

WANDERINGS & WONDERINGS

*INDIA, BURMA, KASHMIR, CEYLON, SINGAPORE, JAVA,
SIAM, JAPAN, MANILA, FORMOSA, KOREA, CHINA,
CAMBODIA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND,
ALASKA, THE STATES*

BY

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"A FIGHT WITH DISTANCES," ETC.

WITH PORTRAIT, MAP, AND SEVEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING CROSS ROAD

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Sussex." "That," said he, "was my grandmother, the widow of the Dean of Battle." And this in Gujerat!

I was now to prepare for Girnar Mountain, and by my notes I find that I left Songad station, on the 25th of February, at 2.29 by Dhola and Jetalsar Junctions for Junagadh, and covered these ninety-six miles by 9.30 p.m. I had telegraphed to the Dewar Sahib Haridas Viharidas, for whom I had a letter from Government House, but he was absent. I was, however, met at the station by Secretary Rajosali Chhaganlal Harilal Pandya, who conveyed me in a carriage to the bungalow of his Highness the Nawab Sahib of Junagadh, where I was his guest, including a welcome glass of champagne after my day's journey.

At 8.30 on the following morning, my friend and protector (who spoke excellent English) again appeared with a carriage to take me a drive round, the excursion to Girnar being fixed for the morrow. We first drove to some most extraordinary underground courts or halls, which had been discovered and dug out some twenty years before; the uses to which they were applied remaining a mystery. They are double-storied and lighted well from above, and have been carved out with care, the pillars and capitals being well worthy of attention in this respect. It is supposed they may have served for governmental purposes. This mystery overhanging them of course lends them a special charm, as mystery always does if there is any trace of imagination in the brain; because it gives rise to speculation, and

speculation, whether fruitless in airy nothings, or ruinous at the gaming table, is always alluring. There was, however, very little room for speculation as to what I was next shown, the by far most enormous rhinoceros that I had ever seen. Next after this alarming, and almost impossible, animal, came the large unsightly boulder, incised all over, and irregularly so—the Asóka Stone, said to exhibit Edicts of Asóka, some 270 years B.C.; and then came a walk in the zoological gardens, where, among various engaging flowering shrubs and plants, showing that the more graceful pursuits and studies are cherished here, we came upon a centre enclosure of rock and water containing crocodiles. Boys were at hand, as usual, for a few coppers, with stones to disturb these basking reptiles, and make them move and show themselves. And nothing could be more frightful than to see their wide angry jaws, quite close by, as they opened their tongueless mouths and showed their frightful armoury of jagged teeth, as they dived into the water. “Did it ever strike you,” said the Pandya, “to ask yourself, How could the Deity create such hideous things?” “But,” said I, “they are not hideous to themselves, and there must be love even among crocodiles. Besides which, the Deity made house flies.”

The next visit was the most curious of all; it was to a Vishna temple, called the Swami Náráyan Temple. My friend belonged to this temple, so that we went in freely. Many were present, and a most curious proceeding was going forward. The gods were being fed. All we saw of this proceeding were