

A -

JOURNEY

FROM

MERUT IN INDIA,

TO

LONDON,

THROUGH

ARABIA, PERSIA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, RUSSIA, AUSTRIA,

SWITZERLAND, AND FRANCE,

DURING THE YEARS 1819 AND 1820.

WITH A MAP AND ITINERARY OF THE ROUTE.

BY

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JOURNEY
FROM
INDIA TO BRITAIN.

A strong desire to revisit my native country, after I had served eleven years in India, induced me to apply for permission to return to Europe, which I was fortunate enough to obtain. Having accordingly made the necessary arrangements, I left *Merut*, accompanied by Lieut. A. Cameron of the Bengal horse-artillery, *on Sunday the 3d of October* 1819, at half-past two o'clock in the morning, when the moon shone forth in all her splendour, thus affording an auspicious commencement to a journey, which it was impossible to contemplate with feelings altogether exempt from anxiety.

built without plan or arrangement,—some regiments having their front, and others their rear, towards the Ganges.

Thursday, 14th.—I dined with Colonel G. Mason, C. B. and met all the artillery officers quartered here. Colonel Mason commands the whole of the artillery in the Upper Provinces.

Friday, 15th.—I spent the greater part of this day at home, and attended the Cawnpoor assembly rooms after dinner, where we met all the beauty and fashion at the station. The rooms are exceedingly good; and the ball and supper were well arranged.

Saturday, 16th.—Having obtained permission to visit Lucknow from Mr. Moncton, the Resident at that court, I crossed the Ganges before five o'clock P. M. and proceeded to Lucknow in my palanquin. When a gentleman wishes to travel any distance in his palanquin, eight or ten men are stationed at the different stages, and at night they are accompanied by two torch-bearers. Four men carry the palanquin at a time; and, if at all accustomed to this mode of travelling, a person may sleep pretty comfortably.

Sunday 17th.—I arrived at the Lucknow Residency at half-past nine o'clock, A.M.—Distance from Cawnpoor about 50 miles. I was most politely received by Captain Raper, first assistant to

the Resident, to whom I brought letters of introduction from Captain Battine and Colonel Stevenson ; and I accompanied this gentleman to pay a visit to the Resident after breakfast. In the afternoon I went to see part of the stud of his Majesty the King of Oude, (a new title assumed by the Nabob of Lucknow.)

The stable was very spacious, but the horses were not remarkably superior. Indeed the guide told me that the finest horses were to be seen in another quarter. I went through the new part of the city, to see the house which was built by the late General Claude Martin, and called *Constantia*. The streets in this part of the city are regular and handsome. After passing through an elegant gateway, I entered the *Chine ke Bazar*, or Chinese market place, which is of considerable length, with neat ranges of shops on each side, all of the same height, and having piazzas along their whole front.

At the other extremity of this bazar, there is a gateway, to correspond with the one above mentioned, and his Majesty's sepoy's are on duty at both. After passing the bazar, a street is continued on as far as his Majesty's grand stables, which are unroofed at present. They are on a very good plan, and calculated to contain a vast number of horses. They form the figure of a cross, so that standing in the centre, where the ranges of the

building intersect each other, a person may see the horses in any of the arms of the cross. This building has a large space in the centre, stables on each side for the horses, and beyond them, on both sides, piazzas, to shelter the horses completely from sun and rain.

General Martin's house, *Constantia*, is, I think, one of the most extraordinary edifices that ever was built, and such as none but a Frenchman, who had been many years in India, and had acquired a taste for the Hindostanee style, could ever have thought of building. It is said to have cost L.150,000 Sterling. Its shape I cannot exactly define; and it would be rather a difficult matter to convey any adequate idea of the place altogether without a plan or drawings. Some of the rooms are handsome, and the walls and ceilings covered with a profusion of ornaments. The piazzas of the lower floor are laid with marble, and decorated with many statues and medallions.

The exterior of the building is covered with figures of lions, and of men and women of all nations, in a great variety of attitudes. The whole is surmounted by a kind of crown, with a flag-staff on the top of it. From the staff you have a fine view of part of Lucknow, his Majesty's palaces, and of the winding river Goomty, running through a well wooded and fertile country. There

is not a piece of wood in the whole building of Constantia. The roofing consists of domes and arches ; and, were they less gaudy, the interior decorations of some of the former are particularly rich and beautiful. In a vault under the house we were shown the tomb of General Martin, with an inscription on a marble slab, in nearly the following terms :

“ Here lie the remains of Major-General Claude Martin, who was born at Lyons in 1733, arrived in India a private soldier, and died at Lucknow in the year 1800 ;

“ PRAY FOR HIS SOUL !”

At the head of the tomb there is a bust of the general ; and, at the corners, figures of sepoys as large as life, and in full uniform, with their arms reversed.

General Martin is said to have been a man of great genius, and very charitable. He left 50,000 rupees, (L.6000,) the interest of which was directed to be distributed daily among the poor of Lucknow ; the same sum, for the like purpose, to his native city, Lyons ; and also the same to St. John's church, Calcutta.

How far the will of the General has been complied with, I know not ; but I have heard that it was directed by this deed that *Constan-*

tia should remain in the state in which he left it, for the accommodation of those who might feel disposed to spend a few days there; that the house was then well furnished, with many paintings, prints, &c. Now, with the exception of the portrait of the General, and the ornaments to which I have adverted, there is nothing left but the walls.

The words "LABORE ET CONSTANTIA," are inscribed in large letters on the eastern face of the building. To the west of *Constantia* there is a fine garden; and on the east side a piece of water, from the centre of which a column of considerable height is erected.

This singular place deserves an abler description. I can only detail what I remarked on a hasty glance.

Monday, 18th.—I mounted my elephant at day-break, and visited the Emaumbarrah, Dowlut Khauna, and the Palace of Barone, or Mossa Baug. I do not think much of either of the former, after having seen the buildings of the imperial cities of Agra and Delhi. Generally speaking, all the public buildings here, such as gateways, musjeeds, &c. are built of brick and mortar, which are paltry materials in the eyes of one who has visited, in the cities to which I have now alluded, the more costly and magnificent structures of the *Moguls*, consisting either of red stone or marble.

Barone is a pretty country-seat of his Majesty, the king of Oude, and about four miles distant from the British Residency. It is built much in the English style, and is very commodious. It contains some good prints and mirrors, and several curious clocks. In the evening I visited another beautiful country house of his Majesty, and dined with the Resident. An hour after sun-set, or from half-past six to eight o'clock, is the usual time of dinner on this side of India.

Tuesday, 19th.—I went to breakfast at the Residency; and, a few minutes before eight o'clock, the King of Oude arrived, accompanied by his son and heir-apparent, his Royal Highness Imtiazud Dowlah, and likewise by many chiefs of the court and relations of the family. The king is rather a good looking man, handsomely dressed, and his manners are certainly dignified. He breakfasted, and, after smoking his hookah a short time, withdrew, accompanied by his suite. He was saluted both on his arrival and departure by an officer's guard of British sepoy, and came in a handsome coach, drawn by four fine grey horses, and escorted by a party of his own body-guard, well mounted.

After breakfast I visited the palaces of Khosh Munzil and Mobarick Munzil, which are both handsome highly finished houses. Thence I went

to the menagerie, which contains a tolerable collection of Asiatic beasts and birds.

The natives of this country are fond of keeping *pets*, and of cock-fighting and quail-fighting. They will sit up fighting their cocks and gambling all night ;—and they have two other favourite amusements, particularly in large towns, which would be considered extremely childish in any other country, viz. flying kites and pigeons. He who can cut his neighbour's kite string, by allowing his own to cross it, and then pulling to and fro, is considered an adept. Nothing is more common than to see an old man on the flat roof of a house, armed with a long bamboo, having a piece of scarlet cloth at the point of it, which he waves around his head, while he shouts and whistles to the flock of pigeons flying in a circle around him, though sometimes at a considerable distance ; and if they are joined by a neighbour's stray pigeon in their flight, so much the better.

Wednesday, 20th.—I spent this day most agreeably at the cantonment of the British subsidiary force, with my friend Lieutenant Dennis of the artillery. The troops are cantoned about four miles and a half from Lucknow. The general plan of a cantonment, on this side of India, is to have a good piece of ground for the exercise of the troops in front, with a line of small buildings for depositing

the arms in the rear. Next to these are the huts of the sepoy; and in their rear the bungalows of the officers, which are built in the cottage style, very well adapted for the climate, and each having a garden around it, with a range of out-offices, consisting of a kitchen, stables, and servants houses.

Thursday, 21st.—I visited the king's stud at the opposite side of the river Goomty, and found it a very fine one, consisting of about 126 high bred horses, in a fine square of stables. On leaving these stables, the king happened to pass, and I made him a salaam, (or obeisance) which he politely returned. The King of Delhi, (or as he is called in Europe the Great Mogul,) never condescends to acknowledge such compliments.

Having left the stables, I went to see the palaces of Dhilaram and Furreed Baksh. In the latter I saw the throne on which the king was crowned a few days ago. It was placed in an immense hall, raised a few feet from the floor, and covered with scarlet cloth and crimson velvet, richly embroidered, and decked with jewels of all descriptions. In short it is a very splendid and costly piece of furniture.

From this hall you have a view of the interior of the palace garden, which is very pretty, having a fine sheet of water through the centre, with four-

tains, beautiful walks, flower borders, and many statues.

This, and indeed all the palaces of Lucknow, are kept in better order, and furnished in a more princely style, than those of the King of Delhi, whose poverty prevents his being able to make any great show ; for although, I believe, he receives a sum not less than about L. 15,000 monthly, for the maintenance of his family, and support of his dignity, his family and dependants are so numerous as to be a very heavy drain upon his finances.

Opposite the palace of Furreed Baksh, the King of Oude's boats are moored. Some of them are large and magnificently furnished ; but they are only intended for *show*, as the Goomty is a paltry and narrow stream, with hardly water enough to float them.

In my ramble this morning I saw the elephant carriages of his majesty—strange looking machines—and, though handsomely finished, only fit for a display in a procession, where one of them is drawn by four elephants, and another by two of these noble animals. Near to the carriages I saw seven animals of the rhinoceros kind. This is a very ugly beast, smaller than the elephant, with a little horn on the nose, and the skin in folds.

It may be remarked, as creditable to the keepers of the various places I went to see, that none of

them asked for any present; and I could not help thinking how different must be the feelings of a foreigner who visits what is deserving of notice in London, where he must satisfy a rapacious fellow at every door he enters.

I gave a present of a few rupees to one of the king's servants who accompanied me every where; and I left Lucknow at six o'clock, P. M. much pleased with the polite attention I had met with.

Friday, 22d.—I arrived at Cawnpoor at seven o'clock, A. M. having slept pretty comfortably in my palanquin the greater part of the way.

Saturday, 23d.—I had this day the pleasure of being introduced to the Hon. Lieutenant John Law of the 11th Light Dragoons, (the brother of Lord Ellenborough,) who was about to return to Europe; and we agreed to proceed together by one of the overland routes. Every one, who has the happiness to know this gentleman, will readily agree with me in opinion, that his acquaintance is a most valuable acquisition.

Sunday, 24th.—I found that I had cause to congratulate myself on my safe arrival here from Lucknow, as a gentleman who attempted to follow my example last night was robbed; the bearers who were carrying his palanquin ran off, and he was obliged to return to that city.

Monday, 25th.—I sailed from Cawnpoor at day-