

DOTTINGS ROUND THE CIRCLE.

BY

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CHAPTER XV.

CEYLON TO CALCUTTA.

NEGAPATAM. — PONDICHERRY. — MADRAS. — MASULIPATAM. — COCONADA. —
VIZAGAPATAM. — BIMLIPATAM. — GOPOLPORE. — FALSE POINT. — DIAMOND
HARBOR. — ARRIVAL AT CALCUTTA.

December 8. — The steamer *Patna*, bound for Calcutta, arrives early this morning. We go on board at noon with Captain Hoskioer, and at two o'clock bid farewell to Ceylon.

December 11. — At noon to-day we sight the southern coast of India, and at one o'clock our ship drops anchor off Negapatam, a place of very little interest to the traveller, which came into the possession of the English in 1783. Having received a little cargo, brought from the shore by natives in large, clumsy scows, we continue our way.

December 12. — At daybreak this morning we arrive at Pondicherry. This town is the capital of the French East Indian territory. It is situated eighty-eight miles south of Madras, and has a population of thirty thousand. Our ship is to receive the French governor, and carry him to Madras to pay his respects to the Prince of Wales, who is now on his way thither. As the governor will not embark till evening, we have ample time to land and examine the town. Calling

a native boat, we are soon set down on a fine beach, near which runs a hard, wide avenue. The town itself is well laid out and pleasantly situated, its excellent roads being especially noticeable. We find here hotels, cafés, an opera-house, a Catholic cathedral, forts, a dock-yard, and lighthouse. The governor's residence is in the centre of the town, and is a spacious building. Multitudes of little carriages are about the streets, propelled by natives from behind, and used here as the *jinrikisha* in Japan. This vehicle is called a *pushpush*.

At noon we return to the steamer, and at five o'clock a salute from the fort announces the departure of the governor for our vessel. Soon a large row-boat comes alongside, with the French flag at bow and stern, and the governor, — a pleasant-looking old gentleman, — his aide-de-camp, private secretary, and several servants, leaving the boat amid "tossed oars," are received at the gangway by our captain (himself an old naval officer) with all due etiquette and ceremony. In a few moments we are under weigh.

December 13. — At five o'clock this morning we anchor off Madras, and, early as it is, the governor of Pondicherry, in full court dress and accompanied by his suite, leaves the steamer, and is rowed quickly ashore by the servants of one of the English officials. It is necessary for him to land thus early, as the Prince of Wales is expected to arrive at the railroad station at eight o'clock, and the governor is one of the Committee of Reception.

A resident of Madras, who comes aboard our steamer, tells us of an amusing mistake recently made by the English officials in regard to the arrival of the governor of Pondicherry. It was believed in Madras that the governor would take passage in the regular mail-boat of the French Messageries Maritimes Company. When that vessel appeared, therefore, two days ago, a salute was fired from the English fort, and a company of soldiers were drawn up on the wharf in readiness to receive the governor. Soon a little boat left the steamer and was rowed rapidly towards the town. On its arrival a gentleman stepped out and walked slowly up the steps of the wharf. The soldiers presented arms, the commanding officer advanced respectfully, and the cannon roared from the town. The gentleman who had just landed was evidently surprised. Pausing near the commanding officer, he raised his hat with a polite and interrogating "Monsieur?" The Englishman in his turn was mystified. Then, suspecting some mistake, he said, "Are you not the governor of Pondicherry?"

"No, sir," replied the stranger in excellent English, "I am the purser of yonder vessel, and his Excellency is not on board." The cannon ceased quickly, the soldiers retired, and all Madras laughed.

Madras, formerly called Fort St. George, is the capital of the Madras presidency, and contains a population of four hundred thousand, of whom four thousand are Europeans. Madras is distant seven hundred and sixty-four miles from

Bombay and one thousand and sixty-two miles from Calcutta. An immense number of vessels arrive at Madras in the course of a year, and the yearly imports and exports of the city average eight million pounds.

Calling a Masullah boat, we are rowed skilfully through the high surf to the beach. The town presents a very gay appearance. All the chief buildings are hung with flags and adorned with mottoes of welcome to the Prince of Wales, and the streets are filled with crowds of natives and Europeans eager to catch sight of his Royal Highness. Great arches have been erected, similar to those in Ceylon, but more elaborate and costly. Our steamer is to remain till afternoon, and we have the morning before us. Taking a carriage we visit some of the chief objects of interest in the city. We drive first to the People's Park, a large public garden containing an extensive menagerie. Here are monkeys of all kinds, lions, panthers, leopards, wild-cats, hyenas, a tiger, and a rhinoceros. From the gardens we proceed to the Central Museum, founded in 1851, which contains a large collection of ancient Indian stone work, old agricultural implements, and extensive ornithological cabinets. After lunch we visit a large Juggernaut car. The English have forbidden the natives to use them as of old.* On our return to the steamer we find our passenger-list considerably increased. Among the

* In a bookstore in this city we found for sale Dr. John Todd's Student's Manual.