

BANDITS OF BURMAH.

ROGUES WHO ANOINT THEMSELVES WITH COCOANUT OIL.

Some Exciting Adventures with the "Dacoits"—How the Bands Operate—Slippery and Dangerous Customers—Incidents of a Night—Religious Traits.

Burmah resembles Italy and Greece in one respect. It is a land of brigands. These robbers are called "Dacoits," and, like their European brethren, work in bands or companies having a chief with absolute authority, lieutenants and other subordinates.

They are daring, rapacious and cruel, setting no value on human life and exposing their own fearlessly. They resemble the European banditti in their wise policy of keeping good friends with the peasantry and toiling people. They thus insure supplies, for which they pay liberally, and gain the earliest intelligence of any pursuit by the government troops.

The Dacoits do not take any prisoners to their fastnesses to be ransomed; they simply lay their hands upon all the valuables they can carry away with them, and move off with great rapidity. One band operating in the country near Toungboon numbered about 500 men, under the leadership of Ming-loung, a cool, cunning and brave chief. He had some royal blood in his veins, being related to the king reigning at the time at Mandalay.

They go upon these expeditions in a perfectly nude state, having previously rubbed themselves well over with cocoanut or sesame oil. They proceed with their wholesale robbery in perfect silence, the only light they carry being the inevitable cigar or large cigarette, which each one smokes. They enter a house they puff away, and hold the lighted end to ascertain the exact whereabouts of any article they desire to carry off.

Should any one awaken and attempt to resist or raise an alarm, he or she is speedily dispatched with the keen dha, or knife, they all carry; but should any general alarm be raised and decided resistance made, then a retreat is ordered, and the party clear off as quick order as possible. There being few roads, properly so called in Burmah, retreat is in consequence easy for the thieves, who know every intricate footpath in the jungle.

A numerous band of Dacoits once, under the leadership of Ming-loung, had the audacity to make a raid upon the European cantonment in Prome. The night of the raid was dark and stormy, it being the commencement of the rainy moonsoon, or season. Everything was thus favorable to their design; absence of proper guards, and a pitchy dark atmosphere, faintly and fitfully illuminated here and there by the few oil lanterns suspended occasionally at the entrances of the bungalows.

Every one had retired to rest, and all was quiet at midnight. At about 1 a. m. the stillness was broken by the discharge of firearms. Several pistol shots rang out through the silence of the night, and in a short time shouts, execrations, etc., were heard, putting the whole cantonment in a state of uproar. Some of the young fellows started for the barracks and brought down a detachment of troops, furnished with lanterns, to make a thorough investigation of the cause of the disturbance.

Nothing, however, was discovered, nor any persons found to be near the cantonment, although several asserted that Dacoits had paid them a visit and that one or more of them was shot. After posting a proper guard, nothing further was done until daylight came.

ROUNDED UP BY COYOTES.

How the Jack Rabbits at Nevada are Gathered in by Wolves.

"You never saw the artistic way the Nevada wolves would round up the jack rabbits, I suppose," remarked Joseph Grandmeyer, the old time Nevada hunter. "It is the cleverest bit of strategy I ever heard of. There are several kinds of wolves all through the state, but the coyotes are by far the plenteous. In the Humboldt, Smoky, and other valleys the coyotes form in military line, oftentimes along some old road, as I have most frequently seen them, and thus systematically go on a regular drive.

They stretch out over a great area of country, the coyotes being stationed somewhere near a mile apart. Once they get sight of a jack rabbit his name is Dennis. He may take to the sage brush and elude the coyotes for a time. Fifty or a hundred coyotes can thus in a short time take in a terrible lot of rabbits. If the coyotes are hungry it is about the rarest sport one can witness. They go at the hunt with so much ardor and with such perfect system.

"A coyote on his own account can usually forage successfully for food. He is sly, like a fox, and, always with an eye out for number one, he generally has his belly full and lots of fat sticking to his ribs; but if the weather has been bad and he gets separated from his fellows on a reconnoitering tour he may have a hard time of it. In the sagebrush a jack rabbit can generally manage to elude a coyote. He can get in and out quicker, while the coyote, being bigger, is delayed by the brush, and can't get in and out like a rabbit.

"But after a lot of hungry wolves have held a council of war and decided to go on a hunt, it is time for the rabbits to hunt their holes. There is always music in the air about that time, and the weird howls of the wolves sound like a distant reveille. The rabbits seem to understand the situation, too, and scamper hither and thither over the plains and rolling hills. It is not long, however, till the wolves marshal their forces. They begin by making a wide detour over the hills, lessening the size of the circle as they advance, and holding all the rabbits they get in as skillfully as a fisherman handles his seine.

"The jack rabbits are all of a tremble when they see how their enemies have them hedged about, and jump helplessly into the air, and utter pitiful cries. The wolves merely watch the sides warily, and look on vindictively, with tongues lolling out through their white teeth, and eyes sparkling, expressive of the knowledge that they will soon have some fine eating. As the wolves draw nearer together the quick snap, snap of their jaws is heard as they snip the throats of their victims, and they fall dead from loss of blood.

"When every rabbit is killed, the coyotes sit down on their haunches to a very comfortable banquet, and never let up until they have taken aboard so much rabbit meat that they can hardly stir. Then they slowly meander off to their homes, wherever they may be, and if there is a lot of rabbit meat left, as there may be, they put in an appearance again, at stated intervals, until the whole is consumed.

"After a lot of coyotes have had a talk, so to speak, and decided to go on a hunt, they will sometimes go to a rough region, where they know the rabbits abound, and lay siege for them in another way. Certain brigades will clamber upon the high rocks and hill tops surrounding a canyon, and drive the game down into the depths below, other relays of wolf s having previously been placed at the entrance and at the weak places. They oftentimes get a great many into a canyon in this way, and thus speedily finish them. It is generally in the very early morning that the coyotes sound their reveille and go after the rabbits."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Overcrowding in Siberia.

The overcrowding of the Siberian prisons is appalling. "The Tomsk transportation prison," writes the Siberian Gazette of that city, "is overcrowded. To the 1,520 people we had here 700 new ones have been added, and so the prison which was built for 900 people contains 2,200. There are 207 persons on the sick list." The central prison, on Sakhalin island, which was built for 600 people, contained 1,103 in 1879. Michela, a Siberian official and ex-prison director, writes about two prisons which were under his control as follows: "The jailer brought me to the rooms. Everywhere dirt, overcrowding, wetness, want of air and light. After having visited the rooms I entered the hospital. As soon as I entered the first room I was involuntarily thrown back by the inconceivable smell. The water closets were luxurious apartments in comparison with the hospital. Everywhere the number of prisoners is thrice the number permitted by the law. At Verkhendinsk, for instance, the jail is built for 210 inmates, and it usually contains 800."—Michalkoff in Chicago News.

How to Become Learned.

Any man of mature years who has enjoyed all the advantages of a free public primary, grammar and high school, a preparatory academy, a college, and a professional school, will testify that what he has learned by himself is of infinitely more value to him than all he ever acquired in all the institutions of learning he ever attended. Books on all subjects are now so cheap and plenty, public libraries are so large and numerous, instruction in special studies is so easily obtained that any person who can read, write and compute numbers may become as learned as the wisest. He can study what he knows or thinks will afford him the most pleasure or profit. He can cultivate his head, hands, or heels, his eye, tongue, or ear, his manners, morals and language to any extent he desires, at an expense not exceeding what a young man ordinarily spends for cigars or a girl for candy. If a person wishes to become learned there is little trouble in accomplishing what he wishes.—Chicago Times.

The Bigness of Texas.

Says an imaginative statistician: "If Texas were a circular lake and France a circular island, the island could be anchored centrally in the lake out of sight of land twenty-two miles from any point on the encircling shore."—Chicago Herald.

IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

SOME OF THE STRANGE SIGHTS SEEN IN ITS STREETS.

The Turk's Fez and Funny Trousers. Crooked Streets and the Dogs Thereof. Shops and Peddlers of All Sorts—Driving a Bargain.

One of the first things you will notice is the fez, worn by all the Turks. It is a red felt cap with no visor, with a flat top and black silk tassel. Turkish law requires every male subject of the sultan to wear this kind of a cap. The men wear very funny trousers. There are no close fitting pantaloons, such as men wear in America, but loose, baggy contrivances, which look like two large bags fastened together at the top. These are gathered around the waist with a colored girdle, which is sometimes very handsome.

The streets are not much better than our narrow, crooked, and dirty streets. It is such an unenjoyable thing to walk through them, and the dogs are quite impossible. You never met so many dogs before. They are big, yellow animals, and live in the streets. They have no owners, but shift for themselves as well as they can. You will stumble over them if you are not careful, for they seem to think that the street belongs to themselves. They lie down anywhere, before a shop or in the middle of the street, and expect you to turn out for them. These dogs organize themselves into bands, and each company has its own district. It is dangerous for a dog to leave his proper territory, and he is likely to pay dearly for trespassing within his neighbors' limits.

Canine Generosity.

The dogs are generous to each other. At the soldiers' barracks the dogs receive the fragments after every meal. One day when the food was brought out only two dogs were in sight. These might have had a grand feast by themselves. They did not take a mouthful, but started off at full speed in opposite directions. Soon their barking summoned the whole pack, and they ate their dinner together.

I know you will laugh at the shops in Constantinople. They are not like the beautiful stores you have seen in our cities, with large plate-glass show windows and long rows of elegant counters. In Constantinople the principal stores are in bazaars. These bazaars are large one story buildings, with streets running through them in every direction. On each side of these streets are the little shops. The floor is about two feet above the street, and the owner usually sits on the floor with his legs crossed under him. The room is small, so that he can reach many of his goods without rising. As we pass along we can look in at the various shops and examine their goods.

Let us stop at this dry goods store. As soon as the man sees us looking at his goods, he takes his pipe from his mouth and begins to chatter away in a very lively fashion, showing us some piece of goods. If you show any desire to make a purchase, he will name a high price, and pretend he is giving you the article. If you offer a much smaller sum he will fold up the cloth and put it away with a gesture of horror. When you turn away, however, he will call you back and take your own price or else make a new offer much below the first.

The Carpenter's Shop.

One of the strangest places is the carpenter shop. Here you will see a man seated on the floor behind a turning lathe. Instead of using a treadle as our workmen do, he has a bow and string which he draws back and forth with his right hand, and so makes the wheel revolve. He holds the chisel in his left hand and presses it against the wood with his knee. Is that not a strange way to use a turning lathe?

You might think, where the stores are so close together and the streets so narrow, that peddlers would have a poor chance. Still there are a great many of them who sell fruit. These men carry trays of fruit on their heads. When they find a good place to stop, they set down the tray upon a high stool, take their scales from their shoulders and are ready for business. They sell almost everything by weight and are usually careful, though the scales may be very rude. I have seen them made simply of two wooden saucers, suspended by strings from a straight stick. The bar was held by another string fastened in the middle, and the eye must judge when the scales are balanced. The weights may be bits of iron or even broken pieces of stone or brick. On the tray these peddlers have large, luscious grapes, and will give you all you can eat for a cent or two. There are fresh green figs which do not look much like the dried ones that come to us in boxes. The quinces are large and the people cook them with meat. The chestnuts are larger than ours, though not quite so sweet. They are roasted, taken from the shell and cooked with meat and potatoes in a very nice stew.

Other men carry tanks of water or lemonade on their backs, and jingle cups in their hands to attract attention. The fanniest way to carry water and wine is in the skins of hogs or buffaloes. When full these look almost like animal skins which the skin has been taken. Thus you may often meet a man with what looks like one or two hogs on his back. The men who carry these wine skins, as well as other burdens, have queer saddles fastened to their backs, and put the load on these.

In the eating rooms you may see little stoves with soup cooking on them, or bits of meat roasting on a spit over the coals. The odors are inviting, but you may go hungry, unless you can talk their strange language. In Constantinople almost every language of the world is used.—Detroit Free Press.

Said Ever So Many Things.

"Oh, George!" cried young Mrs. Merry, running to meet her husband at the door. "I've something the best to tell you." "Yes," said George, "what is it?" "Why, I don't you think—the baby can talk! Yes, sir, actually talk. He's said ever and ever so many things. Come right into the nursery and hear him." George went in. "Now, baby," said mamma, persuasively, "talk some for papa. Say 'How do you do, papa?'" "Go, go, go, go," says baby. "Hear him!" shrieks mamma, ecstatically. "Wasn't that just as plain as plain can be?" George says it is, and tries to think it is, too. "Now say, 'I'm glad to see you, papa.'" "Da, da, boo, hee, boo." "Did you ever?" cries mamma. "He can just say everything! Now you precious little, honey, bunny boy, say, 'Are you well, papa?'" "Boo, hee, go, go, go." "There it is," said mamma. "Did you ever know a child of his age who could really talk as he does! He can just say anything he wants to; can't you, you own dear, little, darling precious, you?" "Go, go, go, dee, dee, di, go." "Hear that? He says, 'Of course I can,' just as plainly as anybody could say it. Oh, George, it really worries me to have him so phenomenally bright. These very brilliant babies nearly always die young."—Woman.

Wedding in a Greek Church.

The prettiest wedding procession I have seen was in Constantinople—a stately and rejoicing march, though without music. Fancy a narrow street of high stone houses with projecting balconies, latticed with slats so close together that persons within can see without being seen. A long line of sedan chairs, cushioned and curtained with satin, each borne by two men holding poles, and keeping step together like trained horses; their uniform braided jackets, baggy trousers and scarlet fez made festive by a bunch of lilacs on the bosom—for it was rejoicing spring, and the gardens of the Bosphorus were radiant with color and bloom.

At the head of the column an armed attendant, in gorgeous costume, with whip in hand, cleared away dogs and gaping idlers. They were en route for the Greek church outside Pera, and the beauty of the beautiful race was on the bride. The shining face at the window was like some lovely human flower, too tender for exposure, blossoming under glass. On the classic head a wreath of orange flowers, to be laid away on the morrow and carefully kept for her burial.

As they near the church door a bridal chorus rules the slow steps of the carriers; and when the bride, lovely all in her white, steps from the silken seat, bonbons are showered on her by waiting friends. The bridegroom, also crowned with a wreath, joins her, and they stand with clasped hands at the altar while the long ritual is read by the priest. Three times the wickets are interchanged by the priest in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These times the bride is led by him round the altar; a glass of consecrated wine is offered first to the bridegroom, then to the bride, afterward to the best man and first bridesmaid, whose duty it is to be godfather and godmother to the children. The ceremony ends with kisses, congratulations and leave takings, much the same as in our own country.—Susan Wallace in Sunday School Times.

The Shah's Finest Charge.

The Persians of today, as those of old, are a "horsey" race, born riders, fond of their horses, looking never complete till seen in the saddle, with all the luxurious trappings and ornaments they love to bestow upon their persons and their quadrupeds. The beauty and strength beyond of a horse, together with the excellence of his apparel, are an unfailing indication of the owner's wealth and station. And such harness, such saddles, girths and blankets! It is the Arabian Nights redivivus.

On race day last spring, after the contests were over, the shah caused his finest charger, a Turcoman of magnificent proportions, to be brought in front of the huge pavilion tent wherein the whole European and American diplomatic corps was assembled. What a fine fellow the animal was, and how he was admired and caressed by the ladies! But what was especially noticeable about him was the splendor of his accoutrements. A saddle blanket of the finest casimere, every square inch of which was worth several gold pieces; his broad bridle thickly incrustated with diamonds and emeralds and rubies, each the size of a hazelnut; the bit of pure gold, and the saddle straps and other pieces made of velvet and embossed with artistic lumps of gold and precious stones. The whole outfit was worth a large fortune; and this was but one of many.—Wolf von Schierbrand in The Cosmopolitan.

Seen in the Czar's Palace.

On the way to the apartments of state my distinguished escort, Prince Barintinsky, stopped, and, running his finger across a mahogany panel, said: "You see there is no dust here; it makes no difference whether the emperor is absent or at home, it is always the same." Every room, of which there are several hundred, is kept in rigorous cleanliness. In the art gallery the individuality of the Czar Nicholas was the most striking feature; a superb life size portrait here, a marble bust there, a bronze statue yonder, gave a good idea of the handsomest man of his day. A veritable Apollo of physical perfection, with a callous face, expressive of autocratic pride and affected humility, the face of a typical Romanoff, who could, if necessary, like Peter the Great, drink bumper of wine with one hand and decapitate with the other. It was the likeness of a type I had never seen in life, and only from the hands of antique sculptors had I witnessed in the form of chiseled marble.—Jesse Shepard in Chicago Journal.

Cuban Cart and Cartman.

There are several thousand mule and ox carts in and about Havana. You cannot find in Cuba a dray or four wheeled wagon. This Cuban cart is literally a great affair. The wheels are frequently ten feet in diameter, the fellos six inches broad and as thick, the spokes as big as your leg and the hub like a half bushel basket. Many are covered like the old "emigrant" wagons; great rush patches dangle from beneath, and the shafts are together larger than the little mule's entire body. A tremendous load is piled upon this cart, and benignly perched upon that, is your Cuban cartman, with shirt rolled to the shoulders, wide linen breeches, sprawling slippers, and, despite the sun, a jaunty cap of red or blue, no larger than and precisely the same shape of a full grown mushroom. The caps tell the nationality. Those wearing red ones are from Navarre, while the Biscayans are invariably told by the blue.—Edgar L. Wakeman's Letter.

Fruits as a Food.

Fruits in general contain but little nutriment, but are of value as a food from their appetizing and pleasant taste; from their supplying in an agreeable way water necessary to food, and from the general laxative effect of the acid present. In addition, both fruits and vegetables supply the body with potash. In this way they counteract the scurvy engendered by a diet of salted meats. The only methods of preserving foods known to ancients were drying and salting, both of which fail to preserve the flavor.—Chicago Times.

New Kind of Pavement.

A new sort of pavement consisting of alternate hard and soft blocks gives a surface that will never grow smooth and slippery.—New York Sun.

The Plattsmouth Herald Is enjoying a Boom in both its DAILY AND WEEKLY EDITIONS.

The Year 1888

Will be one during which the subjects of national interest and importance will be strongly agitated and the election of a President will take place. The people of Cass County who would like to learn of

Political, Commercial and Social Transactions

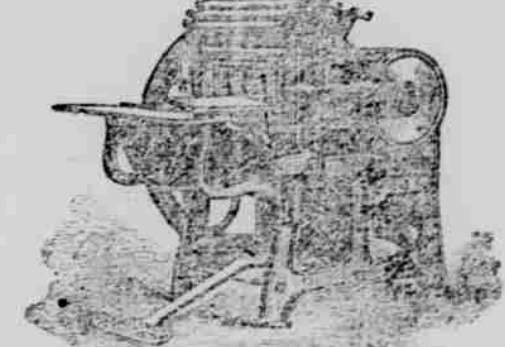
of this year and would keep pace with the times should

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