

INDIA IN 1875-76. THE VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

CHRONICLE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S JOURNEYINGS
IN INDIA, CEYLON, SPAIN, AND PORTUGAL.

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(OF THE INNER TEMPLE),

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE "CENTRAL NEWS."

WITH MAP AND DIARIES.



"It is not necessary that he who looks with pleasure on the colours of a flower should study the principles of vegetation, or that the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems should be compared before the light of the sun can gladden or its warmth invigorate."—DR. SAM. JOHNSON.

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XIII.

IN THE GUIKWAR'S DOMINIONS.

**A PLEASANT GREETING — THE GARDEN OF GUJERAT —
MULHAR RAO'S SUCCESSOR — THE PRIME MINISTER —
WHEN ELEPHANT MEETS ELEPHANT — A DODGING RHINOSCEROS — A CHEETA HUNT — A CASUALTY — THE PALACE
OF CHANDELIERS — AN ENLIGHTENED SPEECH — THE
GUIKWAR'S MOTHER.**

THE Prince of Wales, accompanied by about a dozen members of his suite, arrived at Baroda by special train, on Friday morning, November 19th. The young Guikwar, with his prime minister, Sir Madhav Rao, and the new English commissioner, Mr. Melvill, were upon the carpeted platform to meet His Royal Highness. When it is remembered that it was only on the previous Wednesday that the Prince decided to come here, every praise was due to Mr. Knox Hill, the Irish engineer of the Guikwar's government, for the effective manner in which he decorated the little town. The vernal avenues leading from the railway to the Residency were festooned with leaves and roses, and there were at intervals no less than half a dozen arches, all of which bore English expressions of welcome.

The meeting of the Prince of Wales and the Guikwar was thoroughly Oriental. His Highness, attended by large bodies of his troops, foot and horse, came down to the station, seated upon a splendid elephant. Following the principal elephant, the skin of which was painted in tints of yellow and blue,

Quickly as the achievement was performed, however, his evolution was detected, and the poor boy was overwhelmed with confusion at the laughter he had elicited. The arch over the Residency gate was so hurriedly constructed that no one noticed till too late that the inscription ran thus, "Welcome E. A.," instead of "Welcome A. E."

Baroda is like a town one would expect to meet in China. Pagodas, tiled roofs, painted house fronts, and brass hall-doors. The principal street is divided in the centre by a construction like Temple Bar, only that it is made of lath and plaster, and is painted blue and yellow.

In the afternoon, a series of entertainments, recalling to our minds the chronicles of Mount Olympus, and replete with most of the worst features of that half-civilised time when gods and goddesses still hovered over the Western world, were enacted before the Prince of Wales. The Guikwar keeps a menagerie of animals, all trained and fed for the sole purpose of fighting. He also maintains a body of men who wrestle violently with each other. On this particular afternoon, before an immense concourse of sightseers, including the Prince, the Guikwar, and several English ladies, both men and animals fought long and fiercely. The arena where the combats were carried out is styled the Pance ke Durwaza, or water gate. It is situated at the rear of the old curiosity shop known as the City Palace of the Guikwar. The high walls of the enclosure have seats on the top for the sightseers, whose dresses form a crimson and purple fringe above the mural whiteness. In one corner there is a pagoda for the more important spectators, and it was in one of the broad verandahs of this that the Prince of Wales sat. The high banks facing the palace and beyond the far side of the enclosure were thronged with natives. Still further away was a lake all glittering with the vivid colours of the dresses and bright green trees. Without the other sides of the arena were the dens of the wild beasts, whose impatience under restraint while the combats were going on was manifested by con-

tinual roars. A line of twenty tame elephants, the Guikwar's riding stud, all gaily caparisoned, was drawn up as the Prince's carriage came upon the ground. His Royal Highness having admired them, the animals were sent off to their stables, gambolling like a band of released schoolboys. The first fight was between men. There were eight wrestlers in the ring at the same time. The gladiators were powerful in body. The skin was clear, and the muscle stood out conspicuously, testifying with what earnestness they trained themselves for their work. The victor was the man who first succeeded in putting his opponent fairly on his back. During the whole struggle only one wrestler triumphed, and he was permitted to make a salaam to the Prince, and had his hands kissed and shaken by hosts of friends as he withdrew. After this victory the fighting of the other combatants grew more fierce, until at length three couples were struggling like savages in the choking dust. At this crisis the Prince of Wales must have declared he had seen enough, for a shout was raised, and the men left the ground amid rounds of flopping caused by the beating of breasts. It is in this way the inhabitants of Baroda applaud. A terrific combat between two elephants was now enacted, and during its progress, the monsters, roaring, and plunging in clouds of dust, threatened to dash down the walls and even the palace itself, with the force of their mad charges. At the close of the struggle, a man riding a white pony and wearing a dress like that of Robin Hood, showed by his skilful horsemanship that he could elude all the attempts of a frantic elephant to dismount him.

The most amusing conflict of the day was between two rhinosceri. The beasts, who were made still more hideous than they naturally are, by being blotched over with red paint, were loth to fight at all. The greater coward of the two elicited roars of laughter by sneaking and dodging all round the ring, apparently with a desire to preserve some dignity in the midst of his panic. Rams were subsequently led into the battle-field,