

A WINTER
IN
INDIA AND MALAYSIA
AMONG THE
METHODIST MISSIONS

BY
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LETTER XXXII.

AT CALCUTTA.

THE run from the Allahabad Conference to Calcutta used twenty-four hours, but it was in good company. Bishop Thoburn, Superintendent Oldham and wife, McCoy, Warne, Craig, and their wives, Mr. Brewster, Miss Wisner, and others made up a charming party. The country down the Gangetic valley was level, with some of it wild, but much of it green with growing wheat, and other parts fixed into rice-fields. These are made by forming a small dike or bank on all sides, so that the water necessary for this cereal to grow in can be retained. Palms of two or three species increased, and also impenetrable thickets of bamboo. After a chilly night-ride, in which our ever-attendant roll of bedding, or resai, was a most valuable accompaniment, we came at early morning to the city of Kali and were soon at the various places to which we were assigned in the homes and hearts of the missionaries.

Methodism has a strong hold in Calcutta. There is the English-speaking Methodist Church, the first to be started in this city under the labors of William Taylor and Bishop Thoburn, now with a membership of three hundred. This has proved the parent of all the rest. There is a hopeful work among the Hindustani people; one very successful among the Bengalis, the main part of the natives in this portion of India; the Seaman's

A drive alone to the well-known Zoological Gardens of Calcutta was one of the rich afternoons to a transient sight-seer. The assistant superintendent, a native, Mr. B. L. Dutt, on my asking in vain for a catalogue of the animals and birds, kindly went with me several hours, explaining much that I could not otherwise have known. In this garden I found a very full representation of the fauna of rich tropical Asia. Here was the white peacock, as fond of his faded feathers as those who retain the brightest tints; strange monkeys—one, the Hoolock gibbon, from Assam, whose exceedingly loud cries could be heard in the farthest corner of the garden; the nyghau, or “blue cow” of India, a thick, heavy deer common in the jungles; a curious cow from Chittagong called the gyat; the hog-deer, as thick-set as a goat, or more swine-like; the wild hog, black and heavy-built, and the two-horned, hairy-eared rhinoceros. The birds were also fine. The famous mandarin duck from China was the most gorgeous of its kind I have ever seen. Toucans, cockatoos, herons, red macaws, the argus pheasant, jungle fowls from which our common barn-yard fowl came, and many others were there. In a pond was the snakefish, from Lake Baikal, that would swim around on the top of the water, with its eyes out of it. Some Bactrian dromedaries, patient and evidently of the most hardy endurance, as their country would demand, slowly munched the hay given them. A department was given up to the cat family, and in it were various species, from the possible wild progenitor of the house-cat to the royal Bengal tiger and majestic African lion. Among the tigers was one that had a bad reputation. He was accused of having eaten three hundred people before he was captured. His capture was accomplished by luring him into a pit, where he was wound up in nets and