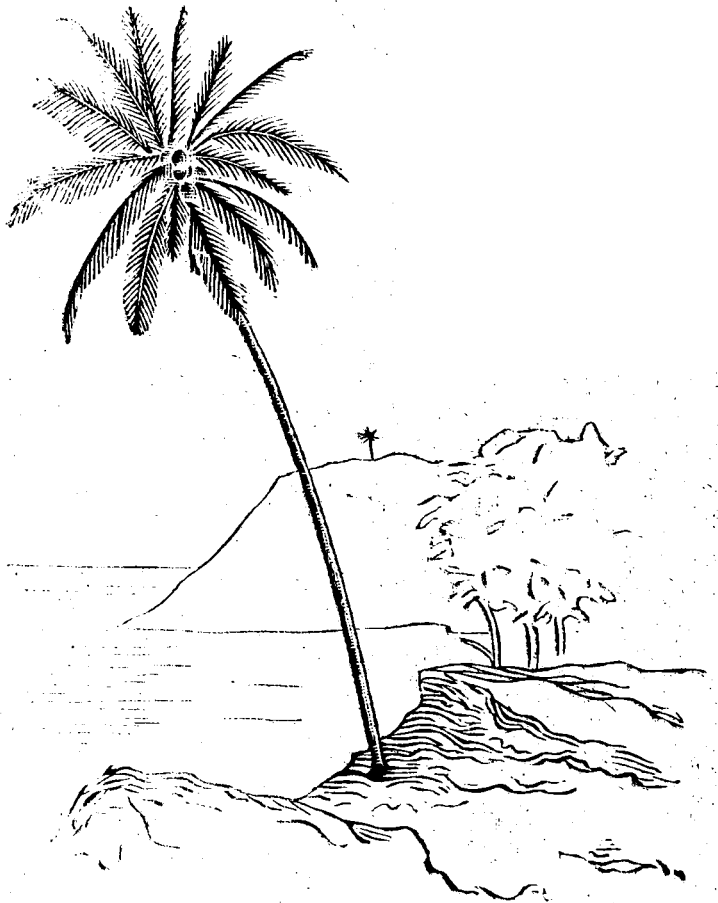


LETTERS

FROM

MALABAR



LETTERS FROM MALABAR

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE NATIVE WIFE

OR

INDIAN LOVE AND ANARCHISM

A NOVEL

JOHN LONG. 6s.

LETTERS
FROM MALABAR
AND ON THE WAY

BY

HENRY BRUCE

AUTHOR OF 'THE NATIVE WIFE', ETC.

With an Introduction by

J. D. REES, C.V.O., C.I.E., M.P.

AUTHOR OF 'THE REAL INDIA', ETC.

WITH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY E. F. H. WEILE, OF BANGALORE
AND BY OTHERS, AND A MAP

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1909

TO
THE MOST PROGRESSIVE STATESMAN
OF MODERN INDIA
V. P. MADHAVA RAO, C.I.E.
PRIME MINISTER OF TRAVANCORE
DURING THE TWO BEST YEARS OF ITS HISTORY
SINCE 1906
PRIME MINISTER OF MYSORE STATE
THIS RECORD
OF A JOURNEY PLANNED BY HIM
IS GRATEFULLY AND ADMIRINGLY
DEDICATED

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INTRODUCTION

I ACCEPTED Mr. Bruce's invitation to write a few words of introduction to this interesting volume, because I was fortunate enough to occupy for some time the post of British Resident in Travancore and Cochin, and have myself, in the pages of English reviews and elsewhere, attempted to describe the indescribable beauties of the Malabar coast and the fascination of life in the only part of the Indian Empire which really is a mirror of ancient India. Here we see the conditions which prevailed before any invader violated the sacred soil of the Peninsula, and here linger the relations which existed in those days between the two sexes, and between the higher and the lower castes, and here we still see that faithful dispensation of the gifts of the gods, which entitles Travancore to claim to be in very truth the land of charity. Indeed the motto of the house of the able prince who rules over this, the larger of the two native principalities, is 'Charity our household divinity.'

Here you can live on the coast beside the sound-

ing sea, and very loudly it does sound, in tracts of which the population is nearly 2000 to the square mile, or you can rise higher to 8000 feet, where often thick clouds settle down over grass and forests, and shroud the heights in impenetrable gloom, where you can bag the wild elephant, the rare and magnificent bison, the tiger, and other big game. When the clouds lift, you can see revealed long, silent valleys, down which flow rivers to fertilise fields upon fields of rice before they are lost in the Arabian Sea.

In the forests you come upon big herds of elephants who live happily in the dense recesses of the dark wood, rendered negotiable only by paths they make for themselves, enjoying their favourite food, with a swamp on one side for a bath, and a grassy hill on the other for pasture.

Tree-trunks smothered in moss, and orchids, rhododendrons bearded with lichen, grassy glades, and many-coloured flowers, tree ferns, elephant reeds, cascades, and rivers, the sight of distant hills, and

‘Valleys low where the mild whispers use
Of shades and wanton winds and gushing brooks.’

Such are frequent phenomena of the march in this favoured land.

But if every prospect pleases, man, and no less women, are by no means vile. In the upper class women enjoy an independence unknown in any

other part of the world, including the privilege of choosing and changing their own husbands, a privilege which they exercise with much discretion, rarely divorcing a husband if he turns out at all a possible person. Girls of the upper class, from fourteen to sixteen, are exceedingly beautiful. They possess perfect figures, lithe, slight, and supple, yet not wanting in development, and they wear costumes which modestly veil but heighten the charm of the wearer. Bright brown eyes, light brown skin, pearly teeth, and vivacious expression, go to make up a personality such as a classical painter, like Alma-Tadema, would love to paint, clad in flowing draperies, and moving over the tessellated pavement of pillared halls.

The Administration of this favoured land is as good as the country is beautiful, and, for my part, I greatly regret that ministers from without are inclined to regard reform as synonymous with destruction of individuality. The individuality of the states of Travancore and Cochin is a most precious possession, which, once lost, will never be replaced in any other part of the world, or in India itself. Nor is it apparent why people, who are happy and lightly taxed, should be reformed, whether they will or not, while in many respects these two states are ahead of British India in civilisation.

Now that the railway has pierced these two principalities and scarred their sacred soil with iron bands, the traveller can, if he wishes, see for himself, and he will go away with a feeling that he has left behind him perhaps the most beautiful part of India.

J. D. REES.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FIRST of all, I must express my thanks to the Editors of two of the leading Anglo-Indian journals. The whole of the following volume, up to page 118 inclusive, with most of the illustrations here reproduced, and with others, appeared in the 'Times of India' a year or more ago. The three remaining articles, on the Administrations of the three Southern States, appeared in the 'Madras Mail' a little earlier.

At the opposite Northern and Southern ends of the Indian Empire lie the two rarest portions thereof, certainly the two Native States most uniquely favoured by Nature. Kashmir and Travancore are some 2000 miles apart as the crow would fly, essentially 3000 miles as one has to travel. It would take a week to get from one to the other, with the best aid of the slow Indian railways. It would be too much to say that their climates are the best and the worst in India. Kashmir has a quasi-European climate, deceptive (like its people), and apt to turn out much less healthy than you thought that it was at the beginning. My entire stay in Malabar was but four or five weeks, or about as many weeks as I have lived for years in Kashmir.

The climate of Malabar, at least in its southern parts, is one trying for the strongest European adults, and impossible for European children. This difference in climate may well explain the fact that, while a traveller seldom appears in Travancore, Kashmir is thronged with visitors—about two thousand of them per year. But it will not wholly explain the difference in the popular renown of the two countries. Even in the world of the Arabian Nights, and in the earlier Chinese world, Kashmir had a great fame. As a result of this fact, and of its many visitors throughout the centuries, the books about Kashmir, often excellent and richly illustrated, are innumerable.

I have already publicly presented the case for the restoration of his remaining powers to the kindly Maharaja of Kashmir, who is, of course, no Kashmiri, but the grandson of one of the more considerable conquerors of the nineteenth century. He ascended the throne in the same year with the Maharaja of Travancore, 1885. The area of his dominions is about that of Great Britain. It may here be said that, by the latest accounts, Kashmir, which was for so long the Paradise of the adventurous traveller, but which has long been spoiling, is now utterly spoiled, to the point that English ladies can hardly venture abroad there with safety. Travellers may well begin to turn their attention elsewhere.

Malabar is the magical coast-land which has been defined as extending from Canara to Cape Comorin.

This, too, has always had a peculiar, although a less noisy, fame. Rousseau, in a little-known passage summing up the picturesque impressions of India which had reached the Europe of his day, speaks of '*les Malabars, le Mogul, les rives du Gange.*' Some of the echoes of its fame have been due to its peculiar customs, rightly or wrongly understood. In an appendix to one of the earlier volumes of his great '*History of France,*' now seventy-five years old, Michelet casually refers to Malabar as '*le pays le plus corrompu de l'Inde.*' When I quoted this passage to Mr. Rees, he wrote back: 'I don't agree with Michelet.' Ethnologists and others interested in the subject, are aware that Malabar actually offers some physiological peculiarities in '*the female form divine,*' which has always flourished there. A universally learned German once made the Rabelaisian remark: 'By all means go to Malabar; they have excellent dairies there.' A knowledge of German will increase the appreciation of this saying.

Malabar certainly offers a social peculiarity which is passing strange, and fascinating as being found nowhere else upon this broad earth, unless among some South Sea savages or the like. It is a cynical saying, even in Europe: 'It is a wise child who knows his own father.' In Malabar it is unnecessary, or at least unimportant, to know your father: it is your mother who counts, for all purposes of inheritance. How beautifully this system of matriarchy solves certain problems! Was this the primeval

system throughout the world, before the patriarchal system arose, to decline in its turn? In that case Malabar is, indeed, a priceless survival from the earlier ages. Or have its people invented or developed matriarchy on their own? I leave it wholly to the learned to answer these questions. In any event, the situation is consummately interesting.

I do not write for those who cannot feel the appeal of the vastness and the variety of India. Travancore is, roughly, but one-250th part, in mere area, of that wonderful Empire. In population, it is about one-100th part of India. But in true interest, importance, and, above all, uniqueness, it is enormously more than either of the above proportions would show. Its area is about that of Palestine, or a little less than Wales. One cannot wonder that successive Governors of the Madras Presidency have gloried in this gem of their dominions—as the Punjab especially delights in Kashmir. Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff described Travancore as ‘one of the fairest and most interesting realms that Asia has to show.’ Lord Connemara, the famous, amorous Governor of Madras, called Travancore ‘a fairy-land’—and indeed, it has much of that effect. Lord Curzon, who can always write (if not govern) well, speaks of ‘its exuberant natural beauties, its old-world simplicity, and its Arcadian charm. . . . In one respect His Highness enjoys a peculiar position and responsibility, for he is the Ruler of a community that is stamped by wide racial differences, and represents a curious motley of religions.’

The little journey here recorded took place in the December of 1907 and the January of 1908. It may be said that I chose the two months which are apt to be the coolest in most parts of India. But in this detail, as in so many other curious ways, Malabar differs from the normal. I was told that I would have found more of an approach to coolness, and a better climate to travel in, if I had entered Malabar a month or two earlier, in November, or even in October, just after the monsoon. Malabar is so charmingly out of the beaten track that the traveller has to find out such facts for himself. Of books upon the subject, at least of any printed and accessible in Europe, there are practically none.

I started from Satara, in the heart of the goodly Maratha country, which is probably the part of India best worth living in. Yet 'The Times' has lately stated that Indian sedition, which shows itself the worst in Bengal, had its origin in Poona, the Maratha capital. The peoples and the States among whom I moved for the next two months were really on the scale of many in Europe, and quite as various. It is, perhaps, hard for the home-keeping Englishman to realise, for example, that the Tamils and the Telegus, two of the peoples only casually mentioned in my text, are as different as the Swedes and the Swiss, and in either case several times as numerous. I stopped for a fortnight in Bangalore, where Mr. Madhava Rao administers a thriving land of the size of Bavaria, or Scotland, or Portugal. A European has called this reformer 'the most

dignified native I know.' Another, in Travancore, said that when Madhava Rao ruled that country, you might go to him with a request which he had to refuse, yet be so delightfully received as to leave his presence feeling better pleased than if you had gained your object.

I am glad to be able to present, with this volume, so good a map of Southern India. For me, the little journey has had the result of filling up those fascinating vacant spaces on the map, which finally would not let me rest until I had investigated them. There are things infinitely picturesque and romantic in Travancore, unequalled in the world besides. The ruler of that State is, in a special sense, the King of the Elephants. His is the chief elephant country in India. The elephant is the emblem of his House, which is mentioned even in the Edicts of Asoka. There is no national coat-of-arms quite so expressive as that of Travancore, with its two elephants, ramping on either side of the conch shell which symbolises the sea. I never wearied of watching this emblem, whether upon stationery, or upon the glittering breasts of the peons (footmen).

It is often said that the native sovereigns of India have been reduced to mere shadows. Yet there is a very real feudality left to them. I remember once, when driving through the streets of Trivandrum, how the friend with me suddenly told the coachman to drive down a side street. The Maharaja was coming down the main thoroughfare. By a surviv-

ing custom, which is beginning to be resented, all his subjects who may be riding or driving on such an occasion are expected to alight, and to stand humbly by the roadside while he passes. This is the ruler whose image is here presented, in a handsome autograph portrait contributed by himself. Among the things which I have not had space to mention was an entire set of the special coins, and also of the special postage stamps of the country, which was kindly collected for me.

This volume is absolutely without any pretension, save to good faith. I have set down nought in malice. The utmost pains have been taken to reach the truth, and that at first hand, not through the writings of others. Hardly any attempt has now been made to go back upon my impressions, or to correct the praise and the very rare blame which it seemed right to assign at the time. I sincerely trust that no legitimate susceptibilities have been wounded. When I left for Malabar I was assured, by the highest authority, that I would be enabled to see things, in the way of social and family organisation, which no European had ever seen before. I cannot for one moment believe that this happened. Probably the fault was in myself, in that I was unable to see what existed close around me. It is more than Governmental help, with goodwill on the part of the observer, that is required in order to discern many of the peculiarities in a shy and secretive people. There were days when my eyes and my brain ached with the effort of trying to see,

yet I felt that the essence of things had escaped me. The special topsy-turvydom of some arrangements in Malabar gives an additional effect as if of standing upon your head.

These Letters, as I have repeatedly said in the course of them, make no pretence of being other than superficial, sometimes hasty, but always honest, efforts to render the strange fleeting impressions which surrounded me during one of the most intense and delightful months of my life. The real Book of Malabar must be written by one (preferably, for the sake of objectivity, a European) who has lived in the country at least twenty years, who knows Malayalam, and the elusive hearts of the Malayalis. There are many such men, but they have not hitherto had time to write.

During the past week I have been carried anew to Travancore by the reading of a couple of volumes. A glance at these will serve to bring the matter of my Letters further up to date. One of them is the 'Brief Sketch of Travancore,' given me at the time by the writer, and mentioned in the text. It is written in an English at once original and spirited, and distressingly printed, like most publications in India. 'The talented pen of Mr. J. D. Rees has covered with additional charm,' we may read here of Travancore, 'its enchanting forest glades and flora.' Of a high wind of the country, we read that through a certain pass 'it rushes forth vehemently, and upsets many a cart and traffic and even men.' Each Maharaja of Travancore, on receiving the

coronation sword, has still to declare, 'I will keep the sword until the return of my uncle'—this in reference to the mysterious Perumal who once sailed off across the Arabian Sea. It is rather confusing, in all Malabar writings, to find the use of the Malabar Era, beginning in A.D. 824.

The first English Resident in Travancore, who in 1805 concluded with the Maharaja the Treaty of subsidiary alliance which still holds, was Colonel Colin Macaulay, an uncle of the historian. What would we not give to get hold of the Memoirs which such a man might have written, in the days before the peculiar institutions of Malabar had begun to fade! Equally, the imagination aches for some detailed record of a later Resident, General Cullen, who bore powerful sway from 1840 to 1860, and whose memory is still green in the land. In the text which follows, I have spoken at some length of the sweet little Queens, or Ranis, of Travancore, who, by the way, sent the portraits here printed, with their names upon the back in crabbed, childish English handwriting. I have also spoken elsewhere of a rather rare phenomenon of untaught genius, the painter, Ravi Varma. But I omitted to bring out a connection which I hardly realised. The Brief Sketch shows the fine countenance of the late artist, and states: 'The Ranis are the grand-daughters of the celebrated Indian Artist, Mr. Ravi Varma Koil Tampuran, whose name stands on fame's lofty pinnacle raised by the spontaneous homage of the enlightened æsthetic world.'

The other book is the 'Proceedings of the Fifth Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly of Travancore,' excellently printed at the Government Press in Trivandrum, and lately sent me by the Diwan. This Assembly last met in November, 1908. I missed its previous sitting, by a month or more. The Diwan has been kindly anxious that I should attend it at some time in the future, because of the wonderfully revealing quality of its proceedings. But I am not likely to do so save in the pages of such a Report, which, with some knowledge of the place and the people concerned, quite enables you to see and hear the proceedings. It is a volume of some 125 huge pages. About a fifth part of it is devoted to the Address of the Diwan, or Prime Minister. At the beginning of this I noted, with regret, the death of the gentle Diwan Peshkar of Quilon, towards whom I had come to feel as a friend, after a few interviews. As is mentioned in my text, he was ill the last time I passed through Quilon. Diabetes is, by the way, the characteristic disease of the educated classes in Malabar, who are stated seldom to live beyond the age of forty-five or forty-eight.

The Address shows the hard-headed ability of the writer. There is a guarded reference to the most unusual riots at Trivandrum, in June, 1908, which were doubtless due to Police causes. Two of the members also urge the reform of the Police Department, which is nowhere in India satisfactory. 'It was a regrettable circumstance, that, instead of

being the protectors of personal property, the policemen very often assume themselves the position of aggressors. . . . There was at present no security of personal property in the taluk, and the people were spending restless nights.' Again: 'The police obtained bribes for releasing on bail: . . . arrested and tortured innocent people, and wrongfully included rich people as accused, with a view to extort some money from them.' For all that, Travancore is happier than most Indian lands. The Police in Kashmir are foully corrupt. Even in the stately fabric of our own rule, the Police make one of the weak, and even dangerous, points. .

During his first whole year of rule, the Diwan has converted a large standing deficit into a small safe surplus. All will learn with regret that in Travancore, of all places, in Cocoanutcore, as it has been called, some blight or disease among the cocoanut trees is now upon the increase. Government will do all that European science can teach to combat this. During the past year a separate Department of Agriculture has been founded, under the charge of a young Travancorean, who has returned to his home with a Scottish and with a German doctorate. A substantial improvement is announced in the work of the Land Revenue Department during 1908. Credit is thus given to the Diwan Peshkars and to the Tehsildars, in place of the blame which was awarded them the year before, and which is quoted in my text.

At the first, it rather overwhelms the imagination

to think of a Popular Assembly being in full existence in the most remote and primeval of Indian lands. This volume, which permits of being read with interest from cover to cover, can leave no further room for doubt about the civilisation which prevails in Malabar. Yet the constitution and the working of the Assembly show that, however genuinely popular it may be, it is neither legislative, executive, nor widely representative. No such body would for a moment satisfy the demands of the ill-conditioned modern agitators in British India! Not even under the monarchy of Louis Philippe could the franchise have been upon a narrower basis. In order either to elect or to be elected, a person has, essentially, to have a yearly income of 3000 rupees, or £200—a figure which represents far more in India than in England. With the aid of nominated members, and of some fancy franchises, the number of members may be as high as 100. Last November it was but 82. A member must give notice as to the subject he wishes to speak upon, and no member may speak upon more than two subjects.

The object of the Assembly is defined as being 'to elicit non-official public opinion,' therefore no Government servant can either vote or be returned. The members do not answer each other, still less do they vote, or express any united opinion. In addition to the day devoted to the Diwan's speech, the Assembly sat but for three and a half days last November. Such a thing as an Opposition is not

dreamt of. The typical procedure is for a member, less often for several members, to speak briefly; then to receive the Diwan's reply, which is always final. He speaks with great courtesy, but his position is dominating. Sometimes there is an unmistakable ring in the answer, as thus, 'The suggestion to organise a Council to help the Diwan does not commend itself to His Highness' Government.'

Even in urging an expansion of the scope of the Assembly, a member spoke of it as having been 'a spontaneous gift' of the Maharaja. In his reply, the Diwan spoke of the steady expansion which the Assembly had undergone during the four years of its existence, and of the moderation always shown in its deliberations. 'I would strongly advise you to leave the matter there, in His Highness' hands. The authority which brought the Assembly into being may well be trusted to develop it on safe and sound lines.' In his concluding speech, the Diwan speaks of his desire 'to know from the people themselves their wants and aspirations.' The Assembly has already had an important share in regulating the work of the Travancore Government. 'What *does* matter is the recognition by us that questions raised by you *have* to be met.' For the rest, in the course of the proceedings, we see the paltry Mahomedan community, even in Travancore, exhibiting that touchiness in religious matters which is so sure to give offence, but which Moslems have always known how to make superlatively offensive. What troubles them now is the handling of the

Koran in courts by non-Mahomedans. 'According to their religious injunctions, even the Mahomedans could not touch the book when they were in a polluted state.'

More serious wrongs, picturesque abuses, 'old, unhappy, far-off things,' upon which we must not here linger, are indicated in representations as to the disabilities of Native Christian converts in the matter of inheritance, and of 'satrom' accommodation when travelling; and specially, as to the disabilities, in the matter of education, of the very large and depressed community of toddy-drawers, known as Elavas, or Tiahs. Such things can hardly be discussed without exciting passionate sympathy; and they once abounded in Travancore. Even at the latest date, the Diwan had to adhere to the decision that the Sanskrit College and another institution must still remain closed to Elavas. Travancore was casually referred to as being, which is undeniable, less orthodox than Cochin. The remedying of such things must be left in the hands of those who best understand them. For very special reasons, in the two Malabar States, it is necessary to remember the old wise maxim about not stirring up the waters of Lake Camarina—*ne quieta movere*.

I have also been reading one of the more recent French books on India, with the strange title of 'Le Mamoul,' by Paul Mimande (Juven). Although several of the very best books about India have been written by Frenchmen, this is a queer book, which is not to be praised. As far as Malabar

is concerned, the writer seems merely to have glanced at Mahé, the trivial French settlement on that coast. He is so incredibly slipshod in his mental processes, as actually to mix up the well-known matriarchy of Malabar with the polyandry of the Himalayas, of which, again, he saw nothing at first hand. This is an example of the sort of misconstruction to which the Malabar people are sometimes subjected, and which they have a right to resent bitterly.

The truth would seem to be, that it is as a sex, and not as an individual, that woman holds so strong a position in Malabar. She is honoured and invaluable as the channel of inheritance. But personally, she is a good deal kept under, and by no means allowed, at least in Travancore, all the alleged liberty with which the lascivious imaginations of outsiders have surrounded her. She may escape the domination of her husband, but not the domination of that joint-family system, which, merely modified in a matriarchal sense, is here, perhaps, stronger than anywhere else in India. This system of lifelong family guardianship is expressed by a long word, *Marumakkathayam*, which I have not once used in the text, though it is often seen in the Indian journals. This control, beneficial on the whole, or at least during the past, is exercised, sometimes harshly enough, by an elected head of the family, generally the senior uncle. Against this there has been much recent revolt, as to which I am not competent to judge. The casual traveller,

however keen may be his own interest in things seen, ought, in good faith, to try to avoid going beyond his depth, or making rash pronouncements upon matters which are of vital concern to millions of human beings.

My tour through the Malabar States made me acquainted with a far greater number than I could have supposed existed, of descriptive official publications, most of them very well 'gotten-up,' as the Americans say. Not one of these is easily accessible in Europe. While abounding in interesting matter, they are not without the quality of aridity. They are certainly too 'meaty' for most readers, even could these get at them. Pre-eminent among such works is one which I have warmly praised in the text, namely, the 'Travancore State Manual' of my venerable friend Mr. Nagam Aiya. This would be a treasure-house for European ethnologists, if they but knew of it, while it might well pay a London publisher to bring out a reasoned abridgment of it. I was much tempted to double or treble the length of my present volume by adding liberal reductions from Nagam Aiya. But they would have remained accretions. Such a process, while increasing the intrinsic interest of this little volume, would have hurt its unity.

But except for heavy official publications, I have to come back to my original impression, that singularly little, either popular or literary, has been written about Malabar. If such books exist, they have not reached my hands. Of a high literary

quality, I know only the quarter part of an otherwise dull book by Loti, and the too few, scattered writings about Malabar which Mr. Rees may some day be persuaded to collect.

In this Preface I have hardly mentioned Cochin. But it will be found to occupy quite its proportionate place in the text. It is a jolly little State, with one formidable drawback. Cochin is rightly proud of being absolutely the most flourishing spot, and one of the loveliest, in all huge India. But it has developed a unique horror in what is often called Cochin Leg (elephantiasis). In contrast to so many Indian States, which are of the size of European kingdoms, Cochin is about as large as an average English county. When the cultured wife of its Diwan was last in England (where she was presented at Court by Mrs. Gladstone), she found it useless to try to make her friends understand the difference between the State of which her husband had just taken charge, and the French Indo-China. The Raja of Cochin is a King of Yvetot, fabulously ancient and sacred, with something of Byzantine pretensions. He would scorn to be called Maharaja (Great Raja), and is really more important than most Maharajas, who are often of yesterday. Equally, the Sire de Coucy was proud of being neither Prince nor Duke ; while there are peculiarly swagger English Earls who would not accept a dukedom. Another unique thing about Cochin is its pitiful little community, alleged to be thousands of years old, of White and of Black Jews. These

have long had a world-wide renown which they scarcely deserve. That is one of the fascinating things about Malabar, that within a moderate compass you come upon so many details which are unique or superlative, unmatched in the world besides.

About British Malabar, a land of reputed enchantment, whose fair women, now stated to be largely European in blood, are widely scattered over Southern India, I regret that I can say nothing. During 1908 some attention was drawn to Travancore by the visits of three distinguished guests, the Metropolitan of India, Sir Archibald Hunter, and Lord Kitchener.

I may be allowed to bring still further up to date the vivid little world which I have tried to present in these pages, by quoting a few sentences from a letter just received from Travancore: 'The Diwan prospers, and is doing solid work. His New Year C.I.E. is an acknowledgment of genuine administrative talent, marvellous tact, unfailing courtesy, and untiring energy. . . . The Diwan's "driving power" is felt in every department of the State service, and his vigilance is unsleeping. . . . Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao has had no further honours. He certainly deserves all that the Government could give him, for he is really my highest ideal of an Indian gentleman. There is famine in Mysore, and I do not think he will retire this year, as he intended. . . . Nagam Aiya has turned aged in an alarmingly sudden fashion. He is now a negligible quantity in the

eyes of the time-servers of the State. The little Senior Rani has grown into a very charming personage. Her beauty is undeniable. For the rest, we stagnate. Indian Unrest does not concern us.'

The following pages will be found to contain a far larger number of parentheses than would be advisable upon strictly literary grounds. These are chiefly explanations, inserted for the benefit of readers in England, of words or of references which are familiar to Anglo-Indians. It has seemed better to be too explicit rather than not explicit enough—to dot every 'i,' and to cross every 't.' With the same motive, I will here collect a few of the more indispensable explanations. Careless folk in England must, please, by no means confound the words Brahmo and Brahman. A Brahmo is a member of the liberal Brahmo Samaj organisation which has now been happily leavening Indian life for eighty years past. Save for some phases of missionary work, it is the most hopeful thing that India contains, among so many things unhopeful. The word Brahman too often means the very opposite, expressing mere obscurantism. Brahmanism must needs be hated, so far as it connotes priestcraft. But it also, and very often, connotes something which it is hard not to sympathise with, namely, a trained and hereditary intellectualism, which is yet dreadfully given to exploiting all other classes. The word Diwan (often spelt Dewan) means the Prime Minister of a Native State. A Tehsildar is the local subordinate magistrate, with a jurisdiction

of a few hundred square miles, who is found all over British and Native India, generally by that name, yet called Mamlatdar in the Bombay Presidency, and Amildar in Mysore. A 'taluka,' or 'taluk,' is the sub-district ruled by a Tehsildar. A Diwan Peshkar, in the Malabar States, is the administrator of a group of a good many sub-districts, and nominally corresponds to a Collector in British territory. An undecorated British Resident in a Native State can, as I have known in several cases, if it comes to a crisis, forbid a given salute or marriage in the ruling family, or even determine the removal of his powers from a Maharaja. This is the Service, the Indian Political, which (outside of Malabar) is most often accused of harshness and of swollen head.

A rupee, it may be added, is sixteenpence, though practically meaning a good deal more, while fifteen rupees are a pound. An anna is a penny, although, again, signifying more.

Finally, I must renew my thanks to His Highness Rama Varma, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Maharaja of Travancore, who was my host during the greater part of the journey here recorded.

HENRY BRUCE.

PLYMOUTH, *April*, 1909.

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