

*India Description 1802*

II

VOYAGES AND TRAVELS  
TO  
INDIA, CEYLON,  
THE RED SEA,  
ABYSSINIA, AND EGYPT,  
IN THE YEARS  
1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, AND 1806.

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BY

GEORGE, VISCOUNT VALENTIA.

~~George, Viscount Valencia~~

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME

INDIA.—CEYLON.

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liked it much had it been more tender. His Excellency ordered a part of it to be sent home to me. The day was now far advanced, and I dreaded the heat in returning; from this fear, however, I was soon relieved by his Excellency's information that he had ordered his cuss palanquin\* to be in waiting for me, and begged I would use it. I accepted it with thanks, and a fellow running by my side with water kept the cuss so wet, that I arrived at the palace as cool as if I had passed three miles in England, whilst an inner lining of linen prevented me from being touched by the water.

We were conducted to the palace, where the Na-waub held a durbar, seated in state on his musnud, which was handsomely covered with silver plates, with ornaments of gold. Over his head was a canopy of velvet richly embroidered, and supported by four light silver pillars to match the musnud. On his right hand were seated the English gentlemen; on his left, his sons and brothers; the different courtiers, eunuchs, &c. stood behind and in front. He was dressed perfectly plain. As soon as he mounted the musnud, his family and servants began to present their nazurs. First his brothers made theirs; next his sons: from all these he received the nazur himself, embraced them, and with his own hands put on their heads turbans ornamented with jewels. They were then clothed with khelauts by his chief eunuch, and afterwards he himself presented them with shawls, belts, swords, shields, and daggers. They then presented another nazur, made their bow, and retired to their seats. From some of the others he

\* The long fibrous and sweet-scented roots of a grass, which are formed into the covering of the palanquin, and the water thrown on them.

made a servant take the nazur, and gave them nothing. Others he embraced and took it himself, giving them dresses of different values, but not always putting on the turban, or any part himself. The artists brought specimens of their works. The General must have been nearly melted, as he received two entire dresses, all of which, except the turbans, he continued to wear at the same time. Think what he must have suffered with two shields, two swords suspended by large belts, two daggers, four robes, and four shawls thrown over his shoulders in such an excessively hot day! His Excellency was in high good humour, but said he would delay receiving the nazurs of the inferior people till evening, that he might no longer detain us in the heat. He took me to see a small temple he had built in the gardens, over a basin for gold and silver fish. It was circular, and adorned with paintings, in compartments, of the most beautiful fish, copied from a French work. After taking a proper leave, I adjourned to the hummaum, to wash off the dust of the day.

Having breakfasted with his Excellency, I went to see his menagerie. The birds were few, and not curious. A great number of different goats were assembled, and most fantastically painted. A few deer of the country, a tiger, a tiger-cat, and rhinoceros, were also there; but the most interesting sight was several goats from Cashmere. The Nawaub has tried to procure the breed, but without success. The Cashmerians will only send him down castrated males. The fine wool, from which the shawls are made, grows only in very small quantities under the hair in winter. It is an additional protection granted to them by Providence in the mountains. Probably were they removed to the level country of Oude, the quantity would be so much diminished

as to answer no purpose. I could discover very little on those in his Excellency's possession.

The amusement of one day was to be a fight of elephants. The plain was crowded with spectators, and with a body of foot and cavalry armed with spears. The elephants chosen were in must,\* and attended each by their female, whom they followed quietly till they saw the crowd. They then set off at a very quick pace, and would easily have overtaken the people on foot, had not their attention been called off by the horsemen, who rode up so close to them as sometimes even to touch them with their spears. The elephant thus touched instantly turned his resentment against the horseman, whom, however, he pursued in vain. The instant he caught a sight of his antagonist, he rushed forward to meet him; and the shock was so violent as generally to raise one of them on his hind feet. Their trunks were elevated in the air, and they continued to push against each other for some time; one generally receding as the other advanced. I was surprised that the mohouts were able to keep their seats.† They seemed anxious for the glory of their animals, encouraged them, and drove them on with their sharp iron spears. After it was thought that a pair had fought sufficiently, they were allured off the ground by their females, who were indeed the cause of all this warfare. The first pair were cowards, and ran away: the second and third behaved very well; but the fourth gave us the greatest amusement. The strongest drove the other into the river, where he followed him. They threw water against each other, and

\* Heat.

† On these occasions they sit on the centre of the animal's back, to be out of the reach of the trunk of the adverse elephant.

made several attacks. The weakest, however, when he came to the opposite bank, retreating still backwards, found the elevation of the ground assist him so much, that he made a stand, and prevented the other from advancing. For some time they continued looking at each other, till the mohout of the weaker drove his elephant into the middle of the stream, where they had a last struggle, in which the victory was undecided. It was considered as a very admirable fight, and certainly was a scene well worth seeing once, but not oftener. There was no variety, nor was any skill shewn in their attack: it was mere brutal force; and the only visible injury was the excoriation of their faces. From the elevated summer-house we had an excellent view of the whole without any danger; fortunately no accident happened.

I went one day to view the Ina Khanah, where are deposited a part of the whimsical curiosities purchased by the late Vizier Asof-ud-Dowlah, consisting of several thousand English prints framed and glazed, Chinese drawings and ornaments, mirrors of all shapes and sizes, lustres, and innumerable other articles of European manufacture. The clocks are the most valuable part of the collection, several of them being richly ornamented with jewels. Asof-ud-Dowlah was anxious to procure every thing that was singular, or that he heard praised; the price was of no consequence; and the imbecility of his mind rendered him a dupe of those who, like general Martin, placed no bounds to their extortions. One of his objects was more worthy of a sovereign, which was to render his capital an object of admiration. For this purpose, he always inquired after what was considered as splendid in other countries. When one of his ministers returned from Calcutta, he asked

him what was the finest work he had seen there; and on being told that it was Fort William, he immediately insisted on having a Fort William built at Lucknow. It was with great difficulty he could be induced to abandon his plan, on a representation of its inutility, and great expence. The Rumi Derwázah was built after the model of one of the gates of Constantinople, at least as he supposed, though it is of that light, elegant, but fantastic architecture, which has some little resemblance to the Gothic and Morisco, but none to the Grecian. The Imaumbarah, the mosque attached to it, and the gateways that lead to it, are beautiful specimens of this architecture. From the brilliant white of the composition, and the minute delicacy of the workmanship, an enthusiast might suppose that Genii had been the artificers. The vast sums expended by Asof-ud-Dowlah brought to Lucknow merchants of large property from all parts of India, and the trade between Cashmere and Bengal in a considerable degree took the same direction. The town rapidly increased in extent and prosperity; and even now when trade receives less encouragement under Saadut Ali, it does not visibly decline.

My boats arrived from Calcutta with my heavy baggage April 22; having had a very favourable voyage for this season. They left Calcutta on the 22nd of February. All my servants and my Dewan Gopinaut had previously arrived, so that I now found myself completely settled. The whole town has this day assumed a melancholy appearance, as it is the eve of the Moharam, a festival of ten days duration, most religiously kept by the followers of Ali, in commemoration of the death of Hassan and Hossein, on which occasion they change their coloured turbans and sashes for

black ones, unless entitled to wear green, as descendants of Mahomed. The present Nawaub, as a Persian, is of the sect of Ali, or a Shiite. So are most of the Mahomedans in India, except the Royal Family, who, as Tartars, are Soonies. Every prince has a place appropriated to the celebration, adorned with numerous lamps, &c. This is called the Imaumbarah. In it are placed the supposed tombs of these young men, made of different materials, according to the respective wealth of the owner. The nobles also at their own houses have similar festivals. The late Nawaub kept it with great splendor, sometimes expending a lac of rupees on the occasion. Saadut Ali is more economical, and even melted down several ornaments used for the occasion, made of silver and gold : one or two of them produced a lac each in bullion.

On the last day of the Moharam I met the procession of mourners attending the supposed horse of Hossein, which is represented as pierced on every side by arrows. Mussulmaun prejudices are now so weakened in India, that the procession was stopped at my request, and, that I might view the horse with more facility, he was brought close to my palanquin. The Imaumbarah is certainly the most beautiful building I have seen in India ; it was erected by the late Nawaub, for the double purpose of celebrating this festival, and of serving as a burial place for himself. It consists of three very long and finely proportioned apartments, running parallel to each other : in the middle one is his tomb, level with the ground. The centre is earth, covered with a scanty herbage, and surrounded with a broad margin of white marble, in which sentences from the Koran are inlaid in black. At one end lies the sword, turban, &c. which he wore when he died. Over it is a rich

canopy supported by four pillars, covered with cloth of gold, now in decay. Unfortunately, it was necessary to place his tomb diagonally, that he might lie in a proper Mahomedan position respecting Mecca; and, consequently, instead of an ornament it is an unsightly object. He left one hundred rupees per day to forty fakirs to read the Koran, and pray for him; but this, the present Nawaub thought extravagant; and, observing that their father had but five, has reduced the number from forty to ten. The approach to the building is through a very large quadrangle to a garden, elevated a small height; on one side of which is a very beautiful mosque, and on the other the Bolee palace. The Imaumbarah itself is built on an elevated terrace, which on this occasion gave still more splendor to the innumerable lights placed upon it; yet even these could not diminish the effect of the thousands of girandoles, filled with wax-candles, which were suspended from the roof at different heights, and were reflected by the different coloured cut glass, which composed them. The floor was covered with candles, likewise in glass branches, leaving only sufficient space for the crowd to pass. The third apartment was filled from one end to the other with a range of silver temples or cenotaphs, raised on platforms about three feet from the ground, in which were placed the supposed tombs of the two brothers. These were brilliantly illuminated, both from the ceiling, and by candles placed around in branches. I think they were at least twenty in number, and were worth from 50,000 to a lac of rupees each. In different parts of the building prayers were said; and every evening all unbelievers, and followers of Omar, Othman, and Abubeker were anathematised, to the edification of the Hindoos, who, on

this occasion, crowded there in great numbers. Disturbances have frequently taken place; but as far as I can learn, this Moharam passed quietly, and without any loss of life.\*

I breakfasted with the Nawaub on May 27, to be present at a tiger fight. A space of about fifty feet square had been fenced off on the plain, between the Dowlat Khanah and the river, in front of the Sungi Baraderi, a building open in the Asiatic style, raised about twenty feet from the ground, and which is occasionally used as a breakfast or banqueting room. It formed one side of the square already mentioned, and was covered with a lattice work of bamboos several feet high, lest the tiger by a violent spring, should make his way amongst us, a circumstance that, on a former occasion, nearly occurred. On the three other sides was a lattice work of bamboos, sustained by very strong pillars of timber driven firmly into the ground, perfectly securing the crowd on the outside from danger. The tiger was in a small cage on the side, from which he was driven by fire-works. He took several turns round the area, and eyed us most attentively. A buffalo was now driven in, on which he quickly retired to one corner: the other watched him, but did not seem inclined to commence the attack. By fire-works the tiger was several times obliged to move, when the buffalo invariably advanced a little towards him; but, on his lying down, stopped and eyed him for some time. Seven other buffaloes were now introduced, but with all our excitements we could not induce either party to commence the attack. A dog was thrown into the area by some one. He retreated into a corner,

\* For an account of the origin and purpose of the structures called Imaumbarah, see Appendix.

into which the tiger also was soon driven by the fire-works; but, on the little animal's snarling at him, he quickly retired to another corner. The Nawaub then sent for an elephant. The first approach of this beast caused the tiger to give a cry of terror, and to run into a corner, where by a spring he attempted to leap over the fence. In this he failed; and the elephant approaching by direction of his rider attempted to throw himself on his knees on the tiger. This the latter avoided, and immediately ran to another place. All the exertions of the mohout could not induce the elephant to make a second attack; but advancing to the gate, he began to push against it, and soon made his way good. The tiger did not attempt to take advantage of the opening, but lay panting in a corner. A second elephant was now introduced, who immediately rushed towards the tiger, and made a kneel at him. The tiger, however, sprang on his forehead, where he fixed by his teeth and claws, till the animal, raising his head, with a violent jerk, dashed him on the ground, so completely bruised, that he was not able to rise. The elephant did not choose to stay to complete his victory; but rushing against the side of the enclosure, with his tusks raised up the whole framework of timber and bamboos, with a great number of people hanging on it. The alarm was great, and they scrambled off as soon as possible. The elephant made his way through, fortunately hurting no one; and the tiger was too much exhausted to follow. The sun was now far advanced, and the heat so considerable, that the fight was adjourned *sine die*.

This was one of the most extraordinary seasons ever known. Usually the north-westers set in early in May, and continue to cool the air by their

frequent recurrence; in the course of ten years there has never been a May without them. Yet till the last day of May we had not a single shower from the time of my arrival. In the evening, the heat being very oppressive, I was sitting in my apartment on the terrace-roof of the house, when a sudden gloom and distant thunder induced me to go out on the terrace. The wind, which had been easterly, was now perfectly lulled. A very dark blue cloud arose from the west, and at length covered half the sky. The thunder was not loud, and the air was perfectly still. The birds were flying very high, and making a terrible screaming. At length a dark brown cloud appeared from the western horizon, and came on with considerable rapidity. The whole town of Lucknow, with its numerous minars, was between me and the cloud, and the elevation of my terrace gave me an excellent opportunity of observing it. When at about the distance of a mile, it had all the appearance of a smoke from a vast fire, volume rolling over volume in wild confusion, at the same time raising itself high in the air. As it approached, it had a dingy red appearance; and by concealing the most distant minars from my view, convinced me that it was sand borne along by a whirlwind. The air continued perfectly still; the clouds of sand had a defined exterior; nor did the wind a moment precede it. It came on with a rushing sound, and at length reached us with such violence, as to oblige me to take shelter in my eastern verandah. Even there the dust was driven with a force that prevented me from keeping my eyes open. The darkness became every moment greater, and at length it was black as night. It might well be called palpable darkness; for the wind now changing a little to the southward,

brought on the storm with ten-fold violence, and nearly smothered us with dust. It blew so violently, that the noise of the thunder was frequently drowned by the whistling of the wind in the trees and buildings. The total darkness lasted about ten minutes ; when at length it gradually gave way to a terrifically red, but dingy light, which I, at first, attributed to a fire in the town. The rain now poured down in torrents, and the wind changed to due south. In about an hour from its commencement the sky began to clear, the tufaun went off to the eastward, and the wind immediately returned to that quarter. The air was perfectly cool, and free from dust. Although all my windows and doors had been kept closed, and there were tattys on the outside, yet the sand was so penetrating, that it had covered my bed and furniture with a complete coat of dust. Mr. Paul informed me that he once was caught in a north-wester on the banks of the Ganges, when the darkness lasted for several hours. This, however, was one of the most tremendous that had ever been beheld at Lucknow. One person was literally frightened to death. There is, indeed, no danger from the storm itself, but the fires in the houses are in such situations that a blast might easily drive a spark against their thatched roofs, heated already by the sun; in which case, the darkness would probably preclude the possibility of saving any part of the town. It is equally probable that a roof may be blown in, which would have the same melancholy consequences. The long draught had pulverised so much of the country, and so completely annihilated vegetation on the sandy plains, that the tufaun brought with it more sand than usual ; and to that alone must be attributed the perfect darkness. It was the most

magnificent and awful sight I ever beheld; not even excepting a storm at sea. The wind in both cases was of equal violence, but neither the billows of the ocean, nor the sense of danger, affected my mind so much as this preternatural darkness.

On June 3, I visited Constantia, once the residence of General Martin. A strange fantastical building of every species of architecture, and adorned with minute stucco fret-work, enormous red lions with lamps instead of eyes, Chinese mandarins and ladies with shaking heads, and all the gods and goddesses of the heathen mythology\*. It has a handsome effect at a distance, from a lofty tower in the centre with four turrets; but on a nearer approach, the wretched taste of the ornaments only excites contempt. A more extraordinary combination of Gothic towers, and Grecian pilasters, I believe, was never before devised. Within, the hall is very fine, but the other apartments are small and gloomy, loaded with stucco-work painted yellow, to imitate gilding. It is not yet finished, but by his will he has directed that it shall be completed according to his own plan. He bequeathed it to the public as a serai, every stranger being permitted to take up his residence there for two months. As yet this has been no advantage to any one; his executors having been more employed in defending his property against the numerous claimants that have started up, than in carrying this part of his will into effect.

A more infamous or despicable character than the late General Martin never existed. He had not a single virtue, though he laboured to assume the appearance of several. He took the female

\* Many of these have been demolished, and most of them injured, by the earthquake of the 1st of September.

orphan children of two of his friends, declaring that he would educate and provide for them both; but when they reached the age of twelve, they unwillingly became his concubines. His death was supposed to be the consequence of the perpetration of this last crime. Another child he promised to educate, and actually sent to England, and during his life he had the credit of having done a generous action; but on his death, every item that he had expended was found in his accounts debited to the father, with an especial order to his executors to recover the whole. His fortune was raised by fraud and usury to upwards of two hundred thousand pounds, independent of houses; yet with affluence to which he had never been brought up, and which, of course, he knew not how to enjoy, he never did a generous act, and never had a friend. His dependents, who had faithfully served him through life, he left to poverty at his death. To his brother, who came out hither, he liberally gave fifty rupees per month, saying, with a curse, "Let him work for his bread, as I have done!" In an account of his life which I have seen, it is said that he made a great deal of money by securing the property of the natives in troublesome times, on their paying him twelve per cent. The fact is, that he opened a regular pawn-broker's shop, where he advanced twelve per cent. on any goods or jewels, the people having a right to redeem them within the year by paying twenty-four per cent.; but if that was not done, he kept them for ever; and this very frequently happened; sometimes even by his own management in keeping out of the way towards the end of the period; so that his debtors, if capable and willing, had no means of redeeming their pledges. The late Nawaub's idiotical propensities were another

fruitful source of profit to him ; he purchased different articles in Europe, and sold them at 100*l.* 200*l.* or 500*l.* per cent. lending him at the same time money to pay himself at 3*l.* per cent. per month. In this branch of his profit I am sorry to say that many English, resident at Lucknow, deeply participated. General Martin certainly loved his money dearly, but he loved fame still more, and at an immense expence he laboured to acquire it. From this idea he built the vast mansions in this neighbourhood, and finished them in the most expensive manner ; and from the same idea, the mass of his property is bequeathed to charitable purposes. Fame he may probably obtain, but it is a species of fame that no good man would desire ; and, if he is handed down to posterity as a man who raised himself to riches and power from the condition of a private soldier, it will also be added, that his riches were contaminated by the methods employed in obtaining them, and that his character was stained by almost every vice that can disgrace human nature. My visit was to a Mr. Quiros, a Portuguese native, who having acted as clerk to the late General, was by him left one of the executors to his will, by which he has thriven well, and is now becoming a man of considerable property.

After dinner several of us visited the General's tomb, which is down stairs in the centre of the house. It is a plain marble slab, relating that he came out to India a private soldier, and died a Major-General ; and though he nominally died a Protestant, yet by his special directions, the spectators are in the last line requested to pray for his soul. The tomb is placed in an arched vault, the approach to which is by a circular room of larger dimensions. There are two other similar vaults,

one on each side. His apartment faces the entrance, and the four doors answer to each other. On a niche over the tablet is placed his bust, which is said to be like, though he himself never was pleased with it. To the house is annexed a very noble garden, and extensive mango tope. The country around is a barren sand, and dead flat. Indeed the General could not have pitched on an uglier spot in the vicinity of Lucknow. His house nearer town is in many respects pleasanter than Constantia. The room that overhangs the river, and the other built by its side, are admirably adapted for the hot winds. It is impossible to suffer from heat, while you continue squatted like a toad, in one of those little cellars. The caprice of iron doors, massive stone walls, and narrow winding staircases, with draw-bridges and battlements, give this house much the appearance of the castle in Blue Beard.

The King's birth day was ushered in by a royal salute fired before the Resident's house. His Excellency the Nawaub and family met the gentlemen of the settlement, and officers of the regiment quartered here, at Colonel Scott's; we were afterwards much edified by a nautch and fireworks, according to immemorial custom. On this occasion presents were made to the Nawaub and his son the minister, in the name of the Company.

As it was known in the country that I intended to visit Agra and Delhi, I received very polite invitations from General Perron and the Begum Somroo to stay some time with them on my way; but the changeable conduct of Scindiah made it doubtful from the first whether I should be able to accomplish my purpose. The die however was now cast; Lord Wellesley notified to me that he could not recommend to me to quit the Company's

territories; and the augmentation of the regiments to the full establishment, and the march of the troops towards the frontiers, proved to me that his Excellency considered a war with Scindiah as certain. I was however permitted to go to Futty Ghur; and as the total want of police in the Nawaub's territories renders an escort necessary, his Excellency kindly sent orders that a company of sepoys and twenty horse should attend me on my journey. The rains had fallen so scantily that the roads were still passable. As it was an object to me to lose no time, and as a residence of four months had shown me all that Lucknow affords, I determined to depart on the 26th: I notified this to his Highness the Nawaub, who kindly promised to supply me with a camp-equipage, and assured me that every thing should be ready.

As it was a matter of indifference whether the formal leave of the Nawaub was taken in the morning or evening, I accepted his Excellency's invitation to dine with him. Accordingly, accompanied by Colonel Scott, we proceeded early to the Dowlat Khanah in the same state as when I paid him my visit on my arrival. The elephants and guards were paraded as usual, and he received us on the steps of the palace, whence we accompanied him to the garden of his mother's zenana. We were seated in the same garden-house as on the former visits. Compliments of good wishes passed between me and the old lady through the medium of Meer Tussein.

Our elephants were waiting at the gate, and the whole party went off for the Sungi Dalam, or stone palace, where his Highness meant to dine, in order to show me the manner in which it used to be adorned in his brother's time. It is, in my opinion, a very elegant building, perfectly in the

Eastern style, open on all sides, and supported by pillars. It is, as the name designates, built of stone, but the whole is painted of a deep red colour, except the domes that cover the towers at the corner. These are gilt all over; the effect is extremely rich. The centre room is large; two narrower on each side make the shape of the whole building a square, with circular towers at the four corners. It is raised one story from the ground, and a large terrace connects it with a smaller but similar building. A most magnificent musnud of gold, covered with brocade and embroidered wreaths of roses, was placed at one end of the large apartment. We dined in the smaller, on one side, whence we had a view of the basin of water, which extends to the hummaum attached to the palace, where I used to bathe. The sides of the basin were covered with coloured lamps; and a complete trellis work of the same extended on each side of the walk. The over hanging trees were perfectly lightened by the glare, which was much increased by the reflection from the water. It was the splendour of the Caliph Haroun-ul-Rashid, as described in the Arabian Nights Entertainments, completely realised, and by no means inferior to the idea that my fancy had formed of it. The band was playing the whole time, and added much to the gaiety of the scene. The tunes were European, and formed a whimsical contrast with every thing else, which was truly Asiatic. After dinner we adjourned to the opposite building, through a lane of double silver branches, with attar placed on stands between each. Being seated at the extremity in a circle, a nautch was brought forward, to which we patiently attended for some time.

I called on his Excellency the next morning, to

see some drawings of the different people who compose his establishment. There has not been time to finish them all, but such as were done he presented to me. A complete collection would be very interesting, and I have requested that they may be continued.

It was not without feelings of regret that I took my final leave of his Highness Saadut Ali Khan, after a residence of four months at his capital, during which time I had constantly experienced the most flattering attentions from him. Every morning he sent me a supply of ice and fruit; and, as he found that I would not accept the presents, that from my rank, he was bound to offer me on public occasions, he was perpetually trying to discover something which he conceived I might with propriety receive: he sent people into his woods to bring me rare birds and plants; he laid a dawk two hundred miles to bring them down to me in a state of perfection; and extended his kindness beyond my departure, by supplying me with the camp-equipage necessary for my journey to Furrukabad, and my return to Cawnpore. Saadut Ali is a man of most pleasing manners, and his appearance is dignified and princely, though his manner of life has made him too corpulent. His hair is now grey, and he has lost many of his teeth, but the fire and intelligence of his eye still lightens up his countenance. In conversation he is lively and entertaining, through the medium of such an excellent interpreter as Major Ouseley. Though ignorant of Persian myself, I was able to judge of this, and even sometimes of the delicate turn which he gave to the compliments paid to him. The language of the eyes is in great use at the courts of Asiatic princes, and by them they issue many orders. I one day understood a sign that his

Highness made to a servant, and told him, through Major Ouseley, that his eyes spoke English: No, said he, yours understand Persian. Colonel Scott assured me, that his language was remarkably pure and elegant, and his mind well stored with Asiatic literature. He has certainly some knowledge of English, as he observed to me one day, that he did not know why my name was spelt with a T, when it was pronounced C. Possibly he wishes to conceal his knowledge, that he may hear observations that are made more freely in his presence, from supposing him to be ignorant of the language.

Soon after his father's death, Saadut Ali quitted Lucknow, in consequence of his brother Asof-ud-Dowlah having suspected him of some connection with a person, Khoja Bassunt, who was said to have made an attempt upon his life, and who was immediately cut to pieces in the Nawaub's presence, no proof being ever brought against Saadut Ali. His flight cannot justly be considered as such, for in an Asiatic court, the next heir may always consider a suspicion against him as equal to a sentence of death. The Bengal Government certainly believed him innocent, for they not only gave him protection, but at length procured for him a pension of forty thousand pounds from his brother. To his long residence amongst the English, may be traced many of his Highness's present pursuits, and his fondness for every thing European. His chief gratification seems to be building palaces of an architecture that resembles Grecian, but as he never employs an architect, the faults are numerous. In the portico at Baroun there is, however, something magnificent and surprising, as the design of an Asiatic Prince. His Highness has, I think, carried his European predi-

lection too far in abandoning the forms of an Asiatic court, and in living with Europeans as an equal. Colonel Scott would have regularly attended his durbar, to have given him consequence with his subjects; but this he declined, and requested that all business might be transacted by their breakfasting with each other. The lowest European gentleman seems to consider himself as on an equality with his Highness, and does not always treat him with that respect, which is his due. Latterly he seems to have felt this, and has contrived an ingenious plan to place every European at Lucknow in dependence upon him. From the long period that a close connection has existed between Oude and Bengal, a great number of houses have been built by the English along the banks of the Goomty, on ground granted by the Nawaub. These were private property, and were purchasable by any person without his Highness's consent. As the change of inhabitants is rapid, they have been on the market since his succession, and he has taken care to secure them all; so that if any future Governor-General should make it a point with him to receive a particular person, he can at any rate prevent his stay, by not granting him a house to live in.

Saadut Ali was by no means popular when he came to the musnud, and his rigid economy, not to give it a harsher name, has not diminished the dislike to him. He was so conscious of this, that he obliged the British troops to mount guard at his palace, and had centinels placed at the door of his chamber.

Tormented by these alarms, he at one time wished to retire from the cares of the Government, as the treasures of the family, which he would

have taken with him, were sufficient to gratify his predominant passion ; but the arrangement could not be made with the Governor-General as he wished, and he therefore continued in Oude. At present he seems to be more tranquil. The dismissal of his lawless bands, who were ready to join Vizier Ali against him, has removed a great part of his real danger ; and the presence of a large British force at Lucknow, and in the different districts of his reserved territory, puts an end to any alarm from the dissatisfaction of the ryots at the extortions which his aumils exercise. He now moves about to his different palaces without a guard, and seems to enjoy his favourite sport, the chase, without any alloy. The dissatisfaction he might have experienced at the cession of a moiety of his territory, is absorbed in the discovery, that he has more real revenue, and can add more to his treasure, than he did when he paid the East India Company one hundred and twenty lacs of rupees per annum. It is said that he actually accumulates from one to two lacs per week, and the treasures he received by inheritance cannot be less than two crore. If his Highness is satisfied with the arrangement, most certainly all the other parties must be so. The British have obtained an aditional revenue, and a secure payment ; the ryots have obtained security from the oppressive plunderings of the aumils, and have also the protection of the British laws, instead of being at the mercy of every robber. So conscious are they of these advantages, that the land which was rated to the Nawaub at a crore and thirty-five lacs, has been let at a crore and eighty lacs. An intermediate personage, the Zemindar, who, from a tenant, has been promoted by the

fanciful generosity of the British into a land owner, may indeed be dissatisfied at being deprived of the power of doing harm : he cannot now rob the traveller, or oppress the ryot under him ; nay, he is obliged to pay his rent, or submit to have his mud fortress levelled with the ground. But if these are evils to him, they are blessings to the large mass of the population, which, indeed, has ever been the consequence of the British Government in India, and I sincerely hope will ever continue to be so.

