I don't remember what our captain found out in regard to the gold fields, at least it was not encouraging; for he gave up the search and joined the English lieutenant in a grand deer-hunt that lasted for five days, and then started back accompanied by two native soldiers bearing despatches to the Rajah.

It was easy running down the river with the current. One man in each end of the boat kept it off roots, sunken logs, and crocodiles, and the rest of us spent the time as best our cramped space allowed. Twice we detected the black, ugly face of a Dyak peering from out the jungle. The men were for hunting them down for the price on their heads, but the captain said he never killed a human being except in self-defence, and that if the Rajah wanted to get rid of the savages he had better give the contract to a Mississippi slave-trader. Secretly, I was longing for some kind of excitement, and was hoping that the men's clamorous talk would have some effect. I never doubted our ability to raid a Dyak village and kill the head-hunters and carry off the beautiful maidens. I could not see why a parcel of blacks should be such a terror to the good Rajah, when Big Tom said he could easily handle a dozen, and flattered me by saying that such a brawny lad as I ought to take care of two at least.

In the course of three days we reached the mouth of the river, and prepared the sail for the trip across the bay to the *Bangor*. Just as everything was in readiness, one of those peculiar and rapid changes in the weather, that are so

common here in the tropics near the equator, took place. A great blue-black cloud, looking like an immense cartridge, came up from the west. Through it played vivid flashes of lightning, and around it was a red haze. “A nasty animal,” I heard the bo’s’n tell the captain, and yet I was foolishly delighted when they decided to risk a blow and put out to sea. The sky on all sides grew darker from hour to hour. A smell of sulphur came to our nostrils. It was oppressively hot; not a breath of wind was stirring. The sail flapped uselessly against the mast, and the men labored at the oars, while streams of sweat ran from their bodies.

The captain had just taken down the mast, when, without a moment’s warning, the gale struck us and the boat half filled with water. We managed to head it with the wind, and were soon driving with the rapidity of a cannon-ball over the boiling and surging waters. It was a fearful gale; we blew for hours before it, ofttimes in danger of a volcanic reef, again almost sunk by a giant wave. I baled until I was completely exhausted. But the long-boat was a stanch little craft, and there were plenty of men to manage it, so as long as we could keep her before the wind, the captain felt no great anxiety as to our safety.

III

At about six bells in the afternoon, the wind fell away, and the rain came down in torrents, leaving us to pitch about on the rapidly decreasing waves, wet to the skin and unequal to another effort. We were within a mile of a rocky island that rose like a half-ruined castle from the ocean. The Dyak soldiers called it Satang Island, and I have sailed past it many a time since. Without waiting for the word, we rowed to it and around it, before we found a suitable beach

on which to land. One end of the island rose precipitous and sheer above the beach a hundred feet, and ended in a barren plateau of some two dozen acres. The remainder comprised some hundred acres of sand and rocks, on which were half a dozen cocoanut trees and a few yams. Along the beach we found a large number of turtles' eggs.

The captain, remembering the Rajah's caution in regard to pirates, decided not to make a light, but we were wet and hungry and overcame his scruples, and soon had a huge fire and a savory repast of coffee, turtles' eggs, and yams. At midnight it was extinguished, and a watch stationed on top of the plateau. Toward morning I clambered grumblingly up the narrow, almost perpendicular sides of the rift that cut into the rocky watch-tower. I did not believe in pirates and was willing to take my chances in sleep. I paced back and forth, inhaling deep breaths of the rich tropical air; below me the waves beat in ripples against the rugged beach, casting off from time to time little flashes of phosphorescent light, and mirroring in their depths the hardly distinguishable outline of the Southern Cross. The salt smell of the sea was tinged with the spice-laden air of the near coast. Drowsiness came over me. I picked up a musket and paced around the little plateau. The moon had but just reached its zenith, making all objects easily discernible. The smooth storm-swept space before me reflected back its rays like a well-scrubbed quarter-deck; below were the dark outlines of my sleeping mates. I could hear the light wind rustling through the branches of the casuarina trees that fringed the shore. I paused and looked over the sea. Like a charge of electricity a curious sensation of fear shot through me. Then an intimation that some object had flashed between me and the moon. I rubbed my eyes and gazed in the air above, expecting to see a night bird or a bat. Then the same peculiar sensation came over me again, and I looked down

in the water below just in time to see the long, keen, knife-like outline of a pirate *prau* glide as noiselessly as a shadow from a passing cloud into the gloom of the island. Its great, wide-spreading, dark red sails were set full to the wind, and hanging over its sides by ropes were a dozen naked Illanums, guiding the sensitive craft almost like a thing of life. Within the *prau* were two dozen fighting men, armed with their alligator hide buckler, long, steel-tipped spear, and ugly, snake-like *kris*. A third *prau* followed in the wake of the other two, and all three were lost in the blackness of the overhanging cliffs.

With as little noise as possible, I ran across the plain and warned my companion, then picked my way silently down the defile to the camp. The captain responded to my touch and was up in an instant. The men were awakened and the news whispered from one to another. Gathering up what food and utensils we possessed, we hurried to get on top of the plateau before our exact whereabouts became known. The captain hoped that when they discovered we were well fortified and there was no wreck to pillage, they would withdraw without giving battle. They had landed on the opposite side of the island from our boat and might leave it undisturbed. We felt reasonably safe in our fortress from attacks. There were but two breaks in its precipitous sides, each a narrow defile filled with loose boulders that could easily be detached and sent thundering down on an assailant's head. On the other hand, our shortness of food and water made us singularly weak in case of siege. But we hoped for the best. Two men were posted at each defile, and as nothing was heard for an hour, most of us fell asleep.

IV

It was just dawn, when we were awakened by the report of two muskets and the terrific crashing of a great boulder, followed by groans and yells. With one accord we rushed to the head of the cañon. The Illanums, naked, with the exception of party-colored *sarongs* around their waists, with their bucklers on their left arms and their gleaming knives strapped to their right wrists, were mounting on each other's shoulders, forcing a way up the precipitous defile, unmindful of the madly descending rocks that had crushed and maimed more than one of their number. They were fine, powerful fellows, with a reddish brown skin that shone like polished ebony. Their hair was shorn close to their heads; they had high cheek bones, flat noses, *syrah*-stained lips, and bloodshot eyes. In their movements they were as lithe and supple as a tiger, and commanded our admiration while they made us shudder. We knew that they neither give nor take quarter, and for years had terrorized the entire Bornean coast.

We were ready to fire, but a gesture from the captain restrained us; our ammunition was low, and he wished to save it until we actually needed it. By our united efforts we pried off two of the volcanic rocks, which, with a great leap, disappeared into the darkness below, oftentimes appearing for an instant before rushing to the sea. Every time an Illanum fell we gave a hearty American cheer, which was answered by savage yells. Still they fought on and up, making little headway. We were gradually relaxing our efforts, thinking that they were sick of the affair, when the report of a musket from the opposite side of the island called our attention to the bo's'n, who had been detailed to guard the other defile.

The bo's'n and one native soldier were fighting hand to hand with a dozen pirates who were forcing their way up

the edge of the cliff. Half of the men dashed to their relief just in time to see the soldier go over the precipice locked in the arms of a giant Illanum. One volley from our muskets settled the hopes of the invaders.

Our little party was divided, and we were outnumbered ten to one. One of the sailors in dislodging a boulder lost his footing and went crashing down with it amid the derisive yells of the pirates. Suddenly the conflict ceased and the pirates withdrew. In a short time we could see them building a number of small fires along the beach, and the aroma of rice curry came up to us with the breeze. The captain, I could see, was anxious, although my boyish feelings did not go beyond a sense of intoxicating excitement. I heard him say that nothing but a storm or a ship could save us in case we were besieged; that it was better to have the fight out at once and die with our arms in our hands than to starve to death.

Giving each a small portion of ship biscuit and a taste of water, he enjoined on each a careful watchfulness and a provident use of our small stock of provisions.

I took mine in my hand and walked out on the edge of the cliff somewhat sobered. Directly below me were the pirates, and at my feet I noticed a fragment of rock that I thought I could loosen. Putting down my food, I foolishly picked up a piece of timber which I used as a lever, when, without warning, the mass broke away, and with a tremendous bound went crashing down into the very midst of the pirates, scattering them right and left, and ended by crushing one of the *praus* that was drawn up on the sand.

In an instant the quiet beach was a scene of the wildest confusion. A surging, crowding mass of pirates with their *krises* between their teeth dashed up the cañon, intent on avenging their loss. I dropped my lever and rushed back to

the men, nearly frightened to death at the result of my temerity. There was no time for boulders; the men reached the brink of the defile just in time to welcome the assailants with a broadside. Their lines wavered, but fresh men took the places of the fallen, and they pushed on. Another volley from our guns, and the dead and wounded encumbered the progress of the living. A shower of stones and timbers gave us the light, and they withdrew with savage yells to open the siege once more. Only one of our men had been wounded,—he by an arrow from a blowpipe.

V

All that night we kept watch. The next morning we were once more attacked, but successfully defended ourselves with boulders and our cutlasses. Yet one swarthy pirate succeeded in catching the leg of the remaining native soldier and bearing him away with them. With cessation of hostilities, we searched the top of the island for food and water. At one side of the tableland there was a break in its surface and a bench of some dozen acres lay perhaps twenty feet below our retreat. We cautiously worked our way down to this portion and there to our delight found a number of fan-shaped traveller's palms and monkey-cups full of sweet water, which with two wild sago palms we calculated would keep us alive a few days at all events.

We were much encouraged at this discovery, and that night collected a lot of brush from the lower plain and lit a big fire on the most exposed part of the rocks. We did not care if it brought a thousand more pirates as long as it attracted the attention of a passing ship. Two good nine-pounders would soon send our foes in all directions. We relieved

each other in watching during the night, and by sunrise we were all completely worn out. The third day was one of weariness and thirst under the burning rays of the tropical sun. That day we ate the last of our ship biscuit and were reduced to a few drops of water each. Starvation was staring us in the face. There was but one alternative, and that was to descend and make a fight for our boat on the beach. The bo's'n volunteered with three men to descend the defile and reconnoitre. Armed only with their cutlasses and a short axe, they worked their way carefully down in the shadow of the rocks, while we kept watch above.

All was quiet for a time; then there arose a tumult of cries, oaths, and yells. The captain gave the order, and pell-mell down the rift we clambered, some dropping their muskets in their hurried descent, one of which exploded in its fall. The bo's'n had found the beach and our boat guarded by six pirates, who were asleep. Four of these they succeeded in throttling. We pushed the boat into the surf, expecting every moment to see one of the *praus* glide around the projecting reef that separated the two inlets. We could plainly hear their cries and yells as they discovered our escape, and with a "heigh-ho-heigh!" our long-boat shot out into the placid ocean, sending up a shower of phosphorescent bubbles. We bent our backs to the oars as only a question of life or death can make one. With each stroke the boat seemed almost to lift itself out of the water. Almost at the same time a long dark line, filled with moving objects, dashed out from the shadow of the cliffs, hardly a hundred yards away.

It was a glorious race over the dim waters of that tropical sea. I as a boy could not realize what capture meant at the hands of our cruel pursuers. My heart beat high, and I felt equal to a dozen Illanums. My thoughts travelled back to New England in the midst of the excitement. I saw myself before the open arch fire in a low-roofed old house, that for

a century had withstood the fiercest gales on the old Maine coast, and from whose doors had gone forth three generations of sea-captains. I saw myself on a winter night relating this very story of adventure to an old gray-haired, bronzed-faced father, and a mother whose parting kiss still lingered on my lips, to my younger brother, and sister. I could feel their undisguised admiration as I told of my fight with pirates in the Bornean sea. It is wonderful how the mind will travel. Yet with my thoughts in Maine, I saw and felt that the Illanums were gradually gaining on us. Our men were weary and feeble from two days' fasting, while the pirates were strong, and thirsting for our blood.

The captain kept glancing first at the enemy and then at a musket that lay near him. He longed to use it, but not a man could be spared from the oars. Hand over hand they gained on us. Turning his eyes on me as I sat in the bow, the captain said, while he bent his sinewy back to the oar, "Jack, are you a good shot?"

I stammered, "I can try, sir."

"Very well, get the musket there in the bow. It is loaded. Take good aim and shoot that big fellow in the stern. If you hit him, I'll make you master of a ship some day."

Tremblingly I raised the heavy musket as directed. The boat was unsteady, I hardly expected to hit the chief, but aimed low, hoping to hit one of the rowers at least. I aimed, closed my eyes, and fired. With the report of the musket the tall leader sprang into the air and then fell head fore-most amid his rowers. I could just detect the gleam of the moonlight on the jewelled handle of his *kris* as it sank into the waters. I had hit my man. The sailors sent up a hearty American cheer and a tiger, as they saw the *prau* come to a standstill.

Our boat sprang away into the darkness. We did not cease rowing until dawn,—then we lay back on our oars and stretched our tired backs and arms. I had taken my place at the oar during the night.

Away out on the northern horizon we saw a black speck; on the southern horizon another. The captain's glass revealed one to be the pirate *prau* with all sails set, for a wind had come up with the dawn. The other we welcomed with a cheer, for it was the *Bangor*. Enfeebled and nearly famishing, we headed toward it and rowed for life. How we regretted having left our sails on the island. The *prau* had sighted us and was bearing down in full pursuit; we soon could distinguish its wide-spreading, rakish sails almost touching the water as it sped on. Then we made out the naked forms of the Illanums hanging to the ropes, far out over the water, and then we could hear their blood-curdling yell. It was too late; their yell was one of baffled rage. It was answered by the deep bass tones of the swivel on board the *Bangor* sending a ball skimming along over the waters, which, although it went wide of its mark, caused the natives on the ropes to throw themselves bodily across the *prau*, taking the great sail with them.

In another instant the red sail, the long, keen, black shell, the naked forms of the fierce Illanums, were mixed in one undefinable blot on the distant horizon.

And that was the skipper's yarn.

Colophon

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Encoding

Revision History

> 2009-01-06 Started.

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Corrections

The following corrections have been applied to the text:

Page	Source	Correction
	Hong-Kong	Hong Kong
32	Changi	Changhi
65	[*Not in source*]	.
83	Gymkahna	Gymkhana
83	Gymkahna	Gymkhana
163	casurina	casuarina
188	[*Not in source*]	”
243	[*Not in source*]	.
268	Mohammedans	Mohammedans
322	somtimes	sometimes

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TALES OF THE MALAYAN COAST ***

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