doctor remarked he wished the soldier could be roused, and among other remedies leeches were prescribed. While watching them I tried to enter into conversation, but received only monosyllabic replies. A copy of Tennyson's poem having been sent to me that morning, I took it out and read aloud—

"'Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said.
Into the valley of death
Rode the six hundred.

"'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldiers knew
Some one had blunder'd;
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.'

The man at once forgot his pain, and entered into a spirited description of that terrific gallop to and from the cannon-crowned height. In a few days the invalid requested the doctor to discharge him for duty, being now in health; but, whether the cure was effected by the leeches or the poem, it is impossible to say. On giving the card, the medical man murmured, 'Well done, Tennyson!'"*

Many fancy a nurse is only needed to spare her patient *bodily exertion;* but it is far more necessary to spare him *mental effort.* If the sick have to think for themselves, they might as well have no nurse. They must not have to remind you of their medicines, their meals, their night-light, etc., nor require to answer the same questions again and again when once would suffice. You must plan for them, remember for them, and anticipate all their wants, and all this without expatiating on what you are doing or mean to do. "A nurse ought to understand every change of her patient's face, every change of his attitude, every change of his voice. And she ought to study them till she feels no one else understands them so well. She may make mistakes, but she is *on the way* to being a good nurse. Whereas, the nurse who never observes her patient's countenance at all, and never expects to see any variation, any more than if she had the charge of delicate china, is on the way to nothing at all. She will never be a nurse. 'He hates to be watched,' is the excuse of every careless nurse. Very true. All sick people and all children hate to be 'watched.' But find a nurse who really understands her children and her patients, and see whether these are aware that they have been "watched." It is not the staring at a patient which tells the really observant nurse the little things she ought to know. The best observer I know, the man whose labours among lunatics have earned for him the gratitude of Europe, appears to be quite absent. He leans back in his chair with half-shut eyes, and meanwhile sees everything, hears everything, and observes everything."†

This habit of correct observation will enable you to give a concise and serviceable report to the doctor; you can tell how many hours the invalid slept, and at what hours of the night; you will be a fair judge of how many ounces of food he swallowed; you will learn to distinguish the indication of the pulse, so valuable when rightly interpreted, so fatally delusive to a novice; and you will notice many other points on which we cannot here touch.

* "Experiences of an English Sister of Mercy."
† "Notes on Nursing."

Yet observation alone is not sufficient, without thought and judgment, to make use of the details with which it supplies us. A nurse should be a thoughtful, responsible person; nor must her thoughtfulness benefit her patients only while she is in actual charge over them. Her own health requires that she should leave the sick-room for rest and daily fresh air, and it is during her absence that so many *accidents* (?) occur; the visitor is injudiciously admitted, the afternoon rest is broken, the medicine omitted, and the meal delayed. All this might be prevented by previous arrangement; and it is the duty of a nurse not so much to do the things which are actually required, as to know they are done. Indeed, the same principle applies to every person in charge; we should so conduct our affairs as to be able to devolve them on others when needful.

Have we sketched too high a model? Yet, less than this will not meet the wants of the suffering and helpless. For this, as for every other vocation, we must through prayer obtain a strength beyond our own. This will help us to meet patiently the irritability of nervous invalids, calmly and promptly to fulfil duties of critical importance, and to reflect Heaven's own light to those walking in the shadow of death.

At this time, when so much is said about the employment of women, and the difficulty of procuring it, it is well to know that in the nursing department the demand far exceeds the supply, and this although ample remuneration is offered. Even probationers at St. Thomas's Hospital are allowed a stipend during their year of training, after which, immediate employment is obtained for them, commencing at not less than £20 a year, with extras. Will not some of the women of England, then, come forward and embrace this truly womanly vocation?

INDIAN THIEVES.

COMMUNICATED BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR THOMAS SEATON.

In that most interesting work, "Modern Egyptians," by Lane, the translator of the "Thousand and One Nights," I met with this paragraph:—"Even the common thieves used not many years since to respect a superior, who was called the Sheikh. He was often required to search for stolen goods and to bring offenders to justice, which he generally accomplished. It is very remarkable that the same strange system prevailed amongst the ancient Egyptians."

I think it is equally remarkable that not many years ago—1823—a somewhat similar system prevailed in various districts in India, and may possibly prevail in a modified form to this day. The thieves in those districts were banded together under acknowledged leaders, to whom they all paid implicit obedience, and through whose influence stolen property might be recovered. But the strange feature in these Indian brotherhoods of thieves was that they and their leaders were always ready to earn an honest livelihood, and their peculiar and favourite line was that of chokeydar, or watchman. To sober-minded Englishmen it may seem a strange and most dangerous plan to employ a professed thief to watch and guard property from thieves—his own comrades, in whose company he had robbed and plundered many a time; but it is one of the many remarkable anomalies that are to be met with in that most remarkable, and still little known country. I have never known these chokeydars other than honest and faithful; the goods and chattels of any person entrusted to one of these thieves were respected by the band; his house was never robbed. Sometimes a thief, disappointed, perhaps,

in his share of a booty, would "run rusty," and, to show his spite to his leader, would commit some small depredation on a protected house; but he could not do much, he could get no assistance, and there were too many of the fraternity on the watch.

In October 1823 I reached Cawnpore, on my way to join my regiment, and as I should be some time getting together my marching establishment, tents, horses, servants, etc.—for I had come up by the river—I hired a small bungalow. As soon as I had taken up my residence, I was waited upon by the cutwal of the chokeydars, as he was called, a respectable looking individual, well-spoken, dignified, stately, but with an eye that seemed to glance round and to catalogue and appraise everything in the room in that glance, who advised me to take a watchman whom he was prepared to supply. I did not "see the fun" of paying ten shillings a month, for (as I thought) a mere incumbrance, and I refused. Fortunately a friend came in at the moment, and told me the story of a young officer who had been recently robbed; he would not hire a chokeydar, so everything he possessed was taken out of his house, the very sheet he was lying on was taken from under him, and his sword, as a warning, was thrust through his mattress.

This clever and seemingly impossible feat was effected in the simplest and neatest way possible. The young officer was warned that his house would be robbed, the thieves knew that he would watch, but they knew also that his youth would soon succumb to the heat of the climate and the fatigue of watching, and then he would slumber most profoundly. So on the third night, as day began to dawn, and when, as anticipated, overcome by the fatigue of the two previous nights' watch, and lulled by the coolness of the morning air, in fancied security the young officer had sunk into a profound slumber, the thieves commenced operations. They had but a few minutes for their work, for daybreak was close at hand, and it dawns near the tropics as rapidly as light departs; there is very little twilight; dawn springs at once into broad daylight. To get into his room, remove all his boxes, his furniture and other things, to take the pistols from under his pillow, and gently remove the sword from his now relaxed grasp, was the work of a few minutes only, and the main body of the gang moved rapidly away, carrying off the plundered property. The leader of the gang remained with two of his men. They first drew off gently the single sheet that covered the sleeper, then they rolled up the under one until it was parallel to, and touching his back as he lay on his side. Then all left the room but the leader. Squatting on the ground close to the sleeper's head, as it hung over the pillow, he took a feather and gently tickled his nose. Thinking it was a fly, he instinctively rolled over to the other side, and when he had again settled into sleep, the rolled-up sheet was easily withdrawn. Then, thrusting the sharpened sword through the mattress, the thief walked off in triumph, following his gang, who with the stolen property had effected their retreat in safety.

This story settled the matter. The cutwal kept his promise to supply me with a good man, and before evening I was master to a hearty, jolly old fellow, called Bhowanny, who, to my great surprise and the surprise of all my friends, proved to be a Brahmin of the highest strain. How one of the purest caste came to be connected with the guild of thieves I never could understand. I thought at one time that he might be their Friar Tuck. At all events, he was the most straightforward, honest, good-tempered old fellow I ever met with. He left his old wife and family to follow me, when I left Cawnpore, and looked after me as if I was his son. He remained in my service over eleven years—in fact, until I came home on furlough. My other servants treated him with the greatest respect, always addressing him as Maha Rajah, or great prince. This, in everyday intercourse, was shortened to Mārāj; and they constantly kissed his feet, embraced his knees, or stood before him in the attitude of supplication.

About a year and a half after I had engaged him, I found myself at Seetapore, in Oude, a place celebrated in those days for skilful and desperate thieves and dacoits. My chum and I thought that we might as well have one of the local practitioners to help Bhowanny, who, from being a stranger, and unknown, might not at first have any influence with the professionals of the district. Bhowanny knew what he was about, and went and engaged for our service the leader of all the thieves in the place, and a more wild, desperate-looking, audacious, intelligent, outspoken, civil, and obliging blackguard I never met with. He had attained to his pre-eminence in the thieves' fraternity by his numerous skilfully-planned and audacious robberies, by his thorough knowledge of the whole country, his aptitude at disguise, ability in getting intelligence, and in disposing of his plunder.

He was a perfect picture, and would have been a "joy," a small fortune, to an artist, could any have seen him as he stood before us—his head covered with rope like rolls of red muslin wound into a turban, that covered his ears and the back of his neck; his spare muscular frame stripped to the waist; his beard flowing down nearly to his breast, his long locks curled and matted together; and his keen piercing eyes glistening with excitement; while leaning upon a six-foot bow, and flourishing in his right hand half a dozen ugly-looking arrows, giving emphasis to his words, he recounted his adventures, sometimes tragical, but mostly ludicrous.

I will give an outline of one of his stories, which may amuse, though it loses half its interest for want of the man's rough language, his grand expressions, and the force derived from the gesticulations with which he acted his tale.

One day in the rainy season, Tokee—the name by which we knew him—received intelligence from a sure and trusty spy, that a well-to-do "Bunniah" grocer and chandler in the town had several hundred rupees concealed in his shop; that the Bunniah was going out the next night to attend some merrymaking in a neighbouring village, and that he would be absent all that night and part of the next day.

The man and his shop were but too well known to Tokee. He had somehow contrived to borrow a small sum of money from the Bunniah, which was constantly increased by enormous interest, by usury; or, if Tokee contrived to pay off any portion, the debt was speedily brought up again to the original amount, by some process which seemed mysterious to the unfortunate debtor. "Sahib," he said, "I was being eaten up. I paid him ten times over."

So here was an opportunity for personal revenge, to plunder the old extortioner, reimburse himself of all of which he had been defrauded, live at the old fellow's expense, and enjoy his anguish of mind at the loss of his treasure.

Towards sunset, when the great heat of the day had passed, and people were thronging the bazaar and streets, Tokee, who was determined that this *coup* should not fail for want of proper precautions, went to reconnoitre, accompanied by his second in command, a sort of Little John. Tokee charged himself with the delicate task of

reconnoitring the inside. His comrade was to examine the outside of the shop, and all connected with it.

The shop was of the kind common throughout India and the East, generally a square room of a convenient size built on to the dwelling-house, with which it communicated by a low strong door. The front of the room was open towards the street, but closed at night by strong sliding shutters. This contained the bulk of his goods, and was the shop proper. Outside this was a broad verandah, with a floor raised eighteen inches above the street. On this floor was placed a stand, on which were vessels of various sizes, containing convenient quantities of the article to be sold; and here the Bunniah sat, and his customers came to buy and sell, and haggle over their pennyworths.

Whilst Little John scanned the walls and doors of shop and house, and examined the neighbouring walls and houses, Tokee, who had put some money in his girdle, watched his opportunity, and when no other customer was there, and the Bunniah had gone into the inner or shop proper, he boldly entered after him, and plumped himself down on the floor. Startled by this sudden and unceremonious entrance, the Bunniah hastily snatched up an old sack, and threw it over something, which Tokee instinctively divined was the hiding-place of the treasure. To avoid suspicion, he immediately diverted the Bunniah's attention by talking about his debt, and tendering payment of a portion; then, purposely taxing him with usury and fraud, he drove the old fellow into a fury, and when the tempest of altercation, mingled with volleys of abuse, "waxed fast and furious," Tokee, who was cool and collected, had ample time to take an accurate survey of everything in the shop, the position of the sacks, the shelves, the shutters, stands, and such like, and calculate the chances of a successful attack. Having found out all he desired, Tokee calmed the Bunniah by seeming to be convinced; then, paying the money he had brought, he left the shop, and, parting on good terms with the Bunniah, he went to meet his confederate.

On comparing notes, Tokee instantly decided to attack the shop by breaking through the wall from the lane: the discoveries of his confederate seemed to render this mode of attack both safe and certain. The wall of the shop was built of kutchā puckā, that is, of kiln-burnt bricks laid in mud plaster; and, of all kinds of wall, this is the easiest to break through.

It may be as well to explain that in India there are several modes or kinds of building: the first is puckā, that is, with kiln-burnt bricks laid in lime-mortar; the next is, kutchā puckā, kiln-burnt bricks, laid with tempered clay instead of mortar; then kutchā, or sun-dried bricks laid on tempered clay; and lastly, walls built of tempered clay, like what is called cob in Devonshire. It may be well imagined that there cannot be much cohesion between kiln-burnt bricks and the tempered clay used instead of mortar, and that of these several kinds of building it is most easy to break through.

The shop stood at the corner of a lane leading down to the river, which was in flood at the time. Half-way down the lane was a narrow winding gully, that led to the bridge, most convenient for advance or retreat. A small stock of firewood had been laid in the lane against the wall of the shop, in such a manner as to form a snug dark corner against the centre of the wall of the shop, as if on purpose to favour the intended attack, by securing the actors from prying eyes of chance passengers going down the main street.

But to counterbalance these great advantages, the position of the shop, the dark gully, the screen of firewood, and the nature of the walls, were several serious disadvantages: the nights were moonlight, and the moon would not set till late, thus contracting the time for their operations; then the Cutwallee (police station) was within two hundred paces; the district watchman was close by, and the door of the courtyard of the Bunniah's dwelling-house opened into the lane a few feet beyond the stack of wood. This was most awkward. The near vicinity of the police station, or of the district watchman, Tokee cared little about: the latter could easily be provided for; and in respect to the former, "You know, Sahib," he said, "the old proverb, Cheragh ke neeché undeyāra—there is a shadow below the lamp—the police would not think of looking for a robbery just under their noses." But the door of the courtyard opening into the lane, so near the place of attack, was the real danger; for on any alarm whilst they were at work, the enemy might sally out and take them in flank, or if they happened to be in the shop at the time, they would be caught in a regular trap. But nothing venture nothing have; the prize in view was too great, and the desire for revenge for the Bunniah's extortion too strong to be foregone, and as the dangers were all in the way of business, and rather a pleasurable excitement, the attack was decided upon without the least hesitation.

Next day the shop was narrowly watched, and every move of the Bunniah and his people duly reported to the two principals by some of the gang. As night came on the shop was closed, and the Bunniah went off to his engagement; the sky became overcast with heavy clouds, the people disappeared from the streets one by one; the shops were closed; lights were extinguished; all sounds died away except the occasional warning cry of the watchmen, the barking here and there of a dog, or the wailing howl of the jackalls, and sleep settled down on the weary inhabitants.

As the night advanced, and the moon went down, the clouds grew heavier; a soft, drizzling rain came on. Chokeydars, men, dogs, and jackals took shelter from it, and then all was silence. Presently four or five figures, wrapped in black blankets, entered the town; three went off in different directions towards the Cutwallee (police station), and up and down the street; and two, divested of all superfluous clothes, stopped in a dark place, took off their blankets, oiled their bodies, and, resuming their blankets, advanced towards the Bunniah's shop, and squatted themselves in the dark corner formed by the stack of wood.

The confederates had effectually provided against interruption from the distant chokeydar, by sending one of the gang, an amusing, chattering fellow, to engage him in a gossip over sundry pipes of good tobacco—temptations that no native of India can withstand; and of course the chokeydar was to be intoxicated by a little bhang mixed with the tobacco.

Secured by the weather, and the manœuvre of their comrade, from all immediate fear of interruption, the confederates set to work. To get out the first brick was one great difficulty; no blow could be struck by any instrument: it would ring through the wall and inevitably rouse the sleepers. But these skilful operators picked the clay-mortar out with tools made for the purpose, and without much delay got the brick out. The others followed closely. The bricks were of the old Indian pattern, five inches square, one-and-a-half inch thick. After getting out a few, it became necessary to exercise the utmost judgment and caution to ascertain which was the inside layer of bricks, and to get out the first without letting it fall into the shop; this was successfully

done. As the hole every moment was made larger, more and more care was required to prevent materials falling inwards and making a noise. All went on prosperously and silently until the hole was large enough to admit a man's head, when a brick fell into the shop with a dull, heavy thump on the earthen floor, and at that very moment their scout in the main street signalled that some one was coming.

The confederates shrank into the dark corner formed by the pile of wood. Cowering down under their black blankets, they held their breath, listening for sounds from the inmates who might have been disturbed, and for the footsteps of the belated person. Slowly the passenger came along, pace by pace; then, turning down the lane, and passing within two feet of the crouching men, he paused as if he saw something. Their hearts beat wildly, and Tokee's comrade was about to spring up and rush away; but Tokee seized him by the arm and forced him to keep his place. Then the drizzle, which had almost ceased, began to come on thicker, and the man moved slowly away.

As soon as he was out of hearing, they listened intently at the hole to ascertain if any of the inmates had been disturbed. All was quiet. The work was resumed with increased vigour, and in a short time a breach was made large enough to enable a man to creep in freely. Putting his head and shoulders through the breach, Tokee listened intently for any sound that would indicate the vicinity of an inmate—any one sleeping in the shop or stirring in the house. All was silent, and the confederates crept in and groped about, Tokee to find the hiding-place of the treasure, his comrade to help, or find anything of value. The hiding-place of the treasure was soon found, the bags piled over it moved away; then, with some difficulty and care, to avoid noise, the box containing the treasure was forced open, and they got possession of the bag.

Again their faithful scout in the main street gave the signal; but this time the house was stirring, for daybreak was close at hand. Quick as thought, Tokee made a dart at the hole, and got out into the lane, grasping the bag of rupees. His confederate, following at his heels, was equally quick, but not equally lucky; for, in the hurry of getting through the breach, Tokee's foot caught in a string that hung from a shelf above, and, in the struggle to free himself, he brought down on the head of his follower a large round earthen pot, that proved to be full of treacle, and felled him to the ground.

"Bāp rē bāp!"—oh dear, oh dear! called out the man, in his surprise; but in an instant he was up again, struggling to get out through the hole. Half of the broken pot, however, stuck on his head, and the treacle, streaming down, filled his eyes and half stupified him.

The crash of the pot and the man's involuntary exclamation roused the Bunniah's family; some rushed into the shop, others into the courtyard, and one stout old lady ran into the lane, all screaming at the top of their voices, "Chor, chor"—thieves, thieves—"Dawro,* dawro" —help, help—"Dhakoo, dhakoo, dacoits, dacoits." The neighbours, roused by the well-known cry, took it up, and the police, who were on the move, came running up from the Cutwallee, calling out "Māro, māro"—kill, kill—"Pukrō, pukrō"—seize them, seize them. Just as they reached the corner of the lane the unfortunate thief had staggered out of the hole with the instinct of self-preservation, had thrown off the broken pot, had drawn his hand across his eyes to clear away the treacle, and dashed down the lane. Coming full butt against the stout old lady, he knocked her down and fell over her. Up he jumped, and off again, running for dear life, for the police were within a few yards of him; but the fall of the old woman saved him. On being knocked over, she fell on something hard, and, being terribly frightened and much hurt, and feeling herself covered with something wet, which she thought was blood, she believed herself to be wounded, and groaned out, "I'm killed, I'm killed." The foremost policeman stopped a moment to see if a murder had been committed, and this gave the fugitive some yards start. Running and staggering on, he missed the narrow gully (fortunately), blundered on to the end of the lane, stumbled over a heap of rubbish, and went souse into the river. This washed the treacle out of his eyes, and he struck out boldly for the other bank, but with much noise, for he was a poor swimmer.

In the meantime Tokee, who on the first alarm had darted off like an arrow, fled down the gully, and threaded its various windings with the silence and speed of a night hawk; but as he emerged from the lane and got to the bridge head, he was suddenly confronted by three chokeydars. Believing that his comrade was close at hand to second him, he instantly dashed at the three. The right-hand man was knocked down and hurled several paces away, but the others, though staggered, seized hold of him, one by the blanket, which was hanging loose from his head and shoulders, the other seized by the arm; and now the precaution of oiling his body stood him in good stead. Struggling on, he abandoned his blanket to the man who had seized it, and, giving himself a sudden wrench, he twisted easily out of the hands of the other, who had no firm hold on account of his greasy skin. Then, bounding forward, he crossed the bridge, the chokeydars in full cry after him, leaped the low wall at the end of the bridge, and dived at once into a perfect rabbit-warren of mud huts close at hand, the resort of himself and gang, and he was safe, for the chokeydars dared not follow him. Hiding his plunder, and putting on some clothes, and taking another blanket, he went boldly on to the bridge, and calmly listened to the uproar in the town.

When his less fortunate comrade fell into the river and swam towards the opposite shore, some of the police came up armed with matchlocks, and, directed by the noise he made, began to fire at him. Tokee instantly guessing that his comrade was swimming the river, ran swiftly and silently to a bend in the stream, gave the signal to his follower, and, reaching out, he soon caught him by the hand and got him ashore. Then, making a wide circuit, to avoid the police, they reached their haunt in safety, and on examining their booty found that they had got nearly six hundred rupees.

Of course, Tokee did not fail to visit the old extortioner next day and enjoy his despair, whilst he lectured him on the folly of keeping so much money in such an insecure place. It was tempting, he said, all the rascals in the country to try and rob him; and on being shown the breach made in the wall, he quietly remarked, that it must have been done by a pucka chōr (a skilful thief), and an impudent fellow, to attack a house so near the police-station.

* Dawro means run; but, as used here, it means "run and help us."

BEE-BATTLES.

After reading "The Battle of the Bees" in No. 840 of "The Leisure Hour," I waited to see if any bee-masters could afford to the writer trustworthy information on