

LETTERS OF
GILBERT LITTLE STARK

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downhill, to the railway station, Tjandjoer, where we caught the through express towards Surabaya and the uttermost ends of the earth. The scenery through the Preanger is varied and beautiful, especially the fertile, mountain-enclosed plain into which we peered as we rushed along a lofty hillside. A little time after noon we descended from the hills, and all the rest of the day we travelled through a gloomy jungle-swamp, where the tiger and rhinoceros and python lived in grumpy majesty, until the railroad drove them into still deeper recesses.

Towards evening we reached Maos and all alighted for the night, as the excellent Java trains do not run at night. We found a government hotel here, a big marble-porched *pasangrahan*, where we lived in luxury overnight for the modest stipend of four florins, about a dollar and sixty cents. The host was a young Dutchman, very fond of hunting, and he told us that so far this year he has bagged one banteng or wild buffalo, — an animal more dangerous than the tiger, — eight stags, twelve deer, and sixty wild pigs. His hunting-ground is within half an hour of the hotel. A few months ago, a friend of his came from Europe to get a Javanese rhinoceros, which is reputed very rare, but after six weeks in the

country, he bagged an excellent specimen of the ferocious one-horned type.

At six on Wednesday our train continued. We travel second-class here, and find that every one who lives here does the same, unless he is traveling at the government expense. The road-beds are good, the cars very comfortable, and the trains run a little ahead of schedule time. At shortly before ten we reached Djokjokarta, capital of the largest of the protected Native States.

Love to all, GILBERT.

DJOKJOKARTA,

Monday, December 18, 1907.

DEAR FAMILLE, — At Buitenzorg and in the Preanger we saw the Soeudanese people, about whom I will write you later when we return to their district, but from Maos on, we have been in the Java of the real Javanese. Djokja, as this place is called, is the centre of real Javanese life, and we have certainly enjoyed our visit here.

The city is a beautiful one, with avenues shaded by the immense trees that are such a feature of every town on the island. Most of the three hundred foreign inhabitants live on the main streets, where the hotels and government buildings are gathered, leaving the rest of the

was a small, tawdry pagoda of gilt and plaster, and a group of tall poles with flapping streamers stood in the monastery enclosure.

The hills rose quite close at hand now, and our road turned north, so that we travelled with them on our right. The teak trees grew farther and farther apart, and great clumps of bamboo, giant bamboo, threw delicate plumes across the roadway. The leaf of the bamboo is so tiny that at a distance this foliage seemed a beautiful green mist with the rich sunlight filtering through, and when the clumps were detached enough to show the entire outline, they looked like spraying fountains or huge bouquets.

While we were eating tiffin by the roadside, a black buffalo with magnificent horns, fully six feet from tip to tip, came slowly down the theatrical roadway, stopping now and then to sniff at us. At a distance of about one hundred yards he charged away into the bamboo-jungle, at right angles to the road. I confess it gave me a little start, five minutes later, to see his eyes and those great horns of his gleaming through the leaves at the roadside, not ten feet away. These beasts from whom a tiger will run, and who in a wild state are considered a close third to the elephant and rhinoceros for dangerous ferocity, have an

extreme dislike for the smell of a white man, and will often charge as soon as they catch his scent; and although I have passed close to the nose of many a water-buffalo without offending his delicate nostrils, I have heard so many tales at first hand of adventures with them that I like to keep to leeward if possible. This fellow was merely curious, however, and soon crashed away through the trees.

After tiffin I walked for nine or ten miles and left the outfit far behind; there was not much travel at this point, and except for a few small parties of Kachins, who stole quietly by in their barbaric red and blue clothes, with swords across their breasts or backs, and bows and arrows in hand, I had the road quite to myself. The foliage grew more and more dense, and the arch of graceful fronds was thirty to fifty feet above my head. The road was like a painted vista, so fresh were the colors of forest and sky and so regular the patches and fretwork of shadow; a painted scene of blue and green and gold. There was no sound except the creaking of bamboo-stems as they swayed or rubbed gently against each other, the murmur of frequent streams, and the incessant music of bird-calls. The birds here were more numerous and beautiful than I