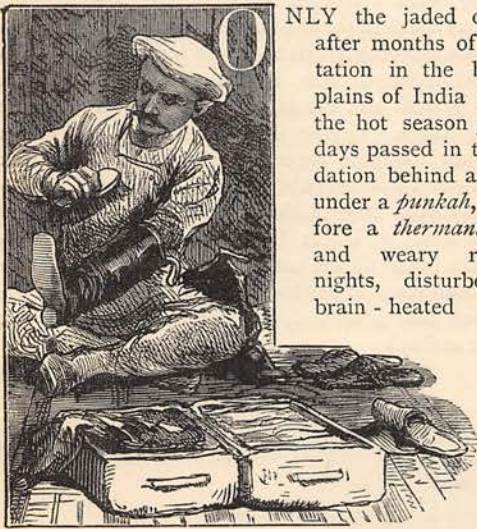


CROSSING THE GUGGUR.

## OFF TO THE HILLS OF INDIA.



NLY the jaded official, after months of vegetation in the blazing plains of India during the hot season; after days passed in transudation behind a *tattee*, under a *punkah*, or before a *thermantidote*; and weary restless nights, disturbed by brain-heated phan-

energy all but exhausted, appetite broken, and temper made fractious and irritable in spite of the inherent benevolence of his disposition, can duly appreciate the fulness of the joy one experiences in leaving the Gehenna of these torments behind, and setting one's face towards those everlasting hills which seem to one even as the gates of Elysium. See how the expression on the countenance of our toiling Tantalus relaxes as he opens the official document which tells him that his application for leave has been granted. See what renewed activity characterises all his movements, which before were languid and spiritless. It does not take him long to get his arrangements made for departure, and at the earliest moment at which he can conscientiously avail himself of his leave, he is off. To see the nimble figure which descends from the railway carriage at Umballa, you would hardly recognise in it the dejected person of the Deputy Commissioner of Frizzlepore. See now with what hungry eagerness he strains his eyes out of the *dak-gharry* to catch the first glimpse of the grey outline, shrouded perchance in the wreathing mists of morning; for the season of the rains is approaching,

tasms, and the vicious buzz of the blood-sucking mosquito; only the man still labouring on with

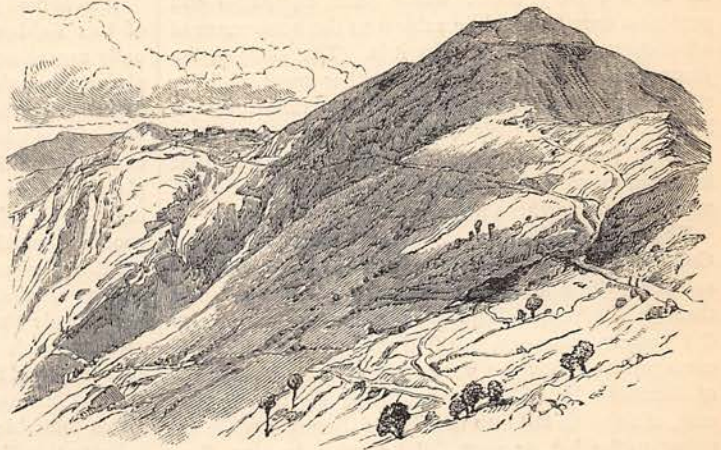


and already the coming cloud-battalions have sent forward their vanguard to steal up through the valleys, and occupy the craggy summits of the upper ranges. His only anxiety now is, will the Guggur be swollen or not?

A strange stream this Guggur, and one which may well give our traveller anxiety, since the possibility is on the cards that, with those ominous clouds gathering in the hills, he may be detained on its banks for some hours. For the Guggur is a rain-stream which is fed by numerous and important channels, through which the floods that descend upon the mountains are carried away into the plains.

Where the road from Umballa towards Simla crosses it, it has a wide shallow bed, with a low muddy island in its centre. Under ordinary circumstances this bed is for the most part quite dry, intersected by two or three insignificant channels of sluggishly flowing water, which any man can wade through without the water reaching to his knees. But when the rain-flood comes down, as it sometimes does, very suddenly, after a heavy downpour in the mountains, this insignificant stream swells into a mighty rushing torrent. The dak-gharry (literally post-chaise) by which the journey is made, stops on the left and south bank of the river, and here the horses are unharnessed and exchanged for strong bullocks, which in their slow lazy fashion drag the carriage through the bed of the stream.

it. Yet during the short interval sufficient to change the draught-beasts, the torrent came down like a wall of water, and swept man and sheep and all away.



JUTOG, FROM THE SIMLA ROAD.

Fortunately they were all recovered a little lower down the stream.

Of course he had to wait as patiently as he could until the waters subsided sufficiently to permit of his crossing; but then there was the apprehension of fresh rain in the hills raising the volume of the river again, so that the first moment at which crossing became at all possible was watched for with solicitous eagerness.

At last, in spite of the representations of the natives who, on these occasions, crowd round the interrupted traveller with mercenary offers of assistance, the passage is attempted. The gharry is emptied of every article of luggage, the heterogeneous mass being piled up on the roof, whither the traveller himself with his servant has to take refuge. Two yoke of oxen have to be attached to the vehicle, and then, with some forty natives howling and shouting vociferously on either side, the perilous start is commenced. The bottom is so loose, and the current so strong, that the bullocks, nearly up to their backs in water, can barely keep their footing. The torrent rushes right through the carriage, eddying noisily around it as it goes, and if it should happen to rise a few inches higher, there is every prospect of the whole bag of tricks being overturned and precipitated into the stream. A deafening babel of yells and shouts kept up incessantly by the dusky and almost naked crowd of natives struggling and



TARA-DEVI, FROM JUTOG.

The writer has arrived at this point, to find to his satisfaction that the stream was not in flood, and easily fordable; for at that very moment a man was in a leisurely manner driving a flock of sheep across

straining at the wheels, or striving to maintain the gharry erect against the torrent, adds to the excitement of the situation, and an indescribable frenzy of glee in the wildness of the situation possesses the traveller.



It would hardly be believed in England that travelling along this road, which is the only route for Government officials, from the Viceroy downwards, journeying annually to and from Simla, and for all the busy traffic which their equipages and provision entail, should be subject to the occurrence of adventures like this. Yet so it is. The Ganges, the Jumna, the Sutlej, the Beas, and other much mightier rivers have been spanned with bridges, reflecting the highest credit on their constructors; but the turbulent and treacherous Guggur is still left in its truculent freedom, to work its wayward will upon the crowded traffic of this northern highway.

There is another very singular feature about this Guggur. If you will take a map of the Indian peninsula and draw an almost straight line from Simla through Udaipur, in Rajpootana, down to Cambay, on the western coast, you will find that such a line indicates pretty closely the watershed of the great rivers of Northern India. All rivers rising to the right, or east, of this line fall into the Bay of Bengal; while all rising to the left, or west, fall into the Arabian Sea. The whimsical Guggur, however, maintains its caprices even in this respect, for rising, or rather being formed by streams which rise, to the east of Simla, it turns sharply round to the west, after emerging into the plains, crosses our line of watershed between Umballa and Kalka, and ultimately, still true to the perversity of its nature, loses itself in the sandy deserts of Bikanir.

But our impatient traveller cares little what escapades the Guggur may choose to indulge in, so that he gets safely across it, and having had the horses put into the shafts again, is being whirled along the road which brings him every moment nearer and nearer to his prospective haven of rest. His heart gladdens within him as the vehicle rattles by the shady gardens and through the narrow lanes of the village of Pinjore. He contemplates with growing enthusiasm the mysterious outlines of the Sewalik ranges, so productive in fossils of antediluvian epochs, and indulges in a deep-drawn "At last!" as the gharry comes finally to a halt in front of the hotel at Kalka. He does not care to stop long, however, amid the stifling odours of this busy little town nestling at the foot of the hills, but he is eager to get as soon as he can out of the seething atmosphere of the plains, up into the Olympic regions, where the air is cool, and the breezes fresh and invigorating; where the scent of the pines comes from the forests, and the friendly note of the cuckoo is wafted across the silent valleys. So, after hasty ablutions and a scanty meal, he jumps beside the driver into the *tonga*, which by this time has been got ready for him, and away they go merrily behind a pair of sturdy little ponies, breasting the hill in valiant fashion to the encouraging persuasion of the driver, shouting "Shavash mera butcha!—sher ka kam hy!" and similar animating ejaculations. How the spirit rises with the altitude attained! How the lungs expand to the rarifying atmosphere! How the blood glows to the freshening temperature! How the whole being exults, as in the first new birth of freedom!

Verily—were it not for the presence of the driver beside him, and the servant in the back seat—our emancipated provost could unquestionably vent his feelings in a wild shout of exultation.

It is almost impossible to realise fully the influence of this sudden change of climate without having actually experienced it. You leave the flat uninteresting plains, over which hangs a reeking mist, seeming only to intensify the fulvid glare of the brazen sky above you. This ichorous fume is what you have to live in, to inhale, until you gasp again for a little of the displaced oxygen which ought to reanimate the thickening blood. If wind blow, it does not better your condition much, for it is like the scorching blast of a smelting furnace. If rain fall, the air resembles the muggy exhalations of a sudatorium, causing your skin to transude through every pore. The very crows, a species much more numerous, garrulous, and self-asserting than the English one, stand open-beaked and gasping in what of shade they can find, and the world seems tolerable only to the salamander and the gadfly.

From this Tophet you may rise in a couple of hours to a climate fresh, clear and bracing, as of summer in the Helvetic Alps; a change so sudden and complete, that it appears like one of the rapid transformations we read of in the tales of the "Thousand and One Nights." No one who has not experienced the depressing influences of literally the "lower regions," can realise the exhilaration of this magic change into the upper ones. How delicious it is to hear the sighing of the breeze through the waving pines, while you can look down upon the reeking mist below you, stretching away in murky folds to the hazy horizon-line! How welcome the hum of bees, and the noisy chirrup of the cicada, in place of flies, mosquitoes, and the hundreds of other entomological and reptilian torments which aggravate one's bitterness in the hot season below! How sweet to watch the cloud-shadows chasing each other on the massive hills, or wreathing themselves in tender affection around their summits, when for months you have seen nothing but a blazing sky, unchequered from morning till night by a single cloudlet, with that awful and everlasting sun beating down upon you, reigning supreme over the glaring firmament, and asserting his power with malevolent cruelty! How enchanting, after living for months together in a stifling cantonment, like Agra for instance, where the mango-groves and palm-trees are the only objects to break the even flatness of the view, to be amongst these mighty hills once more, beholding now their summits towering up into the clouds, now their pine-clad flanks sloping down into the sheltered valleys beneath, where the water is leaping in wanton sport from crag to crag till, tired of its play amid the sunbeams, it ripples cool and placid among the glittering pebbles!

From Kalka the road rises steadily, yet by a tolerably easy gradient, so that in little more than two hours we reach an altitude of about 7,000 feet above sea-level. But the whole distance to be traversed by this road, from Kalka to Simla, being fifty-seven miles, occupies about eight hours.



The wonderful way in which this road has been constructed—sometimes hewn out of solid rock, with a perpendicular wall on one side and a giddy precipice on the other; sometimes bridged across gaping chasms, which become roaring torrents in the rains; always winding in and out with the tortuosities of the sinuous contours, so as to maintain as nearly as possible a uniform level—renders it a model of the industry, patience, and skill of all concerned in planning and executing it. The whole of its course exhibits a continuous panorama of most majestic scenery. We pass, perched on separate summits, the military posts of Dagshai, Kasouli, and Sabatu, used partly as sanitarium for our European troops, partly as military stations for the protection of Simla. Another military detachment is stationed at Solon, a point very nearly halfway between Kalka and Simla, where the traveller, if he pleases, may obtain refreshments and an hour's rest at the welcome wayside inn.

Here there is a most lovely view, stretching away across the valley of the Giri, up in a north-easterly direction to the misty outlines of the Chor, a peak well known to all the frequenters of both Simla and

Mussoori. As we approach the former station, the scenery increases in beauty and interest. To our left we discern the picturesque cantonment of Jutog, which is generally garrisoned by a battery of mountain-guns, and far beyond, rising over ridge upon ridge of intervening mountain ranges, we may perceive the outline of "the snows."

And now we come to the mighty rocks of Tara-Devi, frowning down upon us in rugged outlines which cut directly across the zenith, while on the other side of us is a sheer drop of apparently some thousands of feet, all of which we may contemplate with perfect equanimity, for, thanks to the boldness and intrepidity of our engineers, the roadway is hewn in one long horizontal line along the rock-face, being well protected on the Khud side by a strong parapet-wall.

Suddenly the dark green pyramid of Jacko comes into view, and amid the crowded deodars, pines, ilices, and rhododendrons is disclosed to us a scattered congeries of picturesque dwellings, clustered thickly at one spot, but stretching, by more or less isolated habitations, far away both to right and left of us, and in an hour more we are in Simla.

## THE INCONGRUITIES OF ART IN DRESS.

BY MRS. STRANGE BUTSON, AUTHOR OF "THE ART OF WASHING," ETC.



FIG. 1.

**P**UBLIC taste in costume and decoration has, during the last two years, received endless lessons from numerous authoritative pens; and by perpetual references to, and quotations from, the fashions of past centuries, we are assured that we attain that El Dorado of art called "high." To this coveted goal our artistic women, and those who believe themselves to be

artistic, have struggled with more or less success. There remains, however, a large proportion who, with most praiseworthy desires to display art in their clothes and surroundings, end by collecting about themselves a very heterogeneous *entourage*, and both in their persons and dwellings present incongruities that forcibly remind us of the child's toy-box of coloured figures, when the wrong legs are adjusted to the wrong bodies, and placed in a shop of mixed curiosities.

There never was a truer saying than one which emanated from a celebrated art-critic, that "in matters of art the public are always in the wrong." This is exemplified by the manner in which any new idea of form or colour, however inappropriate, gets "run to death" when once it becomes public property, till we

see the colour or the form perpetuated and vulgarised *ad nauseam*. Take, for instance, the "Langtry hood"—this, originating as a useful appendage to an ulster, has dwindled down into interminable little, useless, unmeaning bags, or folds, of unsuitable materials, put on any sort of costume as a supposed decoration, for they certainly have no other *raison d'être*.

Nothing so forcibly strikes the innately æsthetic eye as the painful incongruities that are displayed by those who aspire to manifest artistic tendencies in their habiliments, nor the promiscuous way in which one and all rush into so-called art in dress, where those of purer taste would hesitate to commit themselves; for nothing is more satisfactory than an old costume rigidly adhered to and carried out, nor so distressing as a *pot-pourri* combination of different periods in the dress of one person.

It is to be deplored that the false canons of taste produced by the bad æsthetic and intellectual education of some who write as authorities on the art of dress and decoration, should fatally cause false habits of judgment in those who put their trust in them; for, starting from erroneous and imperfect information, they but teach the exaggerations and inconsistencies which vulgarise true art and beauty, thus misleading the public they think to instruct. The real artist cannot tolerate what is untrue, whether in form, complexion, or costume; and where form is fictitious, complexion false, and costume incorrect as a copy of a certain period, the artist's eye and sense of truth