

FROM THE BLACK SEA  
THROUGH  
PERSIA AND INDIA

BY  
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*ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR*



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SPV

fully ignorant in regard to socialism, dynamite bombs, and epidemics.

It might, then, become tedious to follow always the same routine: to leave the island, as we did, at sunset; to look back at the fringe of tufted palms fading into the dull red of the sky; to glide along under the palace walls; to land always at the same water-worn marble steps, and drive back in the twilight through the crowded bazaar and the bowers of tropical foliage in the park. But when one wearies of so much repetition a telegram to Bombay will insure a cabin on one of the new fast boats, and within eighteen days one may enjoy the wet winter twilight on the boulevards, under the gas-jets and a dripping umbrella; find the same men in their accustomed corners at the Salle d'Armes, the same crowd of idlers passing in and out of the Café de la Paix, and hear again, as of old, the hoarse cries of the news venders: "Résultats complets des courses!" Possibly his surroundings may gain in value with the souvenir of Oudeypore as a foil.

## V

No better spot could be found than this city in which to observe the ways of high-caste native life. As I remember the resplendent personages who came to make brief visits of ceremony or to pay their respects to some passing notability of official or diplomatic rank, the glittering bravery of their attire and the elaborate trappings of their horses, the inimitable twist of their blue-back beards, and the deferential grace of their "salaams," carefully graded to the correct degree, the melancholy truth is borne in upon me that the "dude" of Western descent is, after all, but a crude and unfinished production—in fact, he is "not in it at all." The term Western, used in this

connection, and from the standpoint of Rajpootana, is sweepingly comprehensive. When arrayed in his court dress, and mounted on his horse caparisoned with corresponding splendor, the Rajpoot noble is at his best, and in the full glare of sunlight he is decorative to a dazzling degree. One toilet which I had the opportunity of studying in detail might have furnished sufficient inspiration to Worth for an entire series of fresh "creations." The scheme of color, as a whole, might be termed a "symphony" in white, relieved by color sparingly used, and by the sparkle of gems. The wearer of this costume, who appeared thus attired on state occasions only, was a



IN THE BAZAR, OUDEYPORE

young man of twenty, and sat his horse like a white statue. A long-skirted tunic or frock of white muslin, close-fitting white trousers, and a rose-colored turban with a broad band of gold lace and tall flashing plume of dark heron feathers and gold filagree were the salient points. Other accessories were the sword-belt, crossing his breast and encircling his waist, of dark green velvet, richly worked with unalloyed gold, and thickly studded with emeralds, rubies, and brilliants; a transparent yellow shield of rhinoceros hide, with knobs of black and gold enamel; a sash of stiff gold lace, with a crimson thread running through the gold; bracelets of the dainty workmanship known as Jeypore enamel thickly jewelled, which he wore on his wrists and arms; and there were strings of dull, uncut stones about his neck. The skirts of his tunic were pleated with many folds, and stood stiffly out, like the skirts of a "première danseuse" in the ballet; and when he mounted his horse a servant on each side held them so that they might not be crushed. Four valets had charge of this costume, and it took them some little time to array their master. The trappings of the horse were scarcely less elaborate; his neck was covered on one side with silver plates, and his mane, which hung on the other side, was braided, and lengthened by black fringes relieved by silver ornaments. White yaks' tails hung from beneath the embroidered saddle cover on both sides; and his head, encased in a headstall of white enamelled leather and silver, topped with tall aigrettes, was tied down by an embroidered scarf in order to give his neck the requisite curve. The idea of the pendant yaks' tails is an old one, and they probably served in the first instance as fly-brushes, being always in motion with the movements of the horse; but increased in number, they serve the double purpose of helping the decorative effect

and keeping the rider's skirts from being soiled. The every-day dress of this gentleman was far more quiet in tone; but he seldom appeared twice in the same turban, which was of quite a different shape from that worn with the state costume, being small and closely folded, and it constantly varied in color.

One of the most striking and characteristic faces belonged to an officer of high rank who called at the Residency in the company of the Maharana's brother, and it may be described as typifying, like a composite photograph, the higher Rajpoot race. This face, when seen in profile, closely resembled the type of the Assyrian warriors and courtiers on the bass-reliefs of Nineveh: there was the



RAI META PANNA LAL, PRIME-MINISTER

same straight line of the forehead and nose, and the long, narrow eye, with full projecting eyeball, which appears in the bass-reliefs to be either out of drawing, or to be greatly conventionalized, but which probably rendered the leading race characteristics with a certain degree of accuracy. This modern prototype of the Assyrian wore his jet-black beard horizontally trained to follow the upward twist of his curled mustaches, and his tunic or caftan, of purple silk embroidered with a palm-leaf design in dull gold, fitted him so tightly as to accentuate the rotundity of his person, as he was, to draw it mildly, inclined to fulness of habit.

Another representative of the same exclusive order, whom I chanced to meet just as he was taking his leave, being on his way to join the Maharana's hunting-party, had quite the same profile, and a still more pronounced upward curl of beard and mustache. He was the ruler of a neighboring state, and a dark jewelled turban was his only mark of rank. His elephant was waiting on the gravelled walk, and as his master descended the steps the great beast knelt for him to mount. These "mashers" of ancient lineage do not shine with the same splendor in European dress. In this respect they are not as apt as the Japanese—which, however, is not much to their discredit—and two centuries of contact with the best English models have not taught them to wear their costume successfully. There is a sort of "compromise," a sporting costume, in which the English element is limited to a tweed jacket or blouse, and which is rather effective. Could we look back a few centuries, not to go further than the Norman conquest, to a time when but few families of the governing race had emerged from obscurity, and when the Plantagenets were still parvenus, we should undoubtedly find this long-eyed, black-bearded gentry living in much the same fashion as to-day, and wearing the same elaborate and glittering costumes, which, if we may judge by the old paintings and portraits which have come down to us, have not changed in any essential particular since the days of Tamerlane. The Mogul emperors, who were descended from that conqueror of kings, much as they would have liked to exterminate the whole Rajpoot race, seem to have adopted their costume with but slight modifications. Sir Thomas Roe describes at great length the costume of his Majesty on the occasion of a "darbar:" "On his head he wore a rich Turbant, with a plume of horne (heron) tops, not