

from India, has long been extinct in the land of its birth, but it is the best that the Chinese know any thing about. The religion of four hundred millions of people, it fails to bring comfort in this life or illumine the future. Because Buddha is deaf to their cries they have added many other idols. Such as have heard of Christ, and have accepted him, have found their souls' desire. But there are over three hundred and ninety-nine millions who know not the truth.

Hong Kong, China, Jan. 18, 1877.

LETTER XVII.

FROM HONG KONG TO CEYLON.

THE "Geelong" left Hong Kong promptly at noon, January 18. I was very glad to be on board, partly because she is an excellent steamer, but mostly because my baggage and Bishop Marvin were aboard, and I came near getting left. Returning in ample time to the ship after mailing my last letter, the stiff breeze made travel in a sampan somewhat rough and risky. We were making good headway, however, when our mast broke, and mast and sail went overboard. The woman at the rudder came to the rescue; but with the waves so high, it seemed doubtful about the ability of the three rowers—two men and a woman—to bring the boat in time to the "Geelong," which was anchored about a mile distant.

I admired the calmness of this well-regulated Chinese family. Evidently alarmed, not an unnecessary word was spoken, unless it was a request for me to steer while they rowed, which my ignorance of navigation compelled me to decline. However, a little ingenuity enabled one of the boatmen to give the rudder an occasional turn, and while they all toiled in rowing, and made slow progress, we reached the ship's ladder several minutes before she moved out of the harbor. Another sampan came near capsizing on the way out, but happily no accident occurred, and the

passengers were content with narrating their hair-breadth escapes.

Our run from Hong Kong* to Singapore, on the China Sea, one thousand four hundred and thirty-seven miles, was made in a little over five days. We were in sight of Cochin China the second day out, and saw one or two steamers going to Saigon. The following day we were in the waters of the Gulf of Siam. With favoring winds and a smooth sea, retarded only by an adverse current on the last day, we made good speed and had withal a pleasant voyage. Numerous islands were in sight all the last day, but it needed not their tropical vegetation to tell us that we were nearing the equator. Always at meal-time, and often when writing during the day, the punkas, pulled by East Indians, called "punka wallahs," were kept going for the comfort of the passengers. All of the officers were dressed in white, while all the passengers, as far as possible, followed this example. Every day found us several degrees nearer the equator, until when we dropped anchor at Singapore we were distant less than a degree and a half, or only about eighty miles. The thermometer at no time, however, indicated more than eighty-five degrees in the shade.

I enjoyed during the voyage a sight of the Southern Cross, which is visible only in the tropics. It is the sailor's friend in southern seas, as by observations taken of Alpha Crux, the star at the foot of the cross, he determines his latitude and longitude. The first officer very kindly sent a messenger to wake me at 4:30 A.M. one day, when about to make

*I have received several requests to indicate in some way the peculiar pronunciation of the proper names in this book. The invariable rule, so I learned, about Chinese names, is not to lay stress on any one syllable. Thus in Shanghai and Hong Kong both syllables have the same force—a somewhat difficult thing for an American always to give. I regret that I cannot always comply with the request in other instances.

his observations, so that I could see the cross in its vertical position, with other stars pointing to it as indicators. The cross is composed of four bright stars, so arranged as to give it its name, and when vertical is instantly recognized in the firmament. The memory of the beautiful vision lingers as an inspiration.

Aside from the luxuriant tropical vegetation, which attracts the traveler's attention on reaching Singapore, the first thing which interests him is the tiny boats full of Malay boys, aged from twelve to sixteen, ready to dive for any coins which may be thrown overboard. Their only clothing is a breech-cloth, which does not impede their motions, and no sooner is a coin on its way to the bottom of the water than they have sprung from their boats and are diving for it. They seem invariably to catch it before it reaches the bottom, however far from them it may be cast. Often three or four boys spring from as many boats after the same coin. They dive as eagerly after a copper as a rupee, and in every case they hold it up in triumph, with "I've got it, master!" They also dived after coral and marine plants, and after being gone about forty seconds would return with both hands filled with the trophies snatched from the bottom of the harbor. Many of these were quite beautiful, and found ready purchasers. In fact, hardly any feat in the way of diving or rowing seemed impossible to these boys. Their skill reaped a silver harvest, which they well deserved. But here are boat-loads of rare and beautiful shells and corals, which divide our attention with other displays of pine-apples and bananas offered for sale. Here are peddlers in parrots, and others have a monkey or two to sell. We know many a boy would have given a dollar and a half for a monkey, even though one could be bought for half that sum. In fact, one-half the first price is

what is really expected in about every instance. Many a passenger has bought what he did not wish by offering a merely nominal price for what was originally held at high figures.

Our ship lay at the wharf in Singapore about two days, taking in coal. The coal is brought out from England and stored at Galle, Singapore, and Hong Kong, for the use of these Peninsular and Oriental steamers. This is found more economical than to burn Japanese or Australian coal, as it requires four or five times more of the latter. Our delay gives us a good opportunity of seeing some of the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. Taking a gharry—a four-wheeled vehicle drawn by a small horse—Bishop Marvin and I direct our Malay driver to take us to the Botanical Gardens, some two miles from the city.

Here we saw the banyan-tree, with its many roots starting from the boughs and piercing the ground, and many small ones starting at the ends of the limbs and amid the leaves. The immense amount of moisture in the atmosphere is very favorable to this style of growth, and we saw hundreds of trees with roots dropping from the limbs. One banyan-tree in the city is so large that a dwelling-house is built amid the roots. In the ponds or ditches we saw the sacred lotus in full bloom, and also the *Victoria Regia*, with its immense leaves, four feet and a half in diameter. Black and white swans swam on the lake, with pelicans of varied plumage and geese of peculiar build. Here were tigers, and leopards, and monkeys, eagles, golden and silver pheasants, the emu, ostrich, deer, and the rhinoceros; but the zoölogical display was especially rich in birds of gorgeous plumage. Invisible songsters filled the air with melody wherever we went. Cocoa-nut-trees abound all through the country, and are laden with their clusters of monster nuts

The aloe appears to be indigenous, as we saw many growing in the woods and by the way-side. But most beautiful of all is the fan-palm, with the stems of its huge leaves projecting from the trunk like the fingers of an open hand. The aim of the gardens is to collect in one the flora not only of the tropics simply, but, as far as possible, of whatever part of the world. Surely all vegetable life requiring much moisture and heat will find here a genial home.

More interesting than this display is the private garden of a wealthy Chinese merchant and mandarin named Whampoa. A letter from President Grant to United States ministers and consuls throughout the world, bespeaking special favors, secured for us from the American consul here, of his own volition, an invitation from Mr. Whampoa to visit him at his house, some two miles from the city. We found him a man of about sixty, simply dressed in Chinese costume, and having fine command of English, and, withal, very much of a gentleman. After seeing his gardens he showed us through his elegant residence, which is in the best style of Chinese architecture, and is richly furnished with handsome carvings, and many articles of both Chinese and European manufacture. Choice bronzes and lacquer-ware, a collection of many years, abounded in the different rooms of the house. He pointed out with manifest pride some fine work in silver and ivory. Of the latter I mention especially an elaborately carved ivory ball containing not less than twenty-two others, all made of one piece. In one of the rooms cups of delicious tea awaited us, which we drank while discussing with our host the products of the wonderful clime. We might have almost supposed ourselves in the home of an English gentleman did not the subtle fumes of burning incense, mingling with the odors of spices and flowers rising

from the garden, tell of idolatrous worship, perhaps, before the ancestral tablets. Mr. Whampoa has a zoological garden also, where we saw the ibex, the Borneo bear, the moose, deer, and many other animals not in the Botanical Garden.

The most interesting objects were representations of animals in foliage, some species of box being trained so as to take on the exact form of animals. For example, guarding the way into the zoological gardens are two dogs with open mouths and glaring eyes. Another entrance is guarded by two deer with a startled look; yet another by elephants with uplifted trunks; and another still by horses. There were Chinese hogs true to life, looking as if their backbone were broken. Then there were birds about to fly, and fish ready to swim, and monkeys eating cocoa-nuts. The box was made to take on equally well the forms of inanimate objects. There were perfect pagodas, vases as tall as one's head, ships with sails, rigging, and life-boats, and even gharries, or carriages, with horses harnessed and ready to start. Most of these figures are first made of wire and the box is grown over them, but those I saw in the Parsee garden, in Shanghai, were branches of an evergreen trained without the help of wire to take on the forms of the monkey and the dog.

In the gardens of Mr. Whampoa we saw growing the pepper-plant and the tea-shrub, as well as the spice, coffee, and orange-trees. One orange-tree had a peculiarly mottled or variegated foliage. A green rose he regarded as among his rarest specimens of vegetable life. All forms of vegetable and animal life which are found here at all absolutely luxuriate in this warm atmosphere. In the published expense account of the English cathedral is a bill for killing three hundred and sixteen bats at five cents each. We counted no less than eleven lizards

visible at once on the side of the hotel as we sat on the veranda. We thereupon concluded not to spend the night there. The Peninsular and Oriental Company, as a matter of economy, have their ships put on the dry docks at the end of every voyage and scraped, to rid them of the barnacles that accumulate so rapidly as to reduce her speed a knot an hour.

Singapore numbers about one hundred and thirty thousand souls, and is the capital of an island of the same name, which forms part of the English Straits Settlement. Fully one-half of the population are Chinese, nine thousand are Tamils, from near Madras, the rest are Malays and Europeans. The Malays are called brown, but are nearly black. They wear no clothing, as a rule, save a cloth about the loins, and another wrapped like a turban about the head. They are quite erect, and have rather a manly gait. They are lazy, however, and are fond of sleep, being content with a shady place on the bare ground. The men wear ear-rings often at the top of the ear, as well as at the bottom. The ears of the women are sometimes distorted by the size of the ornaments worn, and they wear nose-rings also, often one in each nostril, as well as bracelets and anklets. The men appear to do all the work, such as washing, ironing, house-work, etc. We saw several acres covered with clothes, hung out to dry, while the washermen stood in a running stream washing others by beating them upon rocks placed for that purpose at convenient distances in the stream. Malays are usually employed by the English as gardeners and grooms. They are very vindictive when aroused, but are usually quiet and orderly.

The population of Singapore is so mixed that the Malay has to be the common language. Chinese from different districts and of different dialects, unable to understand each other, use the Malay. The only missionary in Singapore, the Rev. W. H.

Gomes, a converted Singhalese, preaches in Malay to a Chinese congregation, and is doing a good work. He also preaches to the Tamils in their own language. In a public school of some three hundred pupils we found in one room Europeans, Chinese, Tamils, Malays, and Eurasians, all studying English text-books and taught by a Portuguese teacher. In the courts we saw English judges in their official black robes trying cases with English, Chinese, and Tamil lawyers, and Malay witnesses. We also met a few Siamese and Klings. The prevailing religion of the Malays is Mohammedan. They have several mosques, and cling with tenacity to their faith, very meager success being met with among them. Both Protestant and Romanist missionaries have had about the same experience.

The English Governor of the Straits Settlement resides here. There is also a fort and garrison, and many other things to impress the native community with British might. The English are doing a good work here for Christianity and civilization. What they do they do well. They have a coinage of their own, fine streets and drives, a good school system, churches and public buildings. The revenue from the tin and spices exported, and from imports, supports the government. They manufacture their own ice, at about two and a half cents a pound. They buy the choicest of tropical-fruit for a mere trifle—pine-apples at about a dollar a hundred, and bananas for ten cents a hundred. Moreover, by the help of punkas at home, in office, store, court-house, and even in church, they manage to live comfortably in this climate, where the mercury rarely exceeds ninety in the shade. In fact, Singapore is a sort of sanitarium in summer for persons living in Bangkok and other places many degrees farther north.

Leaving Singapore at 4 P.M. on the 25th, we sailed through the Straits of Malacca, with Sumatra visi-

ble on the left and the Malay peninsula constantly in sight on our starboard, and after a run of three hundred and thirty-one miles we were in the harbor of Penang at 4 A.M. on the 27th. Penang is another island under British rule, and the metropolis of the same name is a city of about eighty thousand, more than half of whom are Chinese. There are not many Europeans there aside from the garrison. The same rich tropical vegetation meets the eye as at Singapore—the pine-apple, the cocoa-nut, the betel-nut, and the banana, abounding on all sides. The Malay women, with their teeth blackened from chewing the betel-nut, and distinguished from the men not by the length of their hair, but by wearing more jewelry and clothing; the inevitable Chinese merchant with his foreign goods; and the Malay with his native wares displayed on the counter, where he patiently sits cross-legged waiting for a customer, or, wearied, lies down to sleep, his black form fairly shining in the sunlight; the minarets of the mosque and the spires of the English and Catholic churches, are all part of the same picture which we saw at Singapore.

We were present at the awarding of prizes in the Penang Free School. Here are the Chinese, Malays, Klings, and Tamils, engaged with European boys in studying English. The Chinese compose four-fifths of the school. They read, parse, write from dictation, all in the English, and master the “r” with apparent ease—most Chinese have to use “l” instead. Save an ignorance of the idioms of our language and amusing blunders in consequence, the natives compared well with the English boys, and bore off numerous prizes for knowledge of English grammar and history, geography, arithmetic, etc. The English welcome the Chinese to the Straits Settlement, and they do much to develop the country, and take great interest in business and educational

schemes. The business capacity of the Chinaman best appears under a favorable government, as at Hong Kong and Singapore. With promise of protection they would occupy in large numbers, and develop Borneo and the whole Malay peninsula. What power they would carry with them if they were Christians!

Leaving Penang at 2 o'clock P.M., January 27, a run of one thousand two hundred and thirteen miles has just brought us on the evening of the 31st to Point de Galle, Ceylon: The day after leaving Penang we passed the upper part of Sumatra, which is about ninety-five degrees east of Greenwich, and as Kansas City is ninety-five degrees west of Greenwich, I had the satisfaction on that day of completing my one hundred and eightieth degree of longitude, or just half my voyage around the world. Here we met the French steamer "Hoogly," on her way to Singapore. We saluted each other by slowly raising and lowering three times the flags under which we severally sailed, and then the darkness soon hid each from the other's view. This being the Sabbath, after the morning inspection, religious service was held under the double awning on the quarter-deck. After the morning prayer, read by Captain Frazer, with the capstan as my pulpit, it was my privilege, on the Bay of Bengal, as it had been on the Pacific, to speak in my Master's name. Bishop Marvin preached the previous Sabbath on the China Sea. It is gratifying to see the interest manifested in all the East for the spiritual welfare of sailors. Not only do we see them in considerable numbers in the churches, but there are sailors' homes, where the sick are cared for, and where, in pleasant reading-rooms, all on shore may be saved from the snares usually spread for their feet. Flying fish, like flocks of birds, marked our voyage all the way from Penang.

At first we mistook them for birds until we saw them disappear in the water after flying two or three hundred feet.

Mr. E. S. Wetmore, of California, is the only American on board besides ourselves.

Point de Galle, Ceylon, Jan. 31, 1877