

by water is also recommended at high tide (six shillings the boat). The road skirts one side and the railway the other side of the river.

From Dolgelly to Llangollen, *vid* Bala and Corwen, was our next move. We took train to Corwen, and thence walked into Llangollen. The last five miles of this road are beautiful. The Dee "winds about and in and out," and fully realises Tennyson's description of the "brook" as it flows between the wooded hills.

Our little tour was then drawing to its close. Llangollen was our last Welsh resting-place. The whole neighbourhood abounds in charming walks and drives. Valle Crucis Abbey, Castell Dinas Bran, and the residence of the "Ladies of Llangollen," will all be visited with pleasure. To "honeymooners" we recommend the Vale of Llangollen and its romantic scenery.

Two days spent here brought our walk in North Wales to an end, contentedly. The train carried us to Chester, mournful and silent, and we added up our accounts while the North-Western express rattled us from Chester to Euston Square. This is what we saw, briefly:—

FOR TWO PERSONS.

	£	s.	d.
Return Tickets to Conway ... ..	...	3	6
Dinner at Crewe ... ..	...	0	4
Hotel, Llandudno ... ..	...	1	14
Carried forward ... ..	...	5	4

	£	s.	d.
Brought forward ... ..	...	5	4
Expenses at Conway, Servants, Luggage, Lunch, &c. &c. ... ..	...	0	12
To Tal-y-Cafn (Rail) ... ..	...	0	1
Hotel, Bettws-y-Coed ... ..	...	1	6
Servants, Omnibus, Luggage, &c. ... ..	...	0	3
Hotel, Capel Curig ... ..	...	1	2
Coach, Llanberis ... ..	...	0	8
Carnarvon, Tickets, Castle, &c. ... ..	...	0	4
Hotel, Llanberis, and Snowdon Expenses ...	...	1	6
Hotel, Beddgelert ... ..	...	1	11
Festiniog, Lunch, Train, &c. ... ..	...	0	6
Hotel, Tan-y-Bwlch (three whole days), and Conveyance ... ..	...	4	4
To Barmouth, Servants, Lunch, &c. &c. ...	...	0	8
Hotel, Dolgelly, Servants ... ..	...	1	3
Tickets to Corwen, Lunch, &c. ... ..	...	0	7
Hotel, Llangollen, &c., and Tickets to Chester ... ..	...	3	2
		£21	12

We were absent clear twelve days; and several items in the accounts could have been dispensed with, but we went to work in no niggardly fashion, though not in any extravagant temper, and thoroughly enjoyed our tour.

With the exception of our scrambles up Snowdon and Moelwyn, all our walking could easily be accomplished by ladies, and to ladies we recommend the trip.



BURMAH AND THE BURMESE.



THE Kingdom of Burmah—respecting which a new interest has been created by recent events—formerly occupied nearly the whole of the great peninsula east of Hindostan, and was divided into two regions—Pegu in the south, inhabited by the Talaings, with Rangoon as the capital and seaport, and Ava in the north, with its capital of the same name, peopled by the Burmese proper; but British territory now stretches a long arm all down the coast of the Bay of Bengal, and includes the province of Pegu. Scarcely any reliance can be placed on the

palm-leaf chronicles of the native historians, and it is not till we find the Portuguese firmly established in Malacca, and able to look round them at the doings of their neighbours (1540), that any authentic information can be gathered about the political and military struggles of the Talaings and Burmese, and the kings of Martaban and Toung-oo. The last-mentioned was one of the most prominent warriors of his time, and rejoiced in various appellations, the most pronounceable of which, as well as the one by which he is best known, being Branginoco. After conquering the Talaing prince, he attacked him of Martaban with the skilled assistance of the Portuguese, and compelled him to submit, promising to spare his life and the lives of his wives and children if he would spend the rest of his days in retirement. The sanguinary conqueror, however, set up gibbets forthwith on an adjacent hill, where he hung the women and children by their feet, and threw the fallen king with fifty of his nobles into the sea with stones tied to their necks, a proceeding the barbarity of which roused even his hardened troops into mutiny against their master, who succeeded in escaping from them

and subsequently besieged Prome and Siam, quelled a revolution that had broken out in Pegu, slaughtering its luckless inhabitants right and left, and was finally killed during the night by Xenim, the governor of Sittang, against whom he was leading an expedition. Xenim then proclaimed himself king, but in a couple of years was besieged by Zemindoo, a descendant of the Talaing dynasty of Pegu, who had led the revolt in the previous reign. Xenim being slain as he rode on his elephant by a shot from an arquebus, Zemindoo reigned in his stead for a year, when he was deposed by a relative of the formidable Branginoco, fled to the mountains, and wedded there a village maid to whom he was so foolish as to reveal his rank. Women being but poor hands at keeping a secret, she informed her parents, and they, tempted by the large reward set on the royal fugitive's head, betrayed their son-in-law to his foes, who mounted him on a sorry jade, crowned him with straw, gave him a necklace of onions, and finally struck off his head and divided his body into eight portions.

The foregoing is only a summary of the principal events of a few years, and it would be both useless and tedious to pursue the chapter of revolts, treacheries, and murders throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries up to the present time. Having thus given the slightest of sketches of the early history of Burmah, let us turn to its people, who are of the Mongolian type, and are divided into many tribes besides the two already mentioned. Perhaps the best known of the remainder are the Karens, among whom the devoted American missionaries, Judson and Marshman, spent their lives. Taken altogether, the Burmese are a fine robust race, among whom physical deformity and mental weakness are unusually rare. The men are almost invariably tattooed from the waist to the knees with figures of birds and animals, on a groundwork of delicate tracery and waving lines. The operation is performed with needles, is exceedingly painful, and is executed with a black or blue colouring matter. It is often commenced at as early an age as six years. The arms are frequently tattooed in vermilion with cabalistic characters, supposed to be charms against disease and evil spirits. The hair is tied in a knot on the top of the head, and intertwined with a piece of gay muslin or silk, a jacket of stuff or cotton hangs from the shoulders, while a bright-coloured cloth wound round the waist, extending to the ankles, and with one end thrown jauntily over the breast, like a Highlander's scarf, completes the costume. The women are frequently nice-looking, and adepts in enhancing their personal appearance by rich and graceful dress. Their black hair is carefully dressed and perfumed, gathered together behind the head, and usually adorned with fresh flowers. They wear a vest, or bodice, of the material known as Turkey red; a petticoat of native silk, partially open in front, so that in walking it displays whichever leg is thrown forward, and a train of a different pattern, the graceful management of which is one of the accomplishments of a Burmese belle. An open jacket, a shawl draped across the shoulders, and a pair of red sandals are also worn.

Their jewellery is massive and handsome, consisting of pure gold and precious stones. Both sexes have the lobe of the ear bored, and the aperture enlarged by inserting gradually an increasing number of slips of bamboo. In these slits they wear tubes or cylinders of gold, about an inch and a half long, and three-quarters of an inch in diameter. Men, women, and children are inveterate smokers, and the ear-tubes are not inconvenient receptacles for half-smoked cigars.

Women hold a very different position in Burmah to the one to which they are condemned by the Mahomedans and Hindoos. They wear no veils, have their own legal rights, can hold real property independently of their husbands, and are universally respected and considered by the other sex. Their manners are pleasantly frank, though always well-bred, and they are allowed freedom of choice in matrimony. It is quite as common and natural to see a betrothed couple enjoying an evening walk in Burmah as it is in England. The greatest reverence is shown by children to their parents, and by all to the aged. Good temper is a prevailing characteristic; and though none seem to be very rich, there is no poverty. If a family should happen to be in want, the neighbours help them, and strangers are always hospitably welcomed and fed.

Marriage is a purely civil rite. When young people "understand each other," the mother or eldest female relative of the man sounds the girl's mother, and, if she offer no objection, some of the suitor's elderly kinsfolk propose the marriage formally to the parents of the bride elect, and arrange whatever settlement can be made. Their consent being given, the bridegroom provides the trousseau according to the capacity of his purse. A feast is prepared; the affianced pair eat out of the same dish in the presence of the assembled guests; and then the husband presents his wife with some *hla-pet*, or pickled tea, she does the same by him, and the ceremony is completed. This preserved or pickled tea is made up with some glutinous substance into small balls or cakes, and is chiefly imported from the countries bordering on China. It is much used on ceremonial occasions by the Burmese, who dress it with sesamum oil, garlic, and assafoetida, and look upon it as a great delicacy.

Rice, as in most other Asiatic countries, forms the staple food, and is usually accompanied by stewed fish, meat, and vegetables. Cucumber salad is a very popular dish, and chutneys of different flavours abound, the most indispensable one to a Burmese repast being a very strong compound of prawns and the roes of various fish, seasoned with chillies, garlic, and other spicy condiments. Bird's-nest soup is as highly prized as it is in China.

The meals are served up in circular red trays of graduated sizes, fitting one after another into a conical apparatus called an "ok." The largest tray holds the rice, and is placed at the bottom; and the others contain cups and plates of meat, fish, &c. The assembled company sit round the rice, and help themselves to it by handfuls, which they season with the contents of the smaller dishes, passing them round from one to

another. They are all water-drinkers, as becomes devout Buddhists.

Their religion forbids them to kill any animal, but they have no scruple in eating what has been killed by other people. Their appetites are remarkably robust, and they do not hesitate to eat creatures that have died a natural death, and are not at all inclined to despise the flesh of rats, snakes, and lizards, while some of the tribes highly appreciate roast, and even raw, monkey.

The practice of medicine in Burmah is carried on by whoever chooses to take it up, and quack doctors consequently abound. Mercury is their great remedy, but they use a number of "simples," and esteem their virtues according to the lunar periods during which they are gathered. The universal principle with regard to the diet of persons suffering from fever or other acute diseases is that they should eat more than usual, in order that the constitution may have strength to withstand the complaint. Funerals are celebrated with great ceremony; the corpse being washed, a coin put in the mouth, and then wrapped in clean linen, and laid in state in a front room of the house for three days, at the expiration of which time it is placed in a wooden coffin, carried in procession to the cemetery, and there cremated. A band of music, as well as gifts for the priests and the poor, precede the coffin, which is borne by the friends of the deceased, while immediately behind it walk the nearest relatives clad in white. A sort of service, consisting of the Buddhist five commandments, creed, and "ten good works," is recited by the priests before the corpse is placed on the funeral pyre; the chief mourner pours water on the ground, and then all retire to a distance, leaving the departed in the hands of those whose office it is to burn the dead. The alms are distributed to the priests; all present partake of pawn, betel, and pickled tea, and then retire to their respective homes. When three days have elapsed, the relations return to the cemetery, collect the ashes in an urn, and bury it in the earth.

The Burmese as a nation are remarkably good at sports. Europe has imported from them the now fashionable game of polo. They box and wrestle, play a species of football with a wicker ball, and train for their annual boat races on the Irawaddy as zealously as any Varsity eights among ourselves. In rowing, they usually sing and keep time with the oars, or rather paddles, with which they attain a high degree of speed. They are exceedingly fond of both vocal and instrumental music, and the drama is a national insti-

tution. The theatres are only bamboo structures, thatched with grass and draped with gaily coloured cloths. The stage is in the centre, green boughs do duty for sylvan scenes, the footlights are earthen bowls of petroleum mounted on plantain stems, cane platforms supply the place of boxes, and the mass of the spectators sit in an orderly circle on the ground.

The great festival of the year is at its commencement, and lasts for four days. The people go to the pagodas at daybreak, sprinkle them with water, offer up prayers for a fruitful season, and present jars of water to the priests, begging absolution for all sins of word, thought, or deed committed during the past year. This done, they give themselves up to merry-making, decorating the houses and streets, and throwing scented water and flowers about, much as Roman revellers pelt each other with *confetti* during the Carnival. The Buddhist faith inculcates the instruction of youth as a meritorious action, and this has given rise to the establishment of lay and monastic schools in such numbers that the people have every opportunity of receiving the rudiments of education, and consequently a Burman is rarely met with who cannot at least read, write, and cipher.

Every one has heard of the white elephant, to which royal and divine honours are paid in Burmah. This extraordinary animal, which is much more brown than white, lives within the palace enclosure, is served from golden vessels, has lands set apart for its maintenance, and ranks next to the heir apparent, and before all great ministers of state. In case of illness it is attended by the king's physician, prayers are offered for its recovery by the priests, and when it dies its funeral is conducted with royal honours.

Mandalay, the present capital, is a city less than twenty years old, and was founded by the late king. It is about a mile square, and enclosed by a brick wall twenty-six feet high, pierced with twelve gates. The royal palace is in the centre, and within its enclosure are the mint, treasury, powder magazine, arsenal, and council halls, as well as the private apartments and pleasure-grounds. It is defended by a stockade of teak timber and two brick walls, and has three gates, one of which is on the eastern side and is graced by a lofty tower containing a water-clock, which gives the time to the city. One more peculiarity of the Burmese, and we have done: they have an extraordinary passion for large bells with a remarkably sonorous sound, and towards the close of the last century cast the largest bell but one in the world, weighing no less than ninety tons.

