

THE BABOON OF CHANDERNAGORE.

CHANDERNAGORE is a town of Hindoostan, situated on the western bank of the Ganges, and somewhat more than ten miles distant from Calcutta. It possesses some good buildings, amongst which is the *Sudder Adaulut*, or Court-house.

It was firmly credited by the superstitious Natives, that this edifice was haunted by an evil spirit, and, in consequence of that, nobody had the courage to dwell in it. The house was very spacious, surrounded by a large balcony, and a handsome portico formed the entrance. An English gentleman arrived at the place, and, disregarding the vulgar credulity, engaged it at the cheap rent of thirty rupees a month. A countryman of his, in a short time after, arrived at the same place, and was invited to take up his quarters at the Court-house, his host at the same time informing him of the current story, which served rather to amuse than terrify the unbelieving auditor. A suite of rooms, comprising bed-room, baths, and other conveniences, was allotted to each, which were only separated by a capacious hall occupying the intermediate space. They both retired to bed, placing but little confidence in the rumour, and entertaining no expectation of a nocturnal visitor.

In the middle of the night, however, the gentleman who had engaged the house, was awaked by a cry of 'Thieves! Thieves!' proceeding from the chamber of his friend, and, instantly springing out of bed, he ran to his assistance, and was told by him, that some thieves had opened the Venetian blinds, and stared in upon him as he lay in bed. The servants were immediately summoned up, and arming themselves with firewood, and what other weapons chance threw in their way, and led on by the Englishman, went in search of the marauders, who were supposed to be on the balcony. When they arrived there, they were greatly surprised to behold a huge baboon, standing erect, with his fore feet placed against the Venetian blinds, and looking in at the window with a most malicious aspect. One of the men, more bold than the rest, who was equipped with a spit, endeavoured to wound the animal, but was afraid to advance near enough for that purpose. The beast, upon viewing his assailants, turned round, and, clothing his hideous face in a contemptuous grin, advanced a few paces towards them, as if to signify his disregard of their appearance, and, with one bound, vaulted from the verandah to the ground, and, in a few moments, baffled the speed of his pursuers.

It was not long after this adventure, that they had retired to bed, when they heard shrieks, which, as they seemed to proceed from some distance, did not induce the inmates of the *Sudder Adaulut* to arise a second time. In the morning, they sent to inquire whence

the shrieks overnight proceeded; and the messenger returned with the intelligence, that the baboon, in his flight from the Court-house, had fallen upon a Portuguese family outside the town, who were sleeping on mats in the open air for the sake of coolness, and that he had attacked one of the females, and torn her clothes to tatters, but that, upon the rest of the family being awaked by her screams, and starting up to her assistance, the baboon had disappeared. In the course of the following day, they made some inquiries, and discovered it was the property of a half-caste woman, who kept a female school for the Natives; and, sending their compliments, they informed her, that, if they were again annoyed by the baboon, they should be under the necessity of shooting him.

In a few nights after this occurrence, the animal contrived to gain admittance into the Court-house, by jumping over the door of a stable, the top of which was open, and which communicated with the house. A ghorawalla, or hostler, was unfortunately lying asleep there, whom he seized by the hind part of the leg near the ankle, and nearly bit it through. After this, he proceeded through the chambers of the house, and, with instinctive mischief, overturned every article of furniture, and whatever else he could see. Upon the domestics collecting to attack him, the baboon ran out of the house, and took refuge in a stable, the door of which one of the party immediately closed, and secured the object of their pursuit. One of the gentlemen then loaded his pistol with slugs, which had been previously cut up for the purpose, and fired through the bars over the door of the stable, which volley, however, much to his wonder, appeared to have no effect. The monster, seemingly unhurt and unwounded, then bounded up to the iron bars, and, opening his mouth, displayed a formidable row of tusks. The gentleman then fired his other pistol, and, apparently, with the same effect. He then introduced a bull-terrier; who, upon viewing the baboon stalking round him on his hind feet, and scowling in derision, roughened his back, and erected his tail, and, though labouring under the effects of fear, was prevented, by his innate courage, from showing it. Two more dogs of the same breed were then introduced; and, the moment they entered, the animal cried and screamed, and clung to the bars, from which situation he was soon dislodged, by an Indian goading him with his spear. The dogs then attacked him, and inflicted several severe wounds, which he did not fail amply to repay. In the midst of this scene, a man who had before caught and chained him up, happened to arrive, and was requested to enter the stable. At the sight of him, the baboon made the eastern salaam, and laid his head upon the man's feet; then, groaning piteously, put his paws upon his wounds: for every slug, though not very deep, had entered his skin in all quarters, and his forehead especially, which was streaming with blood. The animal, with a face which, though it conveyed the image of fiend-like passions, yet bore a near resemblance to the human counte-

nance, afforded a piteous, and, at the same time, a most disgusting spectacle. The man, taking one of his paws, proceeded to lead him home, while, with the other, the animal wiped his face, and seemed now as passive and obedient, as he was before contemptuous and regardless of his assailants. The school-mistress, immediately upon his arrival, bathed his forehead with water, stanchied the blood with linen, and bestowed lavishly upon this frightful object of her solicitude, caresses and kisses, as if in mockery of human nature. Whether the baboon survived his wounds, was not ascertained. However, from that time, the evil genius was never known to haunt the Sudder Adaulut.

L'INDE FRANÇAISE.*

DESCRIPTIONS of distant countries possess charms for most readers; whether an unsettled state of mind has induced them to quit, or the love of home has retarded them in, their native country, there is no one who does not relish descriptions of foreign scenes, if they are well painted. The first class love to retrace the dangers they have experienced; the others take a deeper pleasure in the peace they enjoy from the recital of perils which enable them the better to appreciate the value of safety and tranquillity. It is to this well-known disposition that we must attribute the publication of so many important events, descriptive of distant parts of the globe.

Since the fall of the powerful empire of Tippoo Saib, and since the complete dominion of the East India Company, that country has ceased to attract the attention of France. Whilst, among our neighbours, its beauties have been described, and its literature explained, in works of various kinds, India is almost forgotten by us, and few of the French recollect, that the white flag still floats over many small settlements, and that a numerous Hindoo population is still subject to the crown of France. Established on the coasts of Coromandel and of Malabar, that population forms a part of those who occupy almost all the south of India; thus, a description of their religion, of their manners, and of their customs, offers, at the same time, a faithful picture of the social state of a very important portion of that Peninsula. 'L'Inde Française' is distinguished by some analogous publications executed in England, such as the beautiful collection of Daniel. These authors, having proposed to make known the Hindoos in general, have contented themselves with reproducing the most striking traits which characterise them; many of these details, which, in the eyes of philosophers and of histo-

* *L'Inde Française*; or, a Collection of Lithographic Drawings, representing the Divinities, Temples, Pagodas, Costumes, Physiognomy, Furniture, Arms, and Utensils of the Hindoo People, who inhabit the French possessions in India, and, in particular, the Coasts of Coromandel and of Malabar. Published by M. Geringer; with an Explanatory Text, by M. Eugène Bournouf. Paris, 1828.—From *Le Constitutionnel*.

rians, are of great importance, could not possibly enter into their collection. The country which we call Hindoostan is, moreover, inhabited by very different classes of people, quite distinct the one from the other. A superficial observer only recognises Hindoos, Musulmans, and, besides these, some Europeans, their masters; but the vague denomination of Hindoos embraces an infinite variety of races, established in this country since the most ancient epochs, and in the bosom of which the division into castes, having become perpetual, has separated them into different people. We must then avoid generalities, and confine ourselves to local descriptions; if we desire to know this celebrated country, we must consider only a small part at a time of its vast territory, in order that its state of civilisation may be better understood.

These ideas have directed M. Géringer in the choice and the union of the subjects which compose 'L'Inde Française'; a long residence on the Coromandel coast has given him the facility of designing, with the most scrupulous fidelity, a great number of representations of places, of religious ceremonies, and scenes of private life, borrowed from the different races which inhabit that coast. Our Orientalists will compare the images and legends of the gods in this part of India with those of which the English have proved the existence in other parts. They will thus be able to determine in what degree the religion of the Brahmins, brought from the north, and established in India at a very ancient period, has preserved its purity.

'L'Inde Française' gives, in short, every detail on a country which, in the time of Duplex and of Sudrein, was the centre of a great power, and which still, at the present day, includes that, of all the French colonies, the possession of which is most important to the country.

The drawings of 'L'Inde Française' were executed on the spot. Each lithograph is accompanied with an explanatory text, the editorship of which is confided to M. Eugène Bournouf, who, for many years, has made India the object of his studies. This text contains not only a clear and precise explanation of the drawing to which it is affixed, but is managed in such a manner, that the separate documents, when joined, form a complete description of that part of the peninsula of India, and of the manners and customs of its inhabitants. The drawings, lithographed with care, offer by turns the representation of Brahma, painted by a Hindoo of the Coromandel coast, and the portrait of Canabady, the superior of the Brahmins of Pondicherry. Canabady raised many difficulties before he would allow himself to be approached by a *Kopoukaru*, the name which they give to strangers; he assured them, that he was obliged, after each sitting, to take a bath to purify himself from the stains which he could not fail to contract. He acquiesced, however, after a formal assurance, that M. Géringer would refrain from touching him, and that he would keep at the distance of from four to five feet.

We have also remarked the celebrated idol of Vishnou, or the preserving god, and a beautiful portrait of a Brahmin female. They cannot, with any justice, accuse our European ladies of coquetry; for none of them would consent to have their nostrils pierced to bear so many jewels as are to be seen in the nose of this brown yet attractive beauty. The plate which represents the marriage of a Brahmin pair is not less curious, since it describes the most important ceremonies in the nuptials of Indians of that caste. We must not forget the portrait of a Raja, or Hindoo prince, and those of the Brahmins, authors, interpreters, and physicians.

Congratulating M. Geringer on his entire fulfilment of the promises held out in his prospectus, we can only persuade him to persevere. The prompt execution of this large and beautiful work ought to insure its success.

THE DYING SOLDIER.

'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori!'

'Tis o'v'—that look to die fast-setting sun
Shows too plainly thy race of existence is run!
That flush on thy cheek, and thy dim, closing eye,
Tell too truly thy glorious career is gone by!
And the breast in the morning so haughty and bold
With the shades of the evening is wither'd and cold!
How proud!—when the death-fires in volleys were flashing,
When the sabres around thee thy comrades were clashing;
How scornful thy glance at the foe's man's array,
Yet subdued by a thought of the friends far away!
Oh! vain was the hope when the battle was o'er,
That thou soon should'st revisit thy own native shore,
And that plenty and peace would unsparingly shed
All their blessings and smiles on the conqueror's head:
That hope and thy life-blood are ebbing away,
And soon will but leave thee inanimate clay;
Yet *her* name on thy lips lingers tenderly yet,
Whom in joy or in peril thou ne'er could'st forget;
And the sighs and the tears you exchanged when you parted,
Are as fresh in thy heart as they were when they started.
'Tis over!—that pang was the last thou wilt feel
From fond recollections or enemy's steel;
And, though amidst heaps of the dead thou may'st lie,
The fame of thy victories never shall die!
For Albion will honour the brave who are slain
In defence of her rights on the blood-deluged plain;
And the warm tear of beauty be shed o'er his grave,
Who perish'd so nobly his country to save!
While bards in their hymnings shall consecrate those,
Who could barter their own for their kingdom's repose.



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