

APA SUKA, TUAN.
MALAY STORIES.

JOHN ANGUS.

5

yours Very
Sincerely
Jack

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THE SLEDANG'S CHALLENGE.

APA



TUAN.

SUKA,



MALAY

STORIES.



JOHN

ANGUS.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE scene is laid in the warm tropical land of Apa Suka, for ever basking under summer skies near the Equator in the heart of Malaya. This name may denote the Malay Peninsula, the real "Tanah Malayu," or anywhere between Madagascar, the home of a large section of the Malay race, and Formosa, where they are still in possession of the mountains and the Eastern coasts, and some will include, as well they may, a large section of the Formosan Chinese, and also a considerable number of the modern Japanese, as being of direct Malay descent.

Malaya as here used, however, comprises all the Malays' country under British and Dutch rule. As to where Apa Suka exactly is, and when and how it came to be, as now, under European rule does not at present concern us. We deal with men and women as such rather than with particular places, whether under British or Dutch control.

Malaya is a goodly land, and once it has woven its undoubted charms into the veins and life-blood of its denizens, whether they be natives of the soil, or the "orang puteh," the

white men of adventurous nature from the cold northern climes, it holds them for ever, wherever they may wander or make their home, and feel they must return, if only in their dreams, and re-visit the land which has such a strong and strange fascination for them.

The real Malay, after visiting Europe and seeing its inner life at its best, in court circles, and in the homes of the aristocracy, as well as most of its glaring aspects of questionable character, and also in its quieter, shady, sheltered walks of normal homely life, where its truest, strongest and best charms are to be found, says on his return to Malaya—"Were Europa to rain showers of gold (mas), I prefer Malaya, even if here it only rain stones (batu)."

The successful merchant, planter, seafaring man, or retired official, let their memories lovingly glide back, and allow them to linger long not only on their arduous days of sweating toil in their businesses and official rounds of duty, of which they are justly proud, for having done their fair share manfully; but also on the days of pleasure and hours of quiet restfulness they knew and prized as well, and say to congenial souls—"Did we not have a good time in that sunny land? How is it that our youngsters say it is a dull place to live in, and that life is hard? Is it Apa Suka is such a different place, or are they so changed from what you and I were when we were out there?"

There are still some parts of the MALAYS' LAND where the Malays and others do, in

many things, what they like. The British power, on the whole, so beneficent everywhere, protects them, and rules them really, though it (and wisely too) considers their feelings and continues to them the semblance of rule, and, as far as can be, encourages them to develop along healthy native lines of progress. Some of these lines of movement are not quite yet for progress along lines that the "orang puteh" would care to call by that name. But no man, not a rank pessimist, will abandon hope of a race of men, however backward they may be, who show such good qualities as the Malays possess. Mohammedanism has handicapped them considerably, and Europeans have not given them anything like full and fair consideration during the four centuries they have been taking occupancy of the Malays' land.

A true sportsman will give a man a chance of training, and a fair start on something like equal terms, or handicap himself to right matters. Meanwhile, we deal with Malays and other Asiatics as they are, and with Europeans as well. Some Europeans are only a poor sorry lot with all their advantages; but others of them are the very best men and women on God's earth at the present time.

I spin no fancy yarns, but simply tell plain, unvarnished stories, picturing men and women as they are, but no character is drawn as a full-length portrait. They are composite pictures, and not photographs of any person living or dead, but they claim to be true to actual life.

Imagination need not take too large strides from the truth. It here works on the loom of life, with the pattern and colour stamped on one's inmost being by a fortunate, or unfortunate, love of the actual.

It is surely no crime to have a pair of eyes, as well as ears, and to have made some little use of them. The most of the material of these stories has been more or less unconsciously accumulating for many years, and after simmering in an impersonal way seeks expression, and "APA SUKA" stories are here.

J A.

L.

A SAINT OF SORTS :
THE "KRAMAT."

(i)

I.

A Saint of Sorts : The "Kramat."

THE "Kramat" was a scoundrel of the first order, but a clever son of Shaitan all the same. He was an Arab, one of the race the Malays have little to be thankful for, for all these many centuries they have made their way into their lands.

—— ——— bin ——— the Kramat, no sooner heard of the death of Prince Othman than his heart went out in lustful desire for the beautiful Circassian widow and her treasures, which her devoted husband had showered upon her. Matrimonial arrangements among Moham-medans are readily made, and, without any seeming undue haste, are yet speedily accomplished, where there are special reasons why it should be so, especially where Arabs are concerned.

The Kramat was an expert in the art of deception, and, for the few months he had been a sojourner in the land of Apa Suka, he had been most assiduous in saying his prayers in public, while he counted his beads, after the manner of the would-be saints, who for a pretence make their long prayers, and find their way to street

corners and elsewhere where they can act their hypocritical parts to best advantage and most ostentatiously.

No one was so often at the "masjid," or mosque, on "hari jemaat" (Fridays), or other times, to observe the offices of the day. But he showed best with his unctuous manner in the classes he held every night for the Malays who aspired to qualify for making the journey to Mecca, and there graduating as "hajis" in the hope of returning to lord it over their less fortunate fellows, who must ever after look up to them as the only qualified leaders in the tenets of Islamism, if not in virtuous living and straightforward dealing, of which their lives showed little traces. At least, they could know, after the "Hadj," as duly performed, how to provide the necessary advice as to the minute observation of Mohammedanism, and get what was to be squeezed out of confiding human nature, for the Malays, with the example of the Arabs before them, could do wonders, but at a great distance from their teachers.

The Kramat was only playing a part in this scheme to curry favour, hence his willingness to teach the common herd of Malays. It put him into everybody's mouth in a land where there were no newspapers, and soon he found not only the Inchis and the Penghulus believing in him, but also many of the Datos and the Ungkus as well. But he reckoned without his host when he imagined he had gained all he sought.

First, this leading man and then that was impressed with his sententious harangues, mostly in Arabic, which they could not understand, but with a sprinkling of Malay to convey sufficiently to their ignorant minds that he, the holy messenger of Allah taala, had a special revelation from the Almighty to take to himself the widow of Prince Othman and make her his wife. The Malays did not dare to dispute his representations, and acquiesced in his intention to obey the will of God and carry out his plan to marry this woman. "Only," they said, "you must lay the matter before "Matahari," who had the 'kuasa' (or power and authority) of the Raja in his absence."

This he consented to do, and forthwith repaired to the great man's house with his flowing robes of brilliant silks, and with the strut and the smirk smiles of the accomplished villain.

At first he spoke as soberly as a judge to the "Matahari," while he laid the burden of his soul bare before him, as though he had no option but follow the divine (?) impulse, and take under his protecting care this lovely "hamba" from the slave market of Stamboul, who had, alas all too soon, been bereft of the lawful charge and control of the late Prince.

In the end the sacred Kramat got the better of the man next the Raja in power, and armed with a "surat" from "Matahari," he left the house pronouncing all blessings on "the father of his people," the "light of the eyes of the

blind," and the "wise judge and counsellor" of the land of Apa Suka.

Now, thought the wily Arab, "My path is plain, my way is clear, my desire will soon be gratified. Allah, the merciful, be praised for ever and for ever, Amin, Amin."

The lady, what of her? Had she no will or wish in the matter? Yes, the voluptuary knew, for he had much experience in such matters, that it was desirable to win her to himself, if such could be, by persuasion or by guile, and in ways best known to himself and the creatures in his pay, he had tried hard to get her to consent to come willingly to his arms when he had got the necessary permission of the family and the powers that were to be consulted in this affair of his heart. But Fatima shrunk from the man, and would not listen to any of those in his employ—male or female—who tried to induce her to accept what they affirmed was the inevitable.

The Prince had been particularly fond of her, for she was a most winsome woman in her own quiet gentle ways, and had been a good wife to him during the few years they had lived together. His means, being ample, he had bought much she had never dreamt of, and all she had ever thought of asking him to get for her. The carriage, though closed with blinds, when she and the women of her household went for an airing ("makan angin"), had been allowed by her husband to take her to see several of the European ladies whose husbands happened to

have appointments under the Raja, or whose business interests lay in his state.

It was not a large community, but in it were some of the best types of women, whose husbands could trust in them as in themselves, and whose praises were in the men's hearts and lives as they toiled for them under the very trying conditions of that sweltering Malayan land.

Fatima loathed the sight of the so-called "Kramat," and hated the very mention of his name, and threw away in great, scornful anger the expensive jewels sent by him to her by the too ready lickspittles who grovelled to him, and for a consideration fulfilled his behests.

In utter despair one day she called the carriage, and went to see some of her European lady friends at a time she knew their husbands would be away at their duties. Fatima had a complete command of Malay, and knew a little English, so, as soon as she found herself in the presence of her friends, she poured out her sorrows into their sympathetic womanly ears.

Mrs. Cranford happened to be spending the day with Mrs. Tullock, and the ladies were soon in fullest accord with the little Circassian lady in her determination not to allow the hateful Kramat to carry out his detestable plan of forcing the Prince's widow to become his wife. But, good ladies, what could they do in such a land, among these people, under such laws?

Fatima went home in great hope that the "Mems" would persuade their "Tuans" to

speak to the "Kuasa," and prevent her being violently carried off by the "Kramat."

When the men folk reached their homes that afternoon their wives told their tales of woe, and urged their knights to rescue the distressed lady. But what could they do? Both Cranford and Tullock, as they told their indignant spouses, were only men who were expected to "makan gaji" (do the work they were paid for).

They assured their good wives that anything they could do or say would be quite useless. But all the same, after hard pressing from their respective old sweethearts, and now their well-tried true partners in the great Game of Life, they said "they would make a fist at the thing and see what could be made of it."

So after a hurried cup of tea and a "mandi" Cranford went over to Tullock, and the pair discussed the situation. Finally, they said they would go and see the "Kuasa" himself.

This was going to headquarters truly, but that stately gentleman hinted that they were going quite outside their sphere of action, and before very long they found themselves returning to tell the result of their kindly interference and intention being entirely fruitless. This made the women folk furious, and had they been able to do what their hearts dictated they should, the Malays, and especially "Kuasa" and the Kramat, would have had a taste of what outraged British womanhood are capable of doing under the smarting sense of bitter injustice to one of their own sex.

II.

A SAINT OF SORTS :
THE "KRAMAT."

(ii)

II.

A Saint of Sorts : "The Kramat."

(II.)

THE "Kramat" was not to have it all his own way, for all that had been allowed to happen. True, Fatima had been forced to become his wife, and he fancied that he had safely got all her belongings now quite securely in his keeping, since he had her and them under his care according to the laws and usages of Moham-medanism.

Inchi Brani alone had dared to oppose the Kramat in his plans, and had gained for himself the scowl and scorn of the haughty giant of an Arab; but little Brani in the end proved more than a match for the Kramat.

When Brani knew that the Kramat was scheming to get the great catch, he gave him to understand that he would not consent to the marriage, but he laughed with sneering contempt at the wiry little Malay, and asked—"Who are you? 'Babi-Lu, babi, chelaka,' (you accursed pig) that you should try to offer any opposition to me, who am a 'Kramat'! Do you think I will take any notice of you?"

Busoh punya orang (rotten specimen of humanity), go to your betters, and ask them why they have all recognised my claims, made in the name of the Almighty, the ever merciful. Shall I listen to you? Do you refuse to acknowledge me—YOU alone—as a ‘Kramat,’ a ‘nabi,” a prophet of God? ”

Brani bravely stood his ground, and, with his fiery eyes flashing on the tall Arab, answered him, “KRAMAT,’ indeed! ‘Nabi,’ forsooth! Yes; I shall believe you are a prophet if you will prove yourself to be one.”

“Jikalau buli bilang sungie itu jadi kring, sahya buli perchaya.” (If you can tell that stream to become dry, and it becomes so, I will believe you.)

“Insolent imp!” roared the Arab. “You are as good as dead. Your life is not worth two weeks’ purchase. By then you will be a “sudah mati ” (a dead man).

Inchi Brani did not for a moment believe that this humbugging Arab was anything else than a pure unmitigated fraud. He knew very well that he had no more power of a superhuman nature to hurt him than he had himself; but—and this he could not afford to ignore—he knew the Oriental character too well not to feel rather frightened, though he kept such a bold front. He realised that the Arab was capable of doing any crime now necessary to keep his position, and use the power he had already acquired, so Brani quietly thought his own thoughts and said nothing in reply. But he eyed the brutal

lump of Arabian duplicity with a steady fearless glare of hatred as intense as that felt and shown by the Kramat, whom he left to his own evil thoughts to devise whatever other mischief he might have in his heart to do.

Brani was very wary, and removed himself out of harm's way for several weeks, and stayed secretly among his own people, and save to one or two trusty followers strictly kept his own counsel. But from the first he was determined to let the Raja know the exact state of affairs, so wrote to him a full account of what had taken place in his absence. In this he showed himself to be the man of affairs he was. He knew his duty and did it.

Brani waited patiently, as such men can wait, who expect to get their way, specially when they know their cause is right and just, and needs but the sanction and approval of reasonable men. In this case it needed but the "hukum," the word of law and authority of the highest in the State, the decisive command of the Raja to say what was to be done, and Brani was just the man to do it.

A telegram came to him, with the sign of his lord and master, containing a single, but significant word on it—"Divorce"—but it was enough and ample.

Armed with this he quickly made his way to the "Kuasa," the man administering the State as the "Ganti," or substitute of the Raja, and showing him the telegram, he explained what he had written, and defied him to do

otherwise than what their Raja demanded should be done.

Their Ruler also wrote a letter full of indignation at such proceedings having been allowed to take place, and added that he was about to take a passage in the first steamer available and would return without delay. Before he was back the "holy" Kramat had disappeared with such movable property as he could carry off, much to the relief of Fatima, and the delight of Brani upon whom she, with her own glad consent, was bestowed as his wife by the special command of the Raja.

III.

THE DOCTOR.

III.

The Doctor.

DR. James Brown had many a strange experience in the discharge of his duties. Many of his cases were full of interest. One day a Bengali baker was brought in from the river-side where he had been badly bitten by a crocodile. How he escaped no one seemed to know, not even himself. Another day a most interesting case turned up in a small Chinese lad, who had been playing with some Malay youngsters by the side of a creek, for boys are boys all the world over. The Chinese boy, in rough horseplay, had been pushed into the river, and would have come out none the worse of the wetting but for a crocodile which seized him as he fell. Quick as lightning, one of the Malay boys jumped on the crocodile's back and dug his fingers into the animal's eyes. The huge brute dropped the Chinese boy, who with his rescuer soon made their way on shore.

With the exception of a few wounds, which

soon healed, and a great fright, the lad was unharmed.

Malays were among his most serious cases, such as the old man who allowed himself to be run over by a passing bullock cart. Another was where some Malays had shot a black bear, which had run out of cover to eat a fallen durian, that luscious Malayan fruit. The animal was wounded, and made for the jungle, where it lay for a while until a friend of these men passed by without noticing it. It immediately sprang upon him, and bit and scratched him very severely. The Malay villagers, hearing his cry for help, came rushing out and finished the savage black bear.

Spring guns are a common way of killing tigers. One nearly killed a Malay, who was brought to the doctor at the hospital. He had been going through the long rank "lalang" grass, where there was nothing to be seen to mark the presence of the danger that he walked into. His foot caught the string which pulled the trigger, and the shot struck him just above the knee joint. By night and by day any serious accident, or emergency case, received the good doctor's immediate care and personal attention.

Once and again cholera, or some other epidemic, visited his district, and the people died like flies. He was then at his best, but he did not hesitate to speak most plainly about the downright shameful neglect of any attempt at sanitation as the sole cause of the trouble,

for money raised on the spot could have been spent, in even a small proportion, with quite appreciable effects, but no such things were done by such a "rotten" administration as held the purse strings at that time.

The doctor could only deal with a small proportion of the victims of preventable disease. Fortunately, he was a wiry fellow, with a frame strong as iron, untainted by sexual vice, or intoxicants. Not every man could have gone at it as he did, for twelve to eighteen hours a day at a stretch, without a collapse. So angry was he with those, who were really responsible for these "filth diseases," that he threatened to clear out of the place and leave them to reap the results of their own shameful neglect. As he one day said to the padre—"The drains were only holes scratched in irregular lines in the mud, and were vile cesspools, which three inches of a huge tropical rainfall, with a rising of the flow of the river would not avail to wash out."

The way in which primitive efforts at sanitation was attempted was a study. The local prisoners, with their legs chained, but the hands free, were turned out daily, or as frequently as suited the convenience of those who had the oversight of them, to "sweep the streets." This they did a little, but their great efforts were reserved to clean out the drains where they had the inducement offered them by the gifts of food, fruits and money, which they shared with their keepers. It was a common sight to see the prisoners, and their

guardians, enjoying a quiet smoke together after a feast of the fruits in their seasons; but the real workers were not allowed to retain more of the money they received from the shopkeepers and road residents than suited the views of the noble order of the underlings of the prison authorities, who also managed to get some consideration out of the procedure—so simple if not very correct! Such things are common as the daylight where the law of "Apa Suka" still holds sway; but it is a mercy that the Sun shines every day, and so powerfully, in these lands, to make life not only possible, but on the whole so bearable.

Beri-beri patients and others suffering from consumption, diarrhoea, dysentery, and other wasting diseases were daily coming for admission, and found treatment with more or less success. The doctor found the most of them reduced to debility, though they were loath to acknowledge it, by indulgence in vice of varied kinds, including opium-smoking, on which they had of late years been spending half or more than half their daily earnings, so that they could not buy sufficient nourishing food, or medicine when out of sorts, to keep them fit for a day's work in the mines or plantations, where they were fired out when they were no longer equal to an average amount of payable toil.

All such things were in the doctor's day's work, and were taken as a matter of course without turning a hair on his head; but he was worried beyond measure at the miserable

little petty injustices that came under his notice, and angered him beyond endurance, at times, at what might be called crimes in the way of bribery and corruption. But strange things happened before the "orang puteh" came into power in the land of Apa Suka, where everyone did, as far as he could, just what he liked to do, or leave undone.

The fountain of justice is supposed to be clean at its source, but what if the authorities could be bought for a price, as also the head of the police?

On one occasion the accredited head of all the "mata-matas" was in prison for a while, without any formal trial, on a charge of bribery in an important case.

Stranger still, after he had confessed his "fault," if it is not to be called by a stronger name, he was reinstated into his office at half the pay he had before "he was found out," which, however, he would manage to make balance in ways he best knew how. Little wonder, then, that the doctor found that the "mata-matas," who occupied the police-box to prevent the patients running away, or going to buy things that were not good for them, made quite a regular trade of allowing the patients to do what they pleased if they only gave them a few cents.

Among others, the lepers were allowed to grow vegetables, which they or other patients sold in the open market. This gave them the command of a little money, of which the

mighty "mata-matas" got their share. Happy land of Apa Suka!

To get into the hospital it was more necessary to pay five cents to the policeman than get the permission of the doctor himself. Indeed, one could ordinarily not get near the "Law Khun," as they called the Doctor, until they had paid tribute at the police-box, or to the police further down the road leading to the hospital. These things the doctor heard of, and sometimes found out, as on one occasion a Chinese patient complained that a pair of trousers had been taken out of his small bundle by the "mata-mata" as he had no cents on him.

The doctor heard the description of the nether garments, and went down to the police-box himself to hear the calm, self-possessed innocent declare that such a thing had not taken place there. But Dr. Brown used his eyes and his hands, and soon found the incriminating garment, which he took charge of as well as the offending defender of the public peace. He hailed both down to the central station, with the result that the "mata-mata" was dismissed the force, and got a month "hard" in gaol to think out a scheme how best to exercise his piratical instincts, when he was once more outside the prison bars which held him.

The doctor was most unfortunate in his assistants. Chinese, on the whole, served him best, and were most useful. Malays were his despair, even in the dispensary. And they were worse than useless in the wards, for they

were far too finical to finger a dead body, or handle diseased limbs. The world has yet to see the first Malay doctor of medicine !

Eurasians and Asiatics of sorts Brown had tried from time to time in a delightful variety, with very indifferent success ; but such full-blooded Europeans, as he was able to get hold of, were a wonder to him and everybody else who saw them as they gradually revealed themselves, as one or two did rather suddenly and unexpectedly. But what is in is sure to come out.

Truly, when they saw themselves as others could not help seeing them, they must have felt very small in their own estimation. Alas ! Several must have done so, with what secret thoughts God alone knows, for they evidently came to the conclusion that they were " better dead," for the sake of others, if not for their own sake. Two or three of them came to violent and sudden deaths. Poor devils !

VI

THE TUAN AND HIS "BOY."

The Tuan and his "Boy."

"THE Devil is an old Fool, and is always making a mess of things," said the Padre to Thomson, when he heard the story of what had happened at Greener's mess.

Thomson's "boy," Lee Ah Soon, looked the very personification of his name, which the padre told him was "obedience." He did in the house in the presence of his master whatever was told him, and did it at once, and so well on the whole, that all the other fellows in the mess envied Thomson. The remark, "That 'boy' of yours is a gem," was quite a usual occurrence for a time. But strange things began to occur in that model bachelors' mess.

Greener happened to turn up at the bungalow one morning to get something he had forgotten. He found Ah Soon and another fellow's "boy" coming downstairs rather quickly, for, to save time, he had entered by the back settlements, and they had not heard him until he had

ascended the stairs. In his hurry he made no remark, but on going into his room, and getting the keys out of his pocket to open the safe, he noticed a small stream of oil running down from the keyhole. Then he spoke, or rather, yelled, " Boy ! "

No answer came until he had called several times. At last, his own factotum appeared apparently roused from his first sleep for the day. Greener roared at him, " Boy, call 'Tuan Thomson's ' boy ' and that other ' boy ' to come here quickly. "

Of course, on enquiry they knew nothing about an attempt to pick the safe. Indeed, Ah Soon suggested that perhaps one of the Tuans, or maybe the Tuan himself, had been in the medicine chest (which stood on the top of the safe) to get a little " minyak," and had spilt a few drops, which had trickled down the face of the safe. Ah Soon, " the most obedient," and " the best, the very best ' boy ' that ever was," said this with the greatest plausibility imaginable, and looked so innocent all the while. He was, indeed, a gem, and that of the very first water.

Greener could not get Thomson to believe that Ah Soon had had anything to do with the matter, and the mess seemed, after a few months of rather good handling, to be getting completely out of gear. The best of good fellows are soon parted at times never again to be friends. Thomson and Greener seemed on the eve of a most violent quarrel over the incomparable Ah Soon.

But Greener, the older man, was a man of sense, and had himself well in hand, so said, "Well, see here, Thomson, I am not going to argue the question with you just now (they were both just back from their respective "go-downs," and were longing for the cool shades of that luxury of life in the Far East, the bathroom), you keep your eyes open, and report within the next few days."

After the visit to the "tempat mandi," Greener felt quite good and clean and comfortable. He did not take his long chair on the verandah for his smoke after a cup of tea, as he often did when not going out for tennis, or for a duty call with his "Paste boards," as he felt bound he must sometimes do on the ladies who happened to show him any little attention or kindness. Such little courtesies have their distinct value, and should not be neglected, within reason, by either of the sexes, especially away in these lands under the tropical sun, for all little aids to friendship should be carefully cared for, and by being kept in repair prove life's best asset.

Greener went straight to his safe to satisfy himself that what had occurred to him, as the cooling stream of water played on his head at the "mandi," had not taken place. But he found that it had. What he had left in the morning untouched was now removed—some thirty dollars in hard cash. All the rest of the contents of the safe remained intact. So Greener called Thomson and the other inmates

of the mess, who were now in from business, to assist in searching the boxes of the servants of the mess. But not a single dollar was to be found. Some small coin there was and even a note or two, but dollars there were none.

As the crime could not be brought home to them, the police were called in, with no very brilliant result, they could do no more than had been already done. The substance of what they said was that no case could be made out against anybody, with such evidence as they had to go upon. So the "Bobbies," ever thirsty souls, were supplied with drinks, and went back to the station.

The Tuans were advised that they had better keep their eyes open, and to watch those they least suspected, for it occurred to them, they said, "the the whole of the servants were a bad lot." But not a better set of Chinese domestics could have been found in any mess, or well-regulated married quarters for some days after this. They did not go out at nights nearly so much as they were in the habit of doing after the rather late hours for which their services were required. Their Tuans, however, could not feel comfortable after this most upsetting event.

Within a few days Thomson got a sudden and unexpected call to go to the other end of the Straits for a fortnight's special business for his firm, and off he went leaving Lee Ah Soon in charge of all his belongings, for there never was a Tuan with a better "boy" than he.

By the time Thomson returned, Ah Soon had disappeared, and with him quite a number of small articles, some of them of considerable value. Among them there were a few much prized trinkets, the gifts he brought from dear ones at home, which, as Thomson explained, he had placed safely at the bottom of his big box.

Now touch a man in his affections, and he is stung to the very quivering quick! So Thomson made tracks for his friend the Padre, and told him his story. He however, got little consolation from him, for the padre said:

"I told you when you took a fancy to the "boy" that he was a rank heathen, and had no manner of connection with our Mission beyond that his uncle asked me to try and get him a situation as a house servant. He would say little about him, except that he was clever, and a good worker, and that, with a good Tuan, who would look after him, he would likely turn out to be very useful. But I have heard what he has been doing since you left a fortnight ago. They say he has been out every night down at the brothels, and had been sleeping off his dissipation during the day. I hear that he is still in town in one of the "kong-si" houses, so you look to see him again some day, and I should say that you would do well to report the case to the police.

This Thomson did, but he did more, he went and offered twenty dollars to some Cantonese "tukangs," who did work occasionally about the mess, and knew all the servants quite well.

Thomson promised them his "trima kasi banyah-banyah," and the dollars, if they would search out his hiding-place.

The thing was done, in the first instance, without the police. Ah Soon was caught by Thomson himself, and on the fool of a "boy" was found one or two of the stolen articles, and several pawn-tickets for other items of Thomson's property. Then the police had at last something to go upon, and they had not excessive difficulty in getting a conviction. Ah Soon got six months with hard labour. This, however, does not finish his career of crime, but that is another story, which will keep for another day.

v.

THE WOMAN WHO SOLD
HERSELF.

The Woman who Sold Herself.

“ Apa Tuan Suka, Sahya Buli Jadi.”

“ What you want, sir, I am ready for.”

Such women often tell untruths, so that one hardly knows how much to believe of what they do say. She said she was of a “ good family,” meaning that she was connected with an old, historic family ; but that, I believe, was pure “ bunkum.”

She blamed her father and mother for her own faults. That is always an easy thing for anyone to do, but it is usually not so much one’s grandmother or parents that are in fault as ourselves.

“ What harm is there, after all, in me having my own way, and being just—well—just what I want to be ? ”

This poor woman often spoke like this when she was in her cups. Then she would apologize, and say :

“ I have been having ‘ gin-slings ’ all day, so you must excuse me talking family affairs, you know.”

Her husband, too, had the fortune, or misfortune, to have a father, who had made a mint of money.

On their wedding day, besides having some money of their own, their fond parents gave them handsome cheques for their Continental marriage trip, which was first to Paris, then Nice, and on to Cannes; but they soon found their way to the tables at Monte Carlo. There, before long at play, they staked their all and lost it.

What could they do now? The foolish husband had brain and ability of a sort, but he had no profession, though he had his chance at the 'Varsity. They had made the acquaintance of some people during their mad career, but none of them could help them, so they made their way back to England pretty crestfallen and feeling rather mean, but as bold as brass, even so young in life, with their people when they met them.

The fond parents of this precious pair, when they got to know the facts of the Monte Carlo affair, or as much of the truth as leaked out, were naturally much enraged, and said that they might fend for themselves as best they could, for they were indeed arrant fools, who needed nobody to help them to get worse than they had at the very start shown themselves to be.

The young folks were high-spirited, and retorted in kind; they had to go out into the wilderness by themselves, and find their way about as best they could, with not the best of success. The worst feature was that their hardships merely made them poorer creatures than they were before their big fall, which upset them for life, as the sequel showed.

The man tried to get some journalistic work to do for a while, and did make a little out of what he did. And the woman tried her hand in the same direction, with even better success, but neither of them had the "staying" powers to win real distinction, or satisfy either the public or the publishers, so they in the long run, which was not very long, were dropt out.

Some friends, who took pity on them, advanced them second-class passages out to the land of Apa Suka to give them a chance of getting on to their feet there.

On arrival, as they knew before they sailed, they had to go to ——, a mining centre in Malaya, where the husband had been offered a "billet," owing to influence on the Board of a Company in London.

The little launch, which took them there, along the banks of the black muddy river, lined with mangrove swamps on either side, where occasionally they saw, lying basking in the blazing sun, huge crocodiles, or monkeys crawling leisurely about on the mud, or running with alacrity among the trees, landed them at ——, where they were met by the Manager of the

mine and estates, who came down to meet them on hearing the whistle of the launch.

The compound had about a dozen of very creditable bungalows for the European staff—manager, doctor, chemists, engineers and overseers—who superintended the labours of several thousand coolies—Chinese, Tamils and Malays, but mostly Chinese as is usually so in such centres of industry.

There were several other ladies, wives of the European employees of the Company, which had been fortunate enough to secure a large concession of land for mining and the development of the resources of the district. The surroundings in the distance were quite fine, but the immediate district was not attractive with the coolie-lines, the upturned sand and earth in all directions, and the general signs of a mining camp on a large scale, where immediate haste to make money was the primary consideration.

The inevitable event, in a small community, happened. This silly woman, who felt herself so vastly superior to the other "women," as she persistently called them from the very first, at least to her husband and one or two of the men, who were of her own smart set and somewhat to her liking.

The result was that before long there was a violent quarrel. The other women united against the new arrival in their intense dislike, if not hatred, of her; for which, to be fair, it was largely her own fault and provocation.

She flatly told her husband that she would not live there, so he had to allow her to get off, once and again, by the launch to Apa Suka, which was much more to the heart's desire, for there she could do pretty much as she liked. What more could any woman of her sort possibly want?

At the hotel where she stayed, she smoked with, played for, and sang to men, whom she favoured; and being a good hand at Bridge, she always won as much as paid for the drinks she wanted, when by herself, and other indulgences she was fond of. She fooled the men, who were willing to be fooled, of whom there are always a sufficient number hanging about any town. But one night one of them fooled her.

Her husband had to do the best he could without her, for she would not go back to——. He came down and saw her for a day or two, when she told him plainly he would have to get another post in some place near Apa Suka, for she would never again face the life of an up-country station in the jungle.

They quarrelled and parted, after making some sort of peace patch-work for the time being; he saying to her that she must keep her eyes and ears open, and to let him know if any opening did turn up for him to get out of the "beastly hole" he was in. She assured him that, if he would behave himself and not bother

her too much, she would make it all right and get him a "billet" before long to his liking as well as her own.

She had already made the acquaintance of an official of one of the native States under the Dutch, or Siam, flag. She did not enquire particularly as to which it was.

This official was an Asiatic, who had taken quite a fancy to her, and she nothing loath had encouraged him in his advances. As there was plenty of money available, and jewellery and other expensive presents were showered on her out of an ample purse, the thing was decidedly to her liking. The native state of her lover's prince was far away from Apa Suka, but what of that, if the pay was good, and anything for a change, meanwhile, would be acceptable. Such women will only take short views.

She knew, for she was always on the alert to hear, that a man was wanted in the state to fill a vacant post. She told the young aristocrat that she expected him to speak to the Raja and secure the appointment for her husband by a given date, for she did not believe in waiting till things came her way; she went in search of what she really wanted, and had made up her mind to get it by hook or by crook. Such women have sometimes ruled a kingdom, and some have done as much good as others have done evil.

The wily official was as much alive to the situation as she herself was, so he at once named

his price, which, to her shameless ears, was not shocking. She simply said in reply, "Apa Tuan Suka." He knew he had her so soon as the opportunity occurred. She was guarded enough to get the appointment first before she yielded to him all he asked, and she had promised. The occasion came before long, once they were settled in their new surroundings.

VI.

THE NATURALIST.

The Naturalist.

AS a child he simply loved living things, and particularly revelled in movement, form and colour. He did not remember when he did not like to pick up things and examine them on sea-shore, by river-side, and on the hills and moors of his native land. For, ——— though he was, he always called himself a ———, and loved the place where he first drew breath, as every properly constituted mortal should.

He got what meagre schooling he could get in his native village, and learnt all that other boys in an agricultural district must learn to know what is necessary to help in farm life for his livelihood. But his talents for observation, and industry for collecting and naming things, drew the attention of some interested persons, who happened to light upon his village. During a short stay they suggested to his parents that, if they were willing, they would get him educated, so that he might make his way in life in

a larger and more promising sphere than his narrow, native environment afforded him, or ever would.

With some persuasion the parents consented, though not without grave misgivings, but ——— was happy to go, and anticipated a larger increase of his already big collection of objects; and yet, beyond the pleasure the collection gave him, he had no great ambition in life. If he had food and raiment, and was allowed leisure, he would be quite content to gather his treasures, view their beauties, which in many cases only his own eyes saw, and he mused at times, long and deeply, as to their relations to one another, and their meaning in Nature; but as yet he had not been taught much, and his thoughts were largely his own.

So it came to pass that ———'s good collections were accepted by several of the museums and scientific societies in Europe. He had made for himself somewhat of a name, and he had eventually the offer made to him to go to the Malay Peninsula, and collect along certain specified lines in particular, with a margin for original research.

Before this he had already travelled in several countries and made collections, but this was quite a new line of things and a larger undertaking. His knowledge of the ordinary European languages would not help much in the interior, into which he was expected to penetrate, so he got grammars and vocabularies of

the mellifluous "Italian of the East," the gentle Malay language.

His progress with the aids he got hold of in the libraries, besides the able text books he bought, gave him, with the undoubted linguistic gift he had, such a command of the language in a few weeks, and afterwards on the quiet voyage out, that most Europeans with years of undisciplined reading, which some might dignify with the name of "study," could not have acquired.

On his arrival out he made few acquaintances beyond the small circle of people interested in scientific pursuits. He soon buried himself far in the interior of Malaya, latterly without any attendants, though on his first trips he took several Malays, and for a while managed to get a Chinese "boy" to go and act as cook for him. He returned from time to time with his collections, and after storing them, and occasionally despatching cases to his employers, who are said to have banked at home on his account, besides selling locally such articles as he claimed as his own perquisites. He would then find his way back into the jungle again to be lost to the sight and ken of his fellows, who only learnt from him what he cared to tell.

Once and again people would get him to dine with them, and then they drew him out to tell more or less of his doings in the interior. But, as time went on, he withdrew himself from nearly everybody.

Greener and Cranford would look him up

when they remembered he had been seen about in the vicinity of where he had lately fixed his quarters. To their intense surprise and grief they found that their friend had become a confirmed opium-smoker. At first he seemed utterly ashamed of his indulgence in the deadly drug vice. When asked for an explanation he said it was due to his frequent illnesses, and the loneliness of his jungle life, that he had begun the habit, which had now got such a hold of him that he could not throw off the hateful thing.

To Cranford he one day confessed that his relations with the Sakais had been most unhappy; since, to establish amicable terms with them, he had not only entered into "blood-brotherhood" with them, by drawing his own blood from his arm and mixing it with the blood one of the chiefs drew from his, they had drunk the same together swearing eternal friendship, but he had also, without thinking in a weak and evil hour, accepted his tempting offer of his daughter, who was little more than a child as his wife, to whom he was married with all the peculiar ceremonies of the Sakais.

From that moment he fell in his own estimation, and began to lose self-respect. From a too easy-going disposition he soon fell into the coarse, sordid ways of the very low type of the people among whom he found himself.

The girl-wife at first yielded him not a little pleasure as he toyed with her, and for a while he was well content to let things slide. One indulgence led to another, and as the Chinese

petty traders brought opium, besides brass wire, knives, tobacco and rice, to barter with these real "men of the woods," the supplies of opium kept the degenerate going, until with a supreme effort, he would work his way back to civilisation for a time. The way the Sakais and other tribes of the jungle bartered was very interesting. The Chinese, or Malays, would bring what they knew they liked, and as they were very timid and feared both, they specially feared the Malays, at whose hands they had suffered many wrongs; what was brought was laid down near a large stone, or tree, and left there for the wild men to help themselves, and leave what they had to give in exchange.

On ——'s last visit he was quite broken up, a perfect wreck, so Cranford called on the Padre to ask him to look him up, which he did at once. He received his last messages to his home people, with instructions as to the disposal of his last collection. Poor devil! He died shame-faced and fallen, with warm thanks to the Padre for visiting him. The funeral was a very sad one, but was only one of several the minister had had, where there were really no mourners, save one or two acquaintances, with a few natives needed to carry the coffin to the grave and hide it away with its contents in mother earth.

VII.

REV. M. LE SOURIRE, alias
MR. SMILVILLE.

Rev. M. Le Sourire, alias
Mr. Smilville.

HE was a big burly Frenchman, with a long grey beard, which he loved to cultivate and caress with his big white hands, which had never handled anything in the shape of a tool save a pen.

He walked with majestic strides, when he did walk, and swaggered to show off to the best advantage his rather striking face and figure, and he wore his large pectoral cross in such-wise that those who looked at him saw it, though what they thought of him, or even it, depended much on their point of view.

“Smilville” was not an inappropriate name : for in public he wore a perpetual sunny smile—a bland open grin for all whom he wished to see, or were bold enough to bring themselves in the line of his vision ; though he had an amazing adroitness in not seeing some people, and an

alacrity of turning his smiling face where he most wished to favour with the light of his gracious smirk, which some mistook for real geniality and urbanity.

Once the padre saw him pass a country-woman of his own—a Frenchwoman of no distinction, but the wife of a hardworking man in a decent business house. Padre Burns was pretty well disgusted with what he saw. He noticed that the portly priest distinctly faced her, but there was no recognition on his part, none of the customary salutation which the priest should show to one of his known parishioners; and there was a shrinking, almost a trembling of fear on her part, and a quick glance to see how he would behave as his carriage drove past. In a few minutes the padre saw him, all sunshiny smiles again, with Mrs. Butterfly in his carriage. He was taking her out for a drive to the Gardens, and other most conspicuous public places to show her off, to her great liking for such recognition as she could secure, as she, catching the contagion of the presence of Le Sourire, smiled to the best of her ability. His intention was to win her consent to take one of the leading stalls for his annual Church and Convent Bazaar. He succeeded with her as he did with most people from the chief officials, whom he knew how to flatter, to all sorts of people, whom he cultivated.

His clergy—both regular and secular—knew him and feared him, and, not in one instance only but in several, were in open revolt at what

they could not but regard as most undue interference with them, and such liberties as they still possessed, even though they were under him as their chief shepherd. Some kicked the traces and defied him, and escaped from his tyranny into business.

On a dark night, when the people no longer worked in their stuffy little shops, a considerable crowd of Chinese gathered to the call of the little band of Padre Wilson's workers, as they took up their stand for street preaching near the Mission Church.

Our lordly ecclesiastic had had his dinner, which he always washed down with specially rich brands of wine, with which he and his clergy were liberally supplied from their own la belle France. Now he was taking an extra constitutional to smoke his cigar, one of the fattest and best of the kinds to be had anywhere.

As he passed the group of workers on the street his usual smug smile curled into one of diabolical superciliousness, and he did everything short of shouting out aloud to vent his rage and contempt, for the heretics coming so near his clerical residence with their singing and preaching—as to what they preached, the Love of God in Christ, he seemed to have no liking.

He had the reputation of being a great financier, though nominally his transactions were done through his friend, Father d'Orsey, whose name often figured in the public press,

and whose person was seen at directors' meetings and estate agents and share brokers' offices. But this priest is quite another person.

Padre Burns never had any intercourse with him but once; that was at the earnest representation of young Thomson, who told him about the young — schoolmaster who had threatened to kill himself. This led to Burns visiting M. Le Sourire for the first and last time.

——— had come out to a school in Apa Suka, and might have done well had he not given way early to drink, as so many of his profession used to do a few years ago, on their miserably poor pay. He married a Eurasian girl, but this did not improve matters. Such painfully unsatisfactory marriages are all too common in the Middle East.

——— tried to keep his head up from sinking; but his constant habit of drinking led to his dismissal by the school authorities. A few former acquaintances sought to steady him, but met with little if any success. Then they talked the matter over with Thomson, who was a manly type of Christian and held their esteem and confidence. Thomson gave the padre what he knew about the case, and suggested that Burns should go direct to the chief pastor of ——— and see what could be done to get him settled in one of the Roman Catholic schools.

After sending in his card, and waiting in the room he was shown into by the Chinese "boy"

for nearly half-an-hour, the lordly, pompous priest appeared out of a side room, and loudly demanded what Burns wanted there. In a few words he quietly stated the reason of his errand. The bishop was furious. He simply began and ended with pure insolence, and charged the padre with going beyond his province, and plainly told him that he had come there to insult him in his own house. He and his clergy knew their duty and would do it without any of his interference!

Burns was completely stunned and dumb-founded, but staggeringly bowed and left the high and mighty piece of inflated pride, who seemed to gather into his own particular person a perfect summary of the unbending system he represented, to his own reflections and devices. What they were will never be known, but ——— was not helped, and shortly afterwards he sought refuge in the muddy stream to make food for fishes and crawling reptiles.

This, his only experience with "Smilville," was more than enough; when he died there was great relief to a great many people.

VIII.

THE GAMBLING COUPLE.

VIII.

The Gambling Couple.

THE Padre's colleague, the Rev. Andrew Wilson, who with his devoted wife had joined him, after his first few years of arduous pioneer work, was to the Padre a brother beloved.

Wilson's wife was one of a thousand ; one of the "right stuff," as she was called in her own Scottish countryside. Blessed with a good, sound constitution, in spite of chronic headaches and other troublesome ailments more or less of a nervous order, which handicapped her more than was to her liking. She had a perfect passion for an energetic open-air life not of the showy kind, but in kindly ministries in obscure corners, and in out-of-the-way places among the Asiatics, whose souls she sought to win, by preference. But she was willing to take her place and share, when necessary, and in the direct line of duty, in more public work for her "ain folk" abroad.

She had a decided shrinking from social duty ; though in times of sorrow, distress, death or sickness, none was more welcome, nor could be of more help and comfort than she. But her chief glory and simple desire was to be a Missionary's wife, and help him in his work for the Master, and care for and train his children for useful and honourable careers in after life.

In conjunction with fellow lady workers in China, she had taken a great interest in fostering the effort of efficient self-supporting work, and various native industries among the women. Among the most successful was the Swatow drawn thread embroidery work, much of which was very skilfully sewn and beautifully finished.

Just as Mrs. Wilson had an eye for beauties in her native flowers and grasses and the shells on the shore of her childhood's home, so she had an eye of quick discernment for the exquisite in art, especially in the tasteful delights of the well-trained housewife, who knows how to choose and buy pretty designs and colours to beautify the home, and make it the sweetest place on earth.

She had absolutely no manner of sympathy with, nor saw any sense in those who seemed content with untidy slovenliness, or ugliness ; as though they thought, deluded bodies ! that these were signs of grace and unworldliness.

Her very delight and keen interest in the beautiful patterns and specimens of drawn-thread work gave occasion for one of the worst kinds of frauds I have ever heard of one woman perpetrating on another

She and her husband had been ordered off to one of the hill stations, after a terribly trying time she had had in nursing him back to life again after a long and painful illness, the result of fever caught while living in the jungle. The large bungalow in which they put up was a sort of hotel. It was a roomy and cool place, and under former management had a reputation of being comfortable. But the people who were now in charge were "queer fish," though Mr. and Mrs. Wilson both were charmed with them at first. Their lively brisk ways of trying to meet the needs of the convalescent husband were sincerely appreciated, and gratefully acknowledged.

Owing to a serious relapse the detention was longer than had been intended, and the manager's wife often drew Mrs. Wilson into conversation and got her to tell her of many things, which evidently greatly interested her, especially the work of the women, several of them widows, who were supporting themselves by doing drawn-thread work. On the side of the lady of the management some information was volunteered largely of a purely imaginary character as it afterwards transpired.

The upshot was, when Andrew Wilson and his wife were leaving, Mrs. Smith-Robinson said she would see her friends, and send an order for fifty, or a hundred dollars' worth. This pleased the good-hearted Mrs. Wilson as much as if she had heard that some one had just left her a legacy.

Very shortly after the Wilsons were back at

their work, trying to take up the threads of what they had left behind them, a letter came from Mrs. Smith-Robinson, with a post-office order for the amount of the goods asked to be forwarded. But the pieces ordered and sent came to a few dollars more; the balance was at once remitted, with a further order for some more, and the request to buy a few pieces of other stuff. A profuse apology was offered for giving so much trouble to one, known to lead such a very busy life, and a further request was made to kindly let Mrs. Smith-Robinson have the things as soon as possible, with the amount, which would be sent off immediately on the receipt of the goods.

The husband now on his feet again, and with his wits about him, counselled the good wife to have a care (to "ca canny"), and first of all make a calculation, as near the actual cost as possible, and to send for the money in advance.

But the "angel of his soul" indignantly refused to do any such mean thing! She bought the goods asked for, and paid for them, out of her own small store of money in the Savings Bank, and enclosed the various items of the thread work she was to send, together coming to the big round sum of three hundred dollars. She despatched the same to reach the lady, whose probity she believed in, about a week before Christmas.

The hyphenated Mrs. Smith-Robinson—soul of all that was true and honourable!—sent a post card, with her affectionate regards and

Christmas greetings, to say the parcel had just safely come to hand, and that she would write soon. This she certainly never did.

The Missionary's unsuspecting spouse said nothing; at first, she thought it might be the Christmas festivities had prevented the lady friends finding time to see and claim, and pay for their several orders. So weeks and months sped on. At last it occurred to the head of the house to ask his wife:

"Jessie, by the way, did you ever get the money sent by Mrs. Smith-Robinson?"

The wife was far too honest a soul to say anything else but "No, I did not."

Still, in the goodness of her heart, in spite of her misgivings, she invented all sorts of excuses to cover the misdoings of the woman she had unfortunately trusted, and who had so miserably deceived her.

To make a long story short—it indeed lengthened into years—and has never been really finished. The husbands had some correspondence. There were threats of legal proceedings, and, by the pressure of some friends of the Wilsons, the husband of the management paid up in all some two-thirds of the sums due, but the wives, on both sides, never put pen to paper again, for very different reasons.

Not a cent would ever have been paid but for Wilson himself dunning (from a deep sense of justice, apart from the money consideration, which was not to be lost sight of) for a while, by every mail, the bright pair. They had, from

various quarters, become really known in their true colours. They were revealed as a couple of most inveterate gamblers of many years standing.

The widows had long before received full payment, and Jessie had learnt much from a painful experience. Her husband was sure that he would not need to say much in the way of further advice on such matters.

IX.

THE OUTRAGED WIFE.

The Outraged Wife.

SHE was a sweet young creature. Pretty, with small features, of rather a delicate aspect, but as bright and happy a soul as ever left her mother's home to become the wife of the man she loved, and whom, she sincerely believed, loved her.

He certainly did in the days of their courtship, if words and deeds had any meaning, in those days of yore in the home land by the sea-sounding beach, where the wild waves came tumbling in on stormy days. For she loved the open-air of her native country, and was not so frail as she looked at times. To sit by the seaside in sunshine, or to face the bracing winds for a sharp battling walk with her lover, when the fresh strong breezes blew off the angry waters was her great delight.

But he had changed since he kissed her and said farewell at the wharf, where she had gone with her mother to see him start for his appointment to take his post in Apa Suka.

The bargain was that, if he was confirmed in his position, after the first year or two, and got the increase of the expected rise in salary, she was to come out and join him to unite their lives until death should part them.

The days, weeks and months had run into years. It was now fully three years since they had said "good-bye." She wrote regularly, as he had pleaded with her to do, and he at first had written like what a true man should, and will write if he is true.

Afterwards he excused himself frequently for being remiss in writing, as he was so very busy and, shame on him, the climate was "so beastly," and the place was quite "rotten." He in his great pity for himself said that he had to broil and roast at his work every day; except when it rained, which he affirmed it did almost every other day, and then he had to expose his precious person to the fury of the tropical elements, and catch fever in consequence.

Now a good deal of this was deliberate lying, as everybody who has lived in Apa Suka knows; but he had already "gone under," and was really wishing that she would throw him up, and make up her mind to stay at home, or fall in love with some other man and marry him.

In his best moments, and to him came not a few occasions when he had to face the past, and to think of his sad fall from his own ideals of what he owed to her to whom he was pledged, then he simply loathed himself and cursed his folly (he called it "luck"), and wished, for

her sake, that the engagement could be broken off.

But her people were pressing him on to have the marriage take place as soon as possible, if ever it was to be at all. He had not the courage to tell them, or his own people, the ghastly truth that he had become a moral leper, and was not fit physically, or in any other way to become the husband of a pure woman, and the prospective father of a family.

She sailed in one of the outside steamers, which carried few passengers and called at few ports. There were only two other ladies on board and several men. They had a quiet, uneventful passage out, and ———, giving the necessary marriage notice to the officiating minister, within four days of her arrival they were married by Mr. ———, at ———'s request, from Mrs. ———'s house, as that good lady had kindly consented to mother her. The ———s really knew little about him, beyond that they had made his acquaintance when he first arrived from home. The warm heart of Mrs. ——— took the young girl into an innermost place from the very first of her seeing her so bright and bonny. A few friends of the ———s were asked to the marriage, and several of ———'s chums were there—some of them of rather a nondescript order. The marriage ceremony over, the usual kind things were said, toasts drunk, and the couple drove away to the seaside to spend their honeymoon.

The Padre was not in Apa Suka when the

marriage came off. He was away on duty at one of his out stations, but he remembered afterwards to have seen in the early morning of the day he went into the jungle, for he started before sunrise, that in passing ——'s bungalow, where he and two other fellows had a "mess," there were three Japanese girls on the verandah, in all their war paint dresses, evidently preparing to go off to their quarters in town in "rickshas" so soon as they arrived for them as had been most carefully arranged.

This man, even on the eve of his marriage, must needs continue on his course to the end. Living so far away from the rest of the community, he and his companions thought they were quite secure against observation and remarks. For did they not take every precaution in choosing their present quarters in an out-of-the-way region off the main road, and had they not arranged with the girls that they were not to come till after eleven o'clock on the special nights they wanted them? And did they not see that they were bundled off home in good time in the early morning? Were they not extremely careful for their "good name?" But the best laid plans, we know do not fall out just as people wish at times.

The bride was welcomed back by Mrs. —— after the fortnight's holiday that her husband had been able to take with her, and they settled in their own house. But before very long the poor girl was in a fearful state of disease, the direct result of her husband's

selfish animal indulgence, and she knew not at first what was wrong with her ; but gradually the terrible truth dawned, and was told with shame and the bitterest disappointment that can come to a woman, as much as by the poison in her system, and the doctor's disgust as he told ——— what he thought of him, but his efforts to save the young bride were in vain.

She was soon a dead woman, stabbed to the heart's deepest core, as well as from physical pain and dreadful suffering. The Rev. ———, who had so recently married her, buried her, and few but really interested people met at the graveside. In kindness to the dear folks at home the usual non-committal things were written and afterwards said ; but the truth was never told.

x.

MR. BANGHISHEAD.

Mr. Banghishead.

THOMAS Burns' pet aversion was Mr. Banghishead. He was short in stature, brusque in manner, and positive to a degree of an absurdity. A man of goodly pedigree, he was educated, after the manner of the schools (which does not necessarily give all that is needed to the making of a gentleman) and he had gained his degree at his University, but without any special distinction.

He was, however, widely read, and fancied he knew more than most men of his equal age and advantages, but conceit is a fairly common human failing. Those who knew him were not so sure of him always as he was of himself. He certainly did seem to feel perfectly cocksure about himself and his opinions. For if any one had the intrepidity to differ from him, that was due to his crass ignorance, which, of course, did not need to be exposed, and it was so apparently self-revealed to all in the know.

Anyhow, so thought Mr. Banghishead, and, if he did not say so, his supercilious smile expressed a world of meaning, and his superior soul (though by the way he did not think man had a soul) pitied those poor devils who were still so sunken in superstitious incongruities that they were not able to see things as they really were!

He had a habit of saying, as though it were the expression of the acme of wisdom, that "there was a meaning for everything, if you only knew it," which meant in too many cases that those who did not see things as he saw them and express their thoughts somewhat in his way, were quite out of the running altogether.

His special delight was to get some confiding fellow to give him an innings. With skilful art and bland insinuation he would find out the inmost thought of the unsuspecting youngster, who, fresh out from the homeland, felt quite honoured to be asked so many questions, and at the same time learn so many things, many of which were well worth knowing. But there were others with the poison of asps hidden in them, which had the power of killing faith in God if not in goodness and all that makes life pure and sweet.

Banghishead sometimes condescended to speak quite pleasantly and becomingly with the Padre, when they were thrown together, as would happen sometimes, in out-of-the-way places. For the superior man was a keen sports-

man and liked to kill things, for the very pleasure of studying movement and to watch them die. At other times they occasionally met at the table of a mutual friend, then he spoke sensibly, as he could when he would, with Burns about the many things in which they had a common interest, and in which there was not a little that the one could learn from the other, and give tips to all who cared to listen to their "feast of reasons and flow of soul." Both being 'Varsity men they knew their way about a great variety of subjects, and both had travelled much and knew not a little above the average of things in general.

But Banghishead, after the manner of his kind, would commit himself in spite of his better self, which lay back somewhere, but, from long neglect, did not seem to be operative for much.

"See here, Padre," he would burst out now and again, "you and your missionary friends are making a mighty hash of it, I am sure, in teaching those nincompoops English and your precious gospel."

Burns would quietly listen for a while, and then ask for an explanation.

"Well, you see, the more knowledge they get the worse the fellows will make it for us to earn a living."

Now Banghishead was far from not wanting to make a mere living. He wanted to make money fast, and plenty of it, as was the right and proper reward for one who had given up his professional prospects (whatever they had really

been was quite doubtful except to his own mind) to astonish the world by devoting himself to the sordid task of making money.

In commercial life he did make some considerable headway, and with the several booms which were on at the time he happened to be in Apa Suka, he managed to cover himself pretty well by adroit deals in estate flotations, but especially in lucky speculations in stocks and shares, and this not without a good deal of hard work, to the great satisfaction of those most interested at home. No one could charge him with dishonest practices in business. He knew perfectly well that "honesty is the best policy"; perhaps he had "tried both." At any rate, he was a straight as the generality of men, and judiciously paid up his losses as readily as he hauled in his gains.

As to his private and personal habits no one interfered with them, least of all the Padre. Had Burns been asked his opinion of Banghishead's life and character, he would have remained mute and incommunicative, after his usual manner.

But what Burns could not stand was the superior way that Banghishead had of dealing with all questions that cropped up, as, for instance, when the Asiatics were under discussion, as they very frequently were in such a place as Apa Suka, which depended for its labour—agricultural, industrial, shipping and largely commercial—on them, without whom Europeans could have done very little indeed.

Banghishead would not, or could not see that the Chinese or Indians could have any good qualities worth taking into consideration. So blind was he that, in his prejudice, he utterly failed to discern the unquestionable difference in the educated and uneducated Asiatic. He would have them kept "in their own place," though when asked he did not seem to know in his own mind as to where that was. He would have them told what you wanted them to do, and if they did not do it, the best thing was to "kick them," or "bang their heads."

To argue with such a man was of no avail; but he, and such like men, are chiefly responsible for much of the mischief that has been done, and which finds expression in the present "unrest," and somewhat too bitter discontent among a large number of under-educated Asiatics, who aim at the prizes of life without having learnt the most elementary conditions of getting and enjoying them with advantage to themselves and the welfare of others.

Banghishead's breed is fortunately not so common now as it was only a few years ago, and it must before long die out, if for no other reason than that it is "bad form," and will not be tolerated among a self-respecting community.

Had he gone to college a few years later than he did, he would have had some of the conceit taken out of him in competition with the average Indian or Chinese student in British Universities, who show that they can, in most things, fully hold their own on anything like equal terms of

training and advantages, and even at times with much less.

When Banghishead had at last made his pile and left for home, few, if any, friends saw him off at the wharf, and nobody regretted his departure. He will no doubt serenely pursue his way in plenty in club-land, country-house, and, perhaps, even grow into a churchwarden. For they say he has ceased to be too offensive in statements of sacred things, and some think he is even becoming quite "religious," whatever that may mean for such a self-centred a man that he has always shown himself to be. But such things have happened before, and may happen again. But one thing we may feel quite sure about, and that is that whatever he does he will lay his plans so as to score a win with his fellows, however he may find himself stand finally with the Eternal, but that is a matter with which neither you nor I have, fortunately, anything to do.

XI.

THE YOUNG BANKER.

The Young Banker.

————— was a lovable fellow, one of the most taking of men who ever, found his way to Apa Suka, and won the affectionate regard of Padre Burns, who never could think of him, in after years, but with deep and lasting regret and loving esteem for his better nature, and with unceasing sympathy and sorrow for his untoward misfortune and grievous fall so early in the stiff battle of life we all have to fight.

————— was always a bright fellow, beloved of all who knew him. In his native hills, as he came lirting up the glen to his crofter home from school in the village, he was so full of life and movement, and so gay in manner and blithe in spirit, like the lark singing overhead that there was never a soul, not even the incorrigible tramp, who wandered occasionally through the hillside on his round of the neighbouring counties, but had a good word for him, and felt the better of seeing his happy, beaming face and hearing his clear resonant voice as he rolled off some fine song, of which he knew not a few of the best.

The schoolmaster was proud of him, for he was quick and ready to learn most things, but was

specially good at the mathematics. The school was never a big one. Most of the lads could not stay longer than was quite necessary, for their homes required their services, so soon as could be, for their support, whether in agriculture, of which there was still not a little possible in the country, or in town in one of the business shops or local industries, or, maybe, at the fishing or the seafaring life. Not a few found their way across the seas to the Colonies or to America. Still, a fair number held on, as —— did, to try and win the "grand prix"—the school bursary. Nobody really felt surprised when he won it, and everybody wished him the best of success with it at "the college," i.e., the University.

It was not a big bursary, but it enabled him to get a good training far beyond what was possible at the school. A local bank vacancy in the city gave him his chance for life, when the term for the bursary held had expired, and, as his people were very poor and honest folk, he was encouraged by them to accept the post to which he had been recommended by some old friend of his father's. There he did well, to the satisfaction of all concerned, and after some time he was sent to the head office in London for a spell of further training, and then told he was to be sent abroad to their branch in Apa Suka.

Before long he was assistant accountant, and with his charming manner, so pleasant with everybody, and smart and accurate in his business methods, it was no surprise to the other fellows when the manager appointed him to

take charge of the new branch, which the bank was opening in the mining centre of ———.

His social talents were in constant demand, and there was quite a competition among the few ladies of the place to secure him for dinner and a musical evening, which both were a success whenever he was in the swim—all of which was very delightful, most acceptable, and all in the best of good form.

But his very best qualities were made the occasion for his great misfortune. He was always ready to oblige and give pleasure to others. Never what anyone would call a heavy drinker, he had learnt to drink pretty freely, especially when he was with the men alone at the club. There were special nights when ladies also were associated, when the men, as a rule, kept themselves well in hand.

Nobody ever could, or would say how it happened, and ——— himself never knew how it come about that one night, after he made for home from the club, he found himself staggering along the road, with no control of himself. He was drunk, and he realised it. He became quite excited, and shouted and sang for a while; then he burst out crying and called himself vile names, and inwardly felt most keenly that he fully deserved them.

Then came a period of dull stupidity, and what else happened he had no recollection of when, next morning, he found himself lying on the verandah of his bungalow, where he must have lain down the night before.

Some suggested that his drink must have been drugged, for none of the other fellows had suffered similarly from the bottles used the night before ; but all drinks called for are not under the eye of those who use them. The club " boys " may have been parties to the trick played on the young banker. At any rate, the key of the strong room was missing. It had been taken out of the bunch which he carried by a strong chain at his side. The bank " kranies " possibly had a hand in the job.

It was not long before _____ found that the contents of the strong room, so far as notes and dollars were concerned, were gone to the tune of several thousand dollars.

He asked his assistant to write the manager at Apa Suka as fully as he pleased, and wrote himself a few lines of deep shame and regret, expressing himself as almost incapable of believing that such a thing could possibly have happened, but said that he must take the consequences whatever was decided.

There was only one course open to the management, if his story was believed, and that was instant dismissal. An alternative would have been to lay a charge before the police for the criminal misappropriation of money. The manager believed the version of the story that _____ and his friends had to give. He wrote appointing the assistant as acting manager, and said that _____ must come at once to the head office and see him.

This he did, as soon as means of conveyance

could be got, and a terribly miserable time he had, even with the company of a friend whom some of the fellows asked privately to go down with him, for they feared that he might in sheer chagrin and disgust destroy himself. This friend said he had business in Apa Suka, so that he did the needful as unconcernedly as he knew how, though it proved no little undertaking on his part after all.

It was impossible to get ———'s thoughts turned away from his great disgrace, and Jones says he hopes, so long as he lives, that he will never have such an experience again.

The manager was exceedingly kind and considerate, when he saw the utterly broken-down condition of the man he had liked so well and trusted so much. On his own responsibility he said he would explain matters to the directors by next mail, only he had no option but to ask ——— to sail by the next steamer. He gave a fair sum himself to the list, which went the round in his own and the other banks, to pay his passage and leave him a few pounds to get a fresh start.

Burns took the warmest interest in the case, and ——— ever in future years of a friendship always kept in good repair on both sides, remembered with grateful feelings his kindness and wise, encouraging words of cheer and counsel in the dark and stormy day, when it looked as though the sun would never shine again in this world so far as he was concerned.

He did not get home to his old father, as at first

he said he felt he must do and confess his folly and his sin. The dear old man on the hillside never knew what had happened. The local newspapers got the hint that no reference was to be made to the affair should any one be so unkind, or unwise, to let the matter leak out beyond the bank circle.

—— got off the steamer at Ceylon, and changed his route for Australia. There, by his real worth, circumspection, and downright hard work he got well on his feet again. He gained, but not for years afterwards, a leading position of respect and great influence in which, to his supreme satisfaction, in a quiet way, and in a delightful variety of forms, many of them only known to himself, he helps young fellows away from home and all that that means, especially during the first few months of their arrival in the city, where he is now one of the chief citizens, and, as an elder in the "kirk," a leader in every good work, and much that he cannot do directly he gets his like-minded minister to do for him. He believes that his money is lent to him by the Lord to be used wisely and well for the good of others, and so is ever ready to give his means as well as himself for any worthy cause which commends itself to him. He is ever alive to keep himself in touch with every move likely to lessen the evils of our drinking customs, and has been a total abstainer ever since that mad night, when all hope seemed to have been blotted out for him and his future.

XII.

THE FORE-DOOMED BRIDE.

XII.

The Fore-Doomed Bride.

—— had said her say to —— —— . He smiled and tried to look unconcerned with cool indifference, as quite unsolicitous, he even laughed outright, but feared her threat all the same. His Malay "toy," which he had played with for over a year, was not so easily thrown aside as he had imagined.

True, she had made, in her own way, advances to him as much as he had wished her to live with him; but a woman is a woman all the world over, and not one cares to have another woman win a man from her side once she has taken him, as she thought, altogether for herself. Green-eyed jealousy is as cruel as the grave, especially in a Malay.

He had simply been planning, with cool calculation, for the gratification of his lower animal nature, and had arranged, without telling —— his motive, in providing for her so that he

could keep the young girl entirely to himself, for he feared to run the risks of casual visits to the brothels, or have the women called from time to time to his bungalow, as he knew other men were in the habit of doing when they felt disposed.

He had made the bright Malay lassie, who was quite young and more taking in her ways, and really more affectionate than the general run of Malay women were, to believe that he ardently loved her, and would always be true to her if she would be true to him. She remained faithful to him from the night he took her to the little country house he had rented in the jungle, and he had refrained from seeking sexual pleasure elsewhere, but all the same he was false to the very core.

He had never meant to make her his wife, never dreamt for a moment of becoming the father of a Eurasian family, but had foolishly thought he could "main-main"—play for a few months with —, and then, by a money payment and a few presents, and some sweet flattering words, give her the "go-by" and "good-bye," by telling her he knew of another young fellow who would like to have her very much, and one who could and would support her quite handsomely. But he was playing with fire.

The time for carrying out the plan he had long fixed in his own mind, had come. He had paid what he intended should be his last visit to —, to whom on a previous occasion he had

broken the news that the young lady to whom he was engaged had already sailed from England and would soon be out to be married to him.

— said little then, she let her “laki” talk and praise her, and in his “chakap manis” say nice things as much as he liked. She said nothing about the many “bagus” presents he had brought her, nor of the sum of money he was to bring the next time he came. Her eyes shed no tears then while he remained, but her heart was bleeding and burning with rage, and her active mind was scheming a deadly blow to punish him for the false, cruel, cunning wrong done to her.

She actually allowed him to kiss her in saying “good-bye”—“salamat tinggil”—as he went away; but in her heart was war, and not peace, though she answered almost mechanically “salamat jalan”—“go in peace”—in a tone as soft as the words themselves.

It was only two years that this man had been in Apa Suka. He had commended himself to his employers by the way he did business and made business for his firm, especially since the sudden death of the senior representative, which had lead to the re-arrangement of the staff, and his own rapid promotion in a time of brisk trade.

He had taken a nice house with a lovely compound in one of the best parts of the out-skirts of the town, and had by visits to auction sales and the local “godowns” furnished quite substantially, and, for a mere man, on the whole rather tastefully for his outcoming bride, Miss

—, who left her devoted father and mother with real loving regret, for they had been very good to her, their only child, all her days. The sad parting was somewhat mitigated for her with the thought that she was going to her lover, who had won her heart's affection and trust.

His letters, never gushing from the first, had always been such as to keep her believing in him. All the references to his success in life made her proud of him, and naturally raised her hopes of filling a place and position superior to any she had yet known at home.

To his own mind and conscience at times he tried to justify himself and his relation with — by arguing that he would not expose his fiancée to any great danger when he married her, as he had kept himself to — and had kept — for himself. It is ever the devil's way to make the worse the better reason for wrong, and try to play providence for one's self, by prudential precautions and so-called safeguards, while playing the fool all the time.

—'s threat was a truly terrible one! She told him that she would kill his "bini"—(wife)—if he really left her, as he had so calmly and deliberately proposed to do without any consideration for her feelings in the matter. He did his best to appease her anger, and made all sorts of promises short of undertaking to continue to live with her.

"Baik, apa Tuan suka, apa sayah bilang nanti sayah buat." ("All right, do as you please, sir, what I have said I shall do.")

——— felt in his inmost soul that the Malay woman meant what she said, but he tried to laugh it off.

There was no parting word on either side this time—no “salamat” now; he simply slunk off, like a licked dog, under the steady gaze of growing hatred and intense disgust with which —— regarded him. The fearful, all-consuming fire of insatiable revenge had taken full possession of her, and was driving her on with the consent of all her powers.

* * * * *

The steamer at last came alongside the wharf. —— claimed his bride, and the marriage, by special licence, was soon over. His firm gave him the short leave he asked, and he left with his wife that afternoon to spend the honeymoon in Java.

Within a month they were back and settled in their own home, where it seemed that many years of happiness lay before Mrs. —— . The community ladies had called and made her acquaintance, and not a few assured her of a warm welcome into their circle and into their homes.

For a few weeks all seemed to go well, there was not a cloud in the sky to give warning of the coming storm. But one night, ——, on coming home late from the club, where he had been delayed, not for pleasure, but really to finish up a little urgent business, fancied that he saw a Malay woman crouching down by the side

of the bamboo hedge. He, however, did not think much about it at the time, but drove up to the house. He did question the "boy" as to whether any Malay woman had been in the compound, and the "boy" answered: "Yes, Tuan, Ayah's friend has been with her, and has just gone away." ———, his wife's ayah, had already just gone off to her husband's—the kabun's (gardener's) quarters—so ——— said nothing more.

He found that Mrs. ——— had had her dinner, and had gone to bed, as she explained, as she was not feeling well.

The reason was soon apparent, for she had eaten something which had seriously disagreed with her, and the severe pains and symptoms were so alarming that the husband sent the "boy" to call ——— to his wife, and as the syce had gone off to give the horse a walk, and must have gone into some place instead of returning, ——— rushed off to town for a doctor. Meeting an empty 'ricksha, he hurried off to the nearest medical man he knew of. He found he had been called out to a case, so made for the next doctor's house, and finding him they come back as fast as the doctor's conveyance could bring them.

The doctor found Mrs. ——— in a state of complete collapse, but did all that expert knowledge, skill and kindness could do to restore her to life, but all his efforts were unavailing, and before midnight the fore-doomed bride was a lifeless corpse.

The husband was like a maniac: he raved and stormed and swore vengeance on ——, whom he believed had carried out her awful threat. He came back to throw himself on the dead body of his innocent wife. He bathed her dear face with his kisses and his tears—alas! so unavailing to bring any relief to himself, or life to her he had so grievously wronged.

The doctor went when no more could be done, and told some friends of ——, whom he knocked up, that they had better go up and spend the night with him, for he was perfectly mad and might do something desperate.

On the arrival of these friends —— was not in the house. The "boy" said the Tuan, after going to his room for a few minutes, had rushed out, and he did not know where he had gone to. The two friends, after they had looked round the compound and called his name several times, without any reply, returned to the house and went into his room. There, on the table, was a letter addressed to the father and mother of his murdered wife. This read: "She is dead. I am alone to blame. That she-devil who has killed her should have killed me. I go to finish myself."

Two days afterwards his body was found in the river with a bullet mark in his forehead. He had shot himself near the stream to make sure that there would be no mistake as to the deed being effectual.

The post-mortem which was held on his wife brought out some strange versions of the reasons

of such a great and terrible tragedy. The whole truth never became public, for ——— was never again seen in Apa Suka; whether she killed herself or made her way to some other part of Malaya remains quite a mystery to this day.

The doctor and the Padre knew more of this case, as of others of entirely different character, which came before them in the ordinary routine of their daily duties, than they ever told anybody, or ever will tell. The very essence of their trusted positions among their fellows consists in hearing and seeing much as though they neither heard nor saw. A faithful legal adviser holds a similar honourable post in the esteem of men.

XIII.

BULANG.

XIII.

Bulang.

BULAN was known to half of the "mems" of Apa Suka, for she was an exceptionally capable woman as an ayah, well able to manage infants, though she did not like to have the charge of children when they were able to run about. She liked them in the early stages of their little lives when she could handle them, or lay them down, and was quite averse to running after them to keep them out of mischief and danger. She was a good needle-woman, and was much prized and valued for her sewing and generally industrious ways, and could always command a situation, at good wages, whenever she wanted to make a change of mistresses, as she pretty frequently did, usually as constantly as she changed husbands, and that was very often.

The ladies knew her not only as an unusually useful woman to have about the house, but as one far above the average in exceeding good looks, and one likely to attract attention anywhere. She could only speak Malay, and had been brought up simply as a Malay; but face, features, general bearing and manners were decidedly European. She was tall, well-built, and little short of being a handsome woman, who, if dressed in European clothes, could have carried herself well with the best of the average woman for appearance in any company.

Who her father was was not known, but perhaps a few of the older residents could have said if they had felt so inclined. Her mother, a pure Malay, died when she was quite a little thing, and she had been brought up as an "anaksudara" by some Malays who may have been her relatives, even though they said so; but most people did not believe they were really related to her at all.

When Bulan became ayah to Mrs. _____ she had already had several husbands, all of whom she had divorced, except one who had died, and the "kabun," or gardener, she was now "married" to was a former "husband!" She was able to support herself, and earned more money than any of her husbands had ever been able to earn. After the usual forms of divorce were observed, she left them each in turn, when fancy or caprice ruled her, taking with her what she brought on the marriage, leaving the discarded husband with a "surat lepas"—his dismissal,

which was the reverse of the usual procedure, when the man left the woman and gave her the "letter of divorcement." The easy-going matrimonial arrangements among the Malays were notorious, and, if report speaks truly, such proceedings are exceedingly common among all Mohammedan races.

Bulan was outwardly well-behaved, and a really good worker, she had many friends among the ladies in the community, whom she served with so much satisfaction. To any remarks any of them had ever had the courage to make to her, about her many marriages, to one and all he had simply replied that it was the "orang Malayu adat"—the Malays' usual custom, and hinted that no doubt the "orang puteh" had their customs, which seemed as strange to other races. For one and all the rule evidently was to do as you liked best. Each had his and her "sukaan"—preference and liking, and of course, followed it whatever it happened to be. This was her easy philosophy, and her career corresponded with it, with no doubt more excuse than that of many others very differently situated and taught, but who made their philosophy, or call it what you will, conform to their practice once they bring down their ideals.

In want of another change, the kabun and she were out of a situation for a few days. He went to the ———, and she left for an up-country station to be ayah to a lady who was soon to come down to Apa Suka to enter a nursing home.

While at this station she let her fancy light upon a rather good-looking Malay, and when the lady came down to hospital she merely came down with her and left her, to return, as she said, to —, where she meant to marry her new fancy. She settled matters with ———'s kabun —with whom, as already stated, she had lived twice already. He seemed to take his dismissal quite quietly, and as a matter of course, especially as she left with him a younger woman than herself with whom she told him he could console himself after she was gone—as a matter of fact, the girl she left behind for him was her own daughter by adoption.

The man at the up-station of — was almost a match for her. He was a strong, powerful fellow of a masterful disposition, and it was not long before they were violently quarrelling. She had brought her belongings, which for an ayah were considerable. But he was a man of some substance, and was not inclined to give her a "surat lepas," nor wanted to have one from her. They made up their quarrel and lived together again on fairly good terms for a while, but her restless nature began to chaff under his rather heavy ruling hand, and before long she did, what is always a dangerous thing to do among the Malays, she secretly encouraged a taking young fellow of a neighbouring village, or "bangsal" to pay court to her, and promised to come some night and visit him in the house he said he had prepared in an out-of-the-way place, where they could

meet unseen by anyone of his village or of her's.

She with the boldness of her native blood and temperament kept the assignment, and they passed the night together, but it was their last night on earth.

Her husband had seen and heard more than they dreamt of, and he merely let them get settled down quietly, as they thought, for the night, after they had extinguished the lights in the house. He then crept under the house, which, after the usual fashion, was raised on piles a few feet from the ground, armed with a spear and parang, and listening for a while, simply to fix their exact locality, he ran the weapons through the open crevices of the "nibong" flooring and pierced them, one after the other, so that no skill of the doctor could save either of them from death.

The infuriated husband rushing from the scene, after he had hacked at them again and again, once he had broken in the door and got into the house. He went completely mad with the "arrak" he had drunk to nerve himself for the deed he had deliberately planned with all the cunning of the savage, which had been awakened in him.

He made his way through the village, howling at the top of his voice, and when any of the people showed themselves he struck them down in his wild career. He continued his "amuk" into his own village among his own people, and attempted to fire some of the houses, and it was

not until, after he had killed four men and wounded several others, that he was felled down, like a wild beast of the jungle, by the "mata-matas" who at last had appeared on the scene, who dragged him off to the police-station.

XIV.

A WOMAN OF WEIGHT.

A Woman of Weight.

AS Padre Burns wrote to her friends at home :
“ Miss Richardson was one week ill and then was for ever well.”

This lady was the daughter of a prosperous man of business, a contractor, who had acquired considerable means by successful undertakings in various parts of the world. She was well-educated, and had taken a keen interest in public affairs, especially in matters educational, and in whatever made for the welfare of young people at home. It was the farthest thing in her thoughts that she should ever go abroad as a missionary.

She was already recognised as one of the ablest women speakers on all large moral questions— a member of the school board in the town where she had taken up her residence, a successful Sunday school and Church worker, and a very special friend of young women, whose environment and circumstances she had made herself intimately acquainted with that she might the

better understand and serve them. She was perfectly happy and contented with her work, and did not wish to change her lot.

Then came the "call"—clear, loud, and to her most convincing, that she should leave all and go as a missionary to Malaya. This she obeyed in due course, and many years before Thomas Burns left school for the University, Miss Richardson had come out on her own charges to the land of Apa Suka. When he first met her she was no longer well-to-do, but she had sufficient for her own maintenance, after meeting heavy losses in which she was involved in the business of her late father, which had been continued under adverse circumstances by her brother and their nephew.

Clara Richardson was no longer a young woman when she arrived in Malaya, but all the same she learnt, as few younger women afterwards did, to speak the Malay language and one or two dialects of Chinese, which gave her great acceptance among the people, whom she sought to benefit by her constant visitation and preaching, as well as by kindly ministries and the use of simple medicines in cases of sickness, and in the thousand and one ways that a true woman can help her sisters who are less favoured, and little children, for whom she had a great affection, in their own homes.

Miss Richardson was clever, resourceful and practical, but her distinguishing quality was her real love for them, and her efforts were eminently successful in the winning of the affec-

tionate regard of her people, whom she looked on as her children, many of them poor, stupid, ignorant things at the best; but they were women and children in need, and so in need of the very best help, teaching and encouragement that she could give them. It was a wonder to many of her friends, who knew her refinement, her upbringing and former privileged position at home, to find her so really interested in her work, which was anything but pleasant at times. Her patience and tactfulness never seemed to fail her, and to the last she laboured on, as she would have told you had you asked why, for the good of the souls of those for whom Christ died, Whose she was and Whom she served.

This good lady was the inspiration of her fellow workers, and especially of Thomas Burns, who came out young, alert and eager for whatever seemed best to be done to effect the object of their common endeavour. It was no small matter that she had already done twenty years efficient work before he came out, and that he had the inestimable privilege of being engaged alongside her and others, who all loved her for her work's sake for over other twenty years. And what a strong woman she must have been, though less strong-minded women might have given in sooner, for she, with the growing weight of years and a great increase of corpulency, continued on steadily working in such ways as she could in school and church, in visitation, in the writing of books and correspondence until a week of her death.

Her Chinese girls and not a few Malay girls too, and some Tamils whom she had, in some cases, rescued from a life worse than death, bewailed her loss. There was not a dry eye at the grave in which they laid her, where the service was conducted by her affectionate colleagues, the Revs. Thomas Burns and Andrew Wilson.

Those who have taken the time and trouble to enquire, and have visited the homes of the girls Miss Richardson and others taught and trained, and made Christians of, could not but be impressed with the great difference between them and those who were allowed to grow up without education, moral training, and the gracious influences of the Christian life and character of those women whom God has touched into sympathy with His own great pity.

Her friends in England and Scotland were not unmindful of her and her inspiring life and example. They remembered her warm-hearted courageous words when she was home on furloughs. She visited their home circles, or addressed them from the platform, and once in a while from the pulpit, telling the needs of her Chinese women in Malaya. Now she was gone to her rest and reward, they raised a capital sum of money to be spent in erecting a memorial building for the purposes she had lately had so much at heart—the training of women to be Bible-women and teachers, and the housing of old women—“ poor old things ” who were past work and needed some little care and attention before the night fell on them, and they laid them down to sleep.

xv.

UNGKU BODOH, THE
DRUNKARD.

Ungku Bodoh, The Drunkard.

HE was a prince by birth and right, and held for long his position as such, as far as appointments went; but no lordly privilege can save a man who will be a drunkard in spite of all that is done for him.

Malays are a most temperate people, and, as Mohammedans, are not supposed to drink alcoholic drinks, but it is well known that many of the young Malays, who have mixed with Europeans, have learned to drink freely. Few Malays contract the opium vice; that is peculiarly the Chinese form of weak indulgence, though the Indians take it, more or less, by eating it; the smoking of opium is the Chinese way of using it.

Ungku Bodoh held several posts, but he was always muddled with drink and incapable of any special exertion. He used to do a great deal of "main judi"—(gambling)—by which he often won considerable sums, but when it was found

that he would not pay up when he lost, gradually he was left to himself as no one would latterly play with him. In short, he was left to himself and his drink, and the only people he had left about were his servants, who helped themselves to much they could lay their hands upon.

Such a course of things could not go on for ever, so he was finally dismissed from all positions of trust, and given a small allowance to make himself as scarce as possible till he died.

His was one of the most helpless and abandoned cases of drunkenness among the Malays. The sober, strict Mohammedans were greatly scandalized to have him about, and said so.

Mohammedans and Hindus lately have joined themselves with Christians in an effort to get Asiatics to leave intoxicants alone, and much may be hoped that by their endeavours they may save the young among them ever learning to use what has been the bane of all the nations of the West, and, in ancient times, was not unknown as a curse in some of the nations of the East. If China is to become a nation of whiskey drinkers, when opium is done away with, there will not be much gain to the Chinese, or mankind as a whole. But those who know the Chinese say that as a nation they are not likely to drink heavily; but it is too soon to be quite confident, so I will for one not try to play the role of the prophet.

Burns, when he first arrived at once began to take notice and have an interest in things in

general, beyond the mere routine of his work of learning the language and his various other duties of rather a miscellaneous sort. He was no believer in the humbugging opinion of his duties assigned to him by a very officious official, that he should strictly confine himself to the preaching of the "simple gospel." As to what that meant to the said official's mind is really of no consequence, as he personally did not seem to take much stock in the thing itself, and indeed seemed ignorant of the most elementary principles of the glad message of truth, love, justice and mercy which lay at the very core of Christ's Holy Gospel. Thomas Burns had thus learned to know it, not only at the hands of his greatly revered teachers in pulpit and classroom, but as he had come to know it for himself from a close and constant loving study of his New Testament. This he had long made the "man of his counsel" and sought to make the guide of his life.

He did not hesitate, after a few years' acquaintance with the situation and the problems of Apa Suka, to denounce the three great sources of revenue on which the place was run—opium, drink and licensed prostitution; which latter has now for several years been abolished. But for years there was a government department having the registration and control of the women and girls in the brothels, and each one had to submit herself to an enforced examination, once a month, for which the women themselves, or the brothel syndicates, had to pay one

dollar a month to the responsible Government official. The practical free trade in opium and drink goes on still, with much too little restriction; but not a few civil servants equally with the Padres, who belong to the moral party, and their friends, are doing not a little to create a better public sentiment and introduce stronger restrictive measures. At any rate, the days of supercilious and unrestrained abuse of the missionaries and the anti-opium party are over and done with. They have been proved to be sane!

XVI.

THE "LITTLE GOD," alias
JACK-IN-OFFICE.



The "Little-God," alias Jack-in-Office.

SOME of the best specimens of British manhood have been Government officials. The genuine "civil servant" is a treasure, one of the most valuable assets in the Empire; but some from sheer lack of discernment have allowed themselves to be caught in the machine of "cram" and "exam," and then in the coil of routine that when they have got into responsible positions of public trust, and become the heads of departments, usually in an "acting" capacity, they have hardly had the manners, or the common courtesy of an ordinary office-boy in England.

But this type is becoming more and more obsolete, and will soon be as extinct as the Dodo. Business men and the public generally will never again tolerate them. There are various ways of dealing with such people, and the best way is to leave them severely alone until they come to

their senses, and merely on strict lines of necessary business, have any doings with them at all as needs must.

Apa Suka was a centre for commercial pursuits, with big industrial, mining and agricultural interests lying near at hand and in the hinterland of Malaya. The men who did the real work of the place had no need to mind much the official classes, with whom, however, on the whole they had the most pleasant and intimate relations in all the concerns that really mattered for the welfare of the place. Where there was friction, and occasionally there was, it was usually the small "jack in office," or "demi-god-in-the-box" man, who was to blame for it.

There were such men, and although at times their antics were annoying they were as frequently, and much more so, amusing, and caused many a joke and hearty laugh at their expense, which experience of pleasure they had no intention of contributing to; but the most of our best things do come to us utterly unexpected and unsought.

The satirical remarks made were not complimentary, for the non-official classes expected civility and attention on public business, as a matter of right and not of favour, from those who got their appointments, pay and pensions, from the public purse. But, be it again said, with due recognition of their worth, that civil servants, as a class, knew quite well that their whole being and purpose in life is to serve the

State as a whole, and especially those who are the money-makers.

Padre Burns had his relations and dealings with officials, not always of a kind quite what they or he liked. All matters of a purely business character he could have nothing whatever to complain of. Given time and due respect to "red-tape" these came out in due course. But he had his own point of view, as any man worth his salt would have, and with any regard for himself and his principles, would find means of making them known, when occasion demanded, without waiting to consider whether his sentiments publicly expressed would please or not.

He was profoundly thankful that he was not, beyond a right regard to social duty, under any obligation to dance attendance at State functions, or "pick up balls" at official tennis parties, and could hardly refrain expressing his feelings for some people—lay and clerical—who had no courage to help in any of the big moral movements which took place in Apa Suka, for fear of the official snubs they might incur, or the odium that might be heaped upon them, if they said anything anti-opium or any other thing that was not popular.

Such invertebrate members of the community had simply to be left alone. They were from long experience known to be entirely out of the running with Burns, Wilson and party.

Yet in club-land, dinner parties, and where they quietly could have their say, without

opposition for the most part, they usually expressed their views strong enough to please those who opposed Burns and his party, but they as religiously kept out of all such "politics" so far as public controversy, or the press was concerned.

The Padre, now and again, had a rub up alongside such people, especially when they were fortified by the presence of a Jack-in-Office, such as the official who told Burns he could not imagine why he bothered himself about opium, "for it was such a good thing!"

"It kept the Chinese quiet and inoffensive, and not only helped the British, Dutch, Malay, and other Governments to carry on, quietly and without fuss, with a sure source of revenue, things in the best possible way in their respective spheres of influence."

But—(thank Goodness!)—this man was by no means representative of the whole civil service of Apa Suka and Malaya.

XVII.

THE VACCINATOR.

The Vaccinator.

_____ was one of Burns' greatest regrets and most bitter disappointments. Taken into his school as an orphan, when he was quite a small boy, he was under the immediate care of the Padre for years. He had real natural talent, and was as sharp as a needle and could learn more readily any of the subjects taught than any other boy in the school, where all the teaching was in Chinese.

His reading was excellent, his writing like copper-plate, and his memory very retentive, as most Chinese memories are with their special training under the old Confucian system, thousands of years old, which has ingrained so much of the peculiar Chinese characteristics into the race as we know it.

Mrs. Wilson took a fancy to the lad and he passed into her school for English, and she declares that he was the smartest pupil she

ever had in all her life. Before he had well got the alphabet pronounced correctly she avers he was reading, and he studied not only in school hours, but without intermission before and after school except for meals and bathing, which near the Equator is a daily necessary and delightful luxury, with an occasional romp with the other boys.

Everything seemed to promise exceedingly well, so far as one looking on the mere outside could judge, but the boy was as deep as he was clever, and he speedily developed into a most consummate rough and finished master of all that was deceitful, and withal carried about with him such a look of innocency that those who heard tell of his doings in after years were loath to believe that such a "nice young fellow," as he seemed to be, could be capable of doing what he was charged with, and had actually been sent to prison for.

Some people, quite inconsiderately and illogically, said to Burns :

"Padre, you see what you good well-meaning fellows are doing in giving such creatures an English education."

They were quite oblivious of the evident fact that education among Europeans helps them, in many instances, to become forgers and clever cheats. They also forget, which the missionaries do not, that a very large proportion, indeed the great bulk of the boys and girls, the men and women, who came under the influence of the Mission Church and School were the better for

what they got; commercial firms too and the Government service on all hands benefited very much by the training and discipline and moral drill the boys received while under the Padre and his friends.

No one grieved, and had so much searching of heart when there were failures; but these were not only to be found in Apa Suka, but elsewhere in almost as great proportion, if the truth were told. But few people school themselves to try and be fair in their judgments and moderate in their criticisms of their fellows, even in what ought to be judged and criticized. But only thus can matters that are admittedly wrong, or out of joint, be righted and mended.

———'s very cleverness was the cause of his ruin, as has often been the case with others since the world began to go round. Other boys praised him, and older boys and young men (for all that come into mission compounds are not angels or saints) led him into all sorts of mischief and sin; before he was well out of his boyhood he had made, in a covert and secret way for the most part, acquaintance with almost every form of vice possible for one so young.

The restraints of school, and specially of the boarding department, were too much for him, and one day he was not to be found. Everybody said they did not know where he was, but not a few knew, but did not like to say so, that he was gone for good. Besides his clothes and such personal effects, which he had, not a few things were found to be missing from the Padre's

study, such as his fountain pen, and Wilson's bicycle was gone, and gone with ——!

After he had been rioting in unrestrained folly for a few weeks, he was seen by Wilson, who told Burns where he had met him. They decided not to make a police case of him, but to get hold of him and have it out with him in good sound talk.

They did not spare him, when he at last did come, sent for by means of one of the older and most trusted boys. With tears of penitence, and words of deep regret for his base ingratitude, he promised on his knees before them complete amendment and a new life for the rest of his days. What were they to do with him?

He could not be allowed, it was too risky, to have him back in the local school. They told him so, so he earnestly pleaded that they would give him a chance as a junior teacher in one of the country schools. After considering what could be done, they decided that he might be tried at one of the out-stations, under an old experienced teacher and preacher in whom they had confidence, and was was likely to benefit the lad and keep him in hand as they thought, but they did not then know how low he had fallen. He was not quite so sure about himself, as he in seeming contritions confessed, but said he would try and do his best, if they would send him, as was suggested, to ——.

To make a long story short. . . . He seemed to be doing all right for a few weeks, as the old teacher had reported, then he dis-

appeared, and the next report was that he had gone up the river and was going about the various settlements of Chinese in the interior acting as a "Chinese doctor." He was selling big, black, ugly plasters with wonderful healing properties, morphine pills and tinctures for the cure of the opium habit, and at the same time did not a little opium-smuggling. With his glib tongue and persuasive manner he was winning golden opinions for himself, and making not a little money out of his already fully established professional reputation (?). He had actually performed minor operations, beyond great exploits in dentistry, for which he had long strings of teeth to show when he went on his rounds. But like vaulting ambition, he over-reached himself, and his last move was his final touch.

The Government had given, during the small-pox scare, strict instructions that the people—Chinese, Malay, Tamils, and everyone else, with the children, had to come to certain given centres to be vaccinated. These were usually the houses of the "penghulu," or the "toa tshu" (big house) of the Chinese headman of the district, unless there was a police station within reasonable distance. Times were fixed and men appointed to do this duty of great importance for the well-being of the scattered community, as well as for the large centres of population.

Clever ——— fancied that he now saw a handsome opportunity of increasing his gains; wherever he went he gave out that he was one

of the recently appointed Government officials (he actually felt greatly elevated in his own mind by the very statement) to vaccinate the people.

He produced his lancet and lymph (which, by-the-way, was merely stiffened condensed milk), and did a good business for a time. But even such a superlative genius had his enemies. He was denounced, traced and captured, and, after due trial, was sentenced to prison, where he did "ten years' hard," to his own betterment, let us hope, as it certainly was to the relief of many who knew him far too well, and were only too glad to know that he was safely out of the way for a time.

XVIII

THE DEGENERATE.

The Degenerate.

ONE of the saddest sights to Burns and to Wilson, and to all others who retained any respect for poor and frail humanity even when fallen so low, was to see "Padre" ——— make fun for the Philistines at the club. There are always some men who can take, we might almost say, a fiendish delight in the degradation of their fellows.

He was said to be a "Padre," but had never held an appointment in Apa Suka, where he had been shunted by his people, for their own peace of mind. Many a home has to carry its own sad burden in silence, and we will not attempt to draw the veil lest any should imagine we are here referring to any particular family.

.....

"Why in all the world did it come about that ——— was out in Malaya at all?" may well be asked.

Well, the truth was his people asked some

relatives there to find him a billet as a teacher, or in any capacity in which he could employ himself. They did not say what a hopeless wreck he really was; his relatives had to find that out.

He was sent to Apa Suka as a "remittance man," rather than to Australia, or South America, for he had no "relatives" out there. So, fearing the worst, though they hoped for the better, they paid his passage out and strictly charged him of the absolute necessity of behaving himself within bounds, and warned him that if he attempted to leave the place the sums they undertook to send him regularly would cease, and that he was not to expect any allowance whatever if he did not stay in the one place and make the best of himself.

It would have been infinitely better had it never been known that he had been a clergyman, and if he had had any saving sense of what he owed to the "cloth," to himself, and family, he would have come as plain Mr. _____, tutor, coach, or what you will, anything, in short, than as the Rev. _____,

He did some teaching, and did act in various other ways and made himself a little money, but he never stayed long steadily at anything, and drank himself drunk latterly as often as he could buy a bottle of whiskey. No one, after a while, would have him live with them, so he had to loaf about with Malays, or Chinese, who employed him to teach their children at so many bottles of whiskey a month, his food and lodging, such

as it was. It is almost incredible to believe that a European could fall so low.

Burns will never to his dying day forget the miserable plight in which he found him on one occasion that he stumbled across his quarters—they seemed to get worse as time went on. The little wooden box of a room, in which he was living, was a lean-to against the wall of a large compound Chinese house.

It was just big enough to hold his truckle bed of planks, with a dirty mosquito curtain, a groggy chair, and a common deal wood table, which had been knocked together out of a packing-case. This was quite destitute of a cover, if ever it had one. There was also a form to hold two which ———— offered his visitor. He was communicative, and told Burns a great deal of the story of his misspent life, but apparently without shame or regret, and brazened out his position as best he might.

Now and again, a present of some cast-off clothes enabled him to make himself somewhat presentable, and he would turn up at the club, though he had long ceased to be recognized as a member, or at one of the messes of a night. Some of the men would clear out if they did not succeed in clearing him out; but others would call upon him to stay and have a drink. Then began the ghastly fun! They would call for a song, or a recitation, then for the Lord's Prayer, which he would repeat, or the Creed, or any portion of the Burial, Baptism, or Marriage Service, which took their fancy, and all to make amusement for themselves. What cared they

for him—he had gone under and “played the fool.” They got their money’s worth out of him ; that was all they asked for or cared to have any thought for, when they were themselves half-seas over.

He would visit the brothels of a night, when he had drank deeply, and not pay the wretched women, who would come pestering about in the morning to get what he owed them. But enough, and more than enough, of the sordid story, which is only too true of him and others who bartered away their manhood and threw away their most precious possessions—for what ? They themselves know best, and others can only guess at.

The hospital for “—————” was a common receptacle for all such cases when the last scene of all was enacted. He died a pauper and was laid in a pauper’s grave.

XIX.

A PIRATICAL STRONGHOLD.

A Piratical Stronghold.

THE Malays for centuries ruled the roost, but now the Chinese are the real power in the "Tanah Malayu" (the Malays' land). Bukit ———, lying on the river Mas, was some fifty miles from Katong on the coast, and had witnessed in its days, past and present, many an exciting and bloody scene. What its history was when Mount Manis was being exploited for gold for King Solomon no one now could say. But such a handy situation so near a good broad river, within easy access of the sea, and not many miles away from the mines in the land of apes and peacocks, where traders undoubtedly came and went in those far-back days, would have its own history, and by no means an uneventful one.

Then after the days of the visits of the sailors from the Persian gulf, and, perhaps, contemporaneously with them came the Hindus, and later the Buddhists of India, with their beautiful

works of art in carving, metal, silver and brass work, jewellery, embroideries and cloths in exchange for the produce of the land. Fully as soon, if not even sooner, the Chinese junks dropped down, in the North-East monsoon, with their rich silks and much else with which to buy for China all that they could get which would yield profit for their exertions.

The Chinese, from the days of Confucius, have classified themselves into four great groups: scholars, from whom all the official classes are drawn; agriculturalists, who have always been the backbone of the nation; artizans, who manufacture the material brought to their hands by the toils of the great second class; traders, who merely had as their province the exchange of commodities. But though the Chinese have in their system of thought and education rated low the mercantile class, this class is their chief strength and glory, and every Chinese, of whatever class, is a born trader, hence their commercial supremacy in the Far East.

For a thousand years, at least, the Chinese have been a familiar sight in the seas of this Middle Eastern world. They sailed along the shores of Malaya, and off ever island, where peaceful trade could be carried on, and not infrequently shots were fired and daring deeds were done, after the manner of the adventurous traders of every nation in their first trips, who, failing to get by friendly barter, took by stealth, or force of arms; the one aim being to accom-

plish the object for which they set sail from their native land.

The Malays had for many centuries gradually distributed themselves most widely of all Asiatics, and are found to-day on nearly every island, big and little, in these Eastern seas, and birth-rate statistics show that they as a race are not dying out. They love the sea, make good sailors, and like to roam in search of new settlements, or rather did before the fatalistic tenets of Mohammed made them sink down to the aimless life which now for long has characterized them, but from which there are signs that they are capable of shaking themselves free.

So far as the "Malay Peninsula" goes, they came as the conquerors and drove the aboriginal inhabitants into the interior, the descendants of whom survive to-day in the Jakoons, Sakais, Semangs and other non-Malayan tribes, who have not been Mohammedanized.

What the Malays did was done to them, is shown by the way the Arabs fleeced them, and who, being on a higher scale of civilization, succeeded in getting them to take to their accommodating religion and social customs. This they managed the more easily by intermarrying with them, and living among them in considerable numbers.

Then came the days of the Portuguese, when Bukit —— played an important part in forming a meeting ground for the forces of defence, which harrassed the invaders, and nearly

managed to oust them from the strongholds they had already captured.

The Portuguese did at last get possession of Bukit —, and some of the old guns which they mounted are to be found on the hill even up till this day. Such weapons, fully six feet long, with a diameter of twelve to eighteen inches, were not dragged through the swamps and jungle, and hauled over a hundred feet up a steep hill to serve no purpose than find employment for the out-of-work "coolies" of the period for the amusement of their lords and masters. These ancient guns are called by the Malays of to-day "meriams," and probably such names were given to the arms of the Portuguese, because their priests used to bless them, consecrating them to their deadly service in the name of the Blessed Virgin—Santa Maria.

Following the Portuguese period came the Dutch. They may, or may not, have kept hold of Bukit —; possibly, they did not trouble much about it, any more than they did with the hinter land of only some few miles from Malacca, where the British, when Malaya became the scene of the present state of things, had to have a little "war"—that of Nanning—to assert the rights of the owner in possession.

Bukit — was the home of pirates for long after the British had entered Malacca, and made their influence felt in the way of trade and barter there and at Penang, and later at Singapore. Bukit — was known as the region from which the pirates and their praus came down

and did wide and great mischief to the small ships which traded with the British. Looking over the sea of "pinang," or areca-nut, and cocoanut trees, which lie spread out before you as you gaze down from the hill to-day, you can see the sea in the distance, and can catch glimpses of the river in its tortuous course along which the pirates rowed home after a tussle with the traders.

They could find their way among the mangrove swamps to such places of landing as served their purposes best to bring on shore their booty, with the fair captives whom they managed to seize from time to time, after they had made away with their men folks, who had given the pirates no small trouble in the last struggle, for men will fight desperately for their lives and their women, whatever their race may be.

Piracy is truly innate in the Malay, and every now and again breaks out. Quite recently there have been cases where Malays have paid the extreme penalty for their ancient profession of arms. But now the Chinese have got the upper-hand in the land where the Malays once treated them so very cruelly and with so little mercy in the "good old days"! Still, the Chinese are not much better than the Malays when they let self-interest rule them as their chief concern.

* * * * *

—— ——— was a Hakka. His father was a blacksmith, as his forbears for many a generation before him had been. He and his two brothers lived in a little "chinam" house, ten

feet by twelve, with his father and mother till he was fourteen years of age, though in Chinese reckoning he was described by his parents as fifteen.

From being a little tot he had to do his share of work, by gathering cow's dung and straws and twigs, where he could find them, to do service as fuel at the forge and for the family fire. His daily fare, like others of the millions in South China, was rice with vegetables, salt or fresh, and occasionally a little dried fish, or a piece of fat pork, and he and the rest of the family were not unfamiliar with the taste of a good stout rat, which, as it fed on the best rice and grain it could get, was thought among the poorer people not to be unsuitable for food. The Padre told me that when he was up in China he had seen Chinese fathers taking home as a choice morsel nice puppy dogs, which were sold in the open market as quite a treat, as cats are in the Canton streets for those who are rich enough to buy and eat these special delicacies.

He got a fair knowledge of the Chinese classics from his father and his teacher, for the short time he was able to attend the school, which a number of the neighbours had clubbed together to keep going while their boys (there were no schools for girls) were introduced to the literature of "The Central Kingdom." The Hakkas, even the poorest of them, make an effort to read their books, and succeed to a larger degree than any other section of the Chinese. This is certainly to their credit, though some of the worst specimens

of Chinese have been this gipsy race "kheh," or Hakkas.

— — — when fourteen was allowed by his father to try his fortune by going abroad as an indentured coolie in the charge of a broker, though he was described to the Consulate at the one end and the Protectorate at the other as the nephew of this dealer in men. — — — had relatives abroad, and his father told him to try and find them, but he was years before he found any of them. First, because he had to work out a term to cover the expenses of his passage down, and other expenses supposed to have been incurred he hardly knew how; then he had to stay on in the interior and work off the debts he had contracted by gambling and going the pace in the indulgences of the vices common in all these settlements. At last he contrived somehow to get away, and found himself a free man in another part of Malaya, where he resolved to make himself well-off, if not wealthy as he found men with no better start in life had done.

After acting as "tukang ayer," or man of the most menial tasks in the house of an "orang puteh" for a while, he became "boy," and later on "cookie," in which latter capacity he got a good wage, and earned quite a lot of money on his commissions of what he bought in the daily marketings in the "bazaar," as they say in India, but which is "pasar" in Malaya. He got into business before long, and by spending little and investing his money on good interest in many concerns, and by looking well to his

investments besides being most attentive to his business, he amassed quite a little fortune in a few years without ever opening an account at the bank.

Avarice grows as it is fed. He longed to make more, so applied to the opium and spirit farmer for the Bukit —— district, and as his offer was the highest he got the monopoly given to him for a year, with the understanding that it would be renewed unless another bidder came in next year with a bigger offer. He turned over his business to the partner he had taken, and went himself to Bukit —— and took possession of the "big house" on the hill to rule as lord of all he surveyed for the time being. He was the chief man of the district, and had practically the power of life and death there while he paid the monthly toll to the "farm," and gave no special trouble to the Government. For ——'s reign was under the old regime, before the "orang puteh" and his straight ways came in to interfere with the old easy-going ways when the fewer questions asked the better. All then realized it was easier to let matters slide.

Mr. Burns had a stake in the land as well as the stout, well-fed Chinese headman, for he and his mission had been at work there for many years, and a zealous preacher of theirs had gone to Bukit —— on several occasions and won some people there. They met for worship every night in the house of one of the Christians for evening prayers and a chat about things in general. They kept the Lord's Day for services, and for

Christian effort among the people living in and near the village. This did not suit Mr. ——, who sent a message to say that he would allow no such foolery to go on in his district, for he was very angry, and said :

“ I am paying a big sum for this monopoly (not only opium and drink, but gambling as well) and if these people become Christians (“ Ang Mo,” he called them), and don’t come to the “ big house ” for their supplies, where am I to get my living from ? ”

He saw quite naturally that if the people did not smoke opium and drink brandy (the commonest drink among all grades of Chinese) nor yet gamble, that his prospects of a huge fortune in a short time were very small indeed—a thing he had never counted on that a mission should interfere with his gains.

He warned, threatened, and finally vowed to take vengeance on the troublers within his domains, where he claimed to be supreme to have every man coming within his bounds to register himself, and to keep him and his clerks acquainted with his whereabouts and business, and not to leave the place without reporting himself. He kept—they were really the property of the powers that were—a pair of stocks, a number of handcuffs, a goodly assortment of rusty guns and spears, and other insignia of office. And he made it known, as most men in the same highly privileged position did, that he could do “ apa suka,” and no one had any right, or at least power to say him “ nay.” He and his

people not only sold to those who had the opium habit fixed on them, but took ways and means best known to such creatures to induce others, especially the young and strong, to become addicted to the expensive and most seductive habit. Free gifts (the "sprat to catch the mackerel") of opium were given by — — — and his hangers-on with the full assurance of a good return in results of a paying character, for a demand once created would bring supplies. Burns' gorge always began to rise, with no benefit to his health and spirits usually bright enough, whenever he told these dark tales of the work of human demons.

Bukit — — — had had many men of different nationalities ruling over its destinies, but no man was ever so quietly determined to have his own way, whatever became of the other fellow, than the said — — —.

He at last made up his mind what he would do. He sent word, by one of his runners, that — — — was to come up and see him. — — — was the chief offender in his eyes. It was in his house and under his spiritual stimulus that the little band met for worship. — — — went, and went alone, with the man who had called for him, not realizing what was likely to happen, but half hoping that the request he had made about the privilege of opening out some virgin forest for planting was to be granted.

— — — like a fiend rejoiced to see the prey delivered into his hand. — — — was no

sooner over the doorway into the open reception room than —— began abusing him, and taking off his slipper, struck him repeatedly over his head and face. One of the worst forms of abuse which an Oriental can use is this of striking with the shoe or other foot-wear. He then called in one of his attendants to “ phah si ” — to beat him until he was dead, and from the blows given — —— might well have died. Indeed, he was thought to be dead, but —— took fright when he saw him lying on the ground all covered with blood, and, apparently, quite lifeless. He then ran behind to think, and on coming back demanded to know if he really was dead. His attendants said that they thought not, so he commanded them to carry him off to his boat lying in the black, muddy creek, and to row as fast as possible with him down to the hospital at Miskin, where he himself would report the “ case ! ”

—— ——, under the skilful care of the doctor there, recovered, in spite of his broken head, and weeks afterwards when he again could walk he was taken before the judge on the serious charge which had been lodged against him, from the very moment that he had been handed over to the care of the doctor at the hospital to cover ——’s conduct, and to shield him from any ugly consequences which might be the outcome of his rash act.

The —— —— monopolist’s charge was that —— —— “ orang banyah jahat ” (an

exceptionally wicked fellow) had come to his house, with a large body of his "kong-si" men, and attacked him, and in self-defence ——— had received the injuries for which he had been treated in hospital. At the headman's request the police had been up to his house (it is not known except to themselves how much they received to see what they should see, and to hear what they were expected to hear). They gave their report, and later their "evidence" as to a broken mirror and some pictures, which had had their glasses smashed, as also some other things, such as a lamp and several ornaments, which had been broken by the attacking party.

—— could only simply, but most emphatically deny the charge. His friends said that when they heard his cries they rushed up the hill only to be beaten back with heavy blows. They said they were followed and driven down again, and that some of them were chased into the jungle, and one of their number had never been seen again. True, he may have escaped to another district; but more likely he had met his death either from his wounds, or from some wild beast, tiger, or black panther, or, what was more probably the real explanation, he simply in sheer fright had fled straight before him into the swamp and sank into the deep, black, slimy mud to be able to rise no more.

xx.

WORRIED HUSBANDS AND
SILLY WIVES.

Worried Husbands and Silly Wives.

TO deal in generalities is notoriously a precarious process of thought, a most fallacious mode of expression, and about as futile as to try and prove a negative.

The Doctor and the Padre were not always on their guard in spite of the lessons (in the old logic classroom under the redoubtable professor, who had taught them to think for themselves from his famous lectures and text books on Berkeley, which they read, yea, studied as students—and actually re-read in the small edition, which this teacher, revered by many in all parts of the world, issued in his green old age, still full of life and vigour) imparted to congenial spirits in the historic place “ages ago.”

“See here, Padre, that woman is a born fool, and will regret to her dying day leaving her husband just yet awhile. She is only two years out, the baby is perfectly healthy, and there is absolutely nothing in the world wrong with her! If she would but be content with less bridge parties, and a quiet tiffin with her lady friends now and again; if she would not worry — eternally with her insane craze for excitement in having so many dinner parties, and

wishing to go out so much at nights to wine and dine, and put in as many of the amusements, catered for by the roving fraternity of companies, good, bad, and indifferent, as if the salvation of her soul depended on the amount of hard work she does that way, and compels him to take more than his share in, there would be no reason why she should not live here and bring up her 'kids' for the next two or three years. She could then go home with her husband when his leave falls due. These women folk are a silly lot!" So said Dr. James Brown, for he was thoroughly roused, and plainly showed it.

"Now, Doctor, you had better not make such big, sweeping statements. All men may be mortal, though I am sometimes not so sure about that; but you know the man who said that all men were liars, when in his haste went far beyond the mark, for you and I are men, and, whatever else we are, we are not 'liars.' Women-folk are of different sorts, just like men, and all women are no more silly than all men are sane."

"Hold on, Burns, you know what I mean. Mrs. ——— is a fool, and there are many others in Apa Suka just like her, who manifest their inanities and petty insanities each in her own sweet way no doubt."

In explanation, it should be said that Dr. Brown never said things in this way except in the alone presence of his old fellow student of his "Arts Classes" days, in whom he had perfect confidence. He always felt that he could

unbend and reveal himself without fear to his alter ego, who in return esteemed his friend, with the experience of half a lifetime to confirm his confidence, with affectionate regard.

The Doctor was a great success, after his earlier practice in treating the natives with good results, especially having pulled through a wealthy old Chinese, whom the older practitioners had given up as good as dead. He, with the newest appliances and knowledge, fresh from college, saved his life. His grateful patient, for people are grateful at times whatever cynics may say to the contrary, gave him a handsome cheque as a present besides his fees, and ever after sang his praises. This fully established the reputation of Dr. James Brown, M.D., which never afterwards waned. Among the Europeans he was greatly in demand. He was known as a "ladies' doctor," with manners the pink of perfection; but, on occasion, he could speak as he now did to Burns.

"I am afraid, Doctor, that Mrs. —— will make a big mistake by going. What you say is perfectly true. But, cannot you, in your professional capacity, speak to her, and tell her, as you best know how, of the grave risk that she is running of alienating her husband's affections, wrecking his and her own happiness, and depriving the children of the joint benefit of the love and care of their parents, during the first few years, that it is not only possible, but positively beneficial that they should live in this 'Children's Paradise?'"

“Such women, as she is, will not listen to reason. They are only overgrown children themselves. The ‘lovely flat’ in Kensington is her heaven below, and there she will go. But, I may tell you, I did speak to her for ——’ sake. Sensible man, he asked me to try and persuade her, without in the least hinting that he was interested, that she had better stay on a year or two longer.”

“Well, Brown, you and I have seen several most deplorable breakdowns, which we might say were wholly caused by such purely selfish conduct on the part of these women, that we may well fear the worst in this case.”

“You will remember that hare-brained creature Mrs. Kraff, who actually went into ecstasies, when her husband’s firm failed, for she saw the prospect of at last getting home to her own “Bonny Scotland,” from which he had brought her only three years before. She never ceased to bemoan the fact that she was an exile; as a matter of fact she had never been away from her mother’s side till she married the young fellow who had a career before him, if she had backed him up, and not made his life almost intolerable, that he found it quite impossible to face, as he should have done, his burdens, and the responsible duties of his business in a time of stress. Yes, indeed, some women are undoubtedly simply silly.”

“Then there was that case of Dr. ——, whose wife would not come out and join him, and made as her excuse that the two infant children needed her

care at home, whereas she only wanted his money, and cared little, or nothing for him, though he was a very decent fellow, and would have done remarkably well had she come. As it was, in his loneliness he took to the whiskey, lost his billet, and ended his days as a ship's doctor on the pilgrim run to Jedda for the "hadj" at Mecca. Indeed, several doctor's deaths, following their professional failures and moral breakdowns, I have no hesitation in saying, were due to their wives' refusal to bear their part of the burdens that they voluntarily took on themselves, when they entered into the marriage state."

"It was so, Doctor, and look at that girl of —'s! She was born here, her people were decent folks; the father a real hard-working, steady mechanic, who brought his family up excellently well, and gave them a good education in the local schools till his death; then the mother, good, honest body, worked hand and feet for them in her well-appointed boarding house, where they should have been made to do a great deal more to help her than ever they dreamt of attempting. She got the girls into situations, including that one who married young —, who is already a partner in his firm, and forsooth, she must needs have a run to Europe every two years, and will stay away nearly two more, and she has no 'kids' at all. No wonder it is reported that he is going off the lines as well."

"Now take the case of that young fellow

—, the engineer, there is his wife packing up to go home for the education of the children, so she says ; but the youngest is just a baby and does not need schooling yet, and the other two she could teach herself, especially in the quiet out-of-the-world place in which the father has at present to work in. The real reason is she has no one of her own social standing to talk to, though one or two of the ladies of the station are really very kind and good to her, and in many ways she is a great deal better off now than she will ever be again. But go she will, and so 'good-bye' to him, I fear, as to so many others similarly treated by their thoughtless wives in the past."

Burns and Brown settled down to a more steady go at their smoke than they had been allowing themselves during their unusually rather long talk, when the telephone rang.

"Yes, who is there, please ?" asked the Doctor. "All right ; I will come at once."

"'Boy,' panggil syce pakei lekas." (Boy, tell the coachman to get the carriage ready at once).

"Good night, Burns, you will hear to-morrow whether it is a boy or a girl. Mrs. Butterworth, honest woman, she at least does not shirk her duty at home ; but makes a home of the right sort for husband and his bairns. Her contributions to the State in the shape of healthy children should have the recognition of all rightly-constituted citizens."

And Dr. James Brown went out into the dark, uninviting night on his errand of mercy.

XXI.

THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE!

The Righteous Judge !

THE "Tuan Hakim"—he was a beauty without paint—the spring of justice undefiled—a very Solomon in strict impartiality !

Born in Dunia, in one of the most evil smelling parts of that land of cesspools, where the heaviest rains could not wash their filthiness into the sea, he was the son of one of the local grandees, a direct descendant of one of the most daring of the pirate crew, who did such signal service for the stockaded stronghold on Bukit

As a privileged person, his name was enrolled on the register of the vernacular school, where the opening minds of young Malays were trained, and they were taught how to read the Koran, without understanding it. Here they also got a smattering of their own meagre history, such as the "Hikayat Abdullah" furnished ; besides, they acquired the art of reading

“pantums,” which form quite a special feature in their literature, in which are recounted the most absurd prodigies, and the commonest trivialities of every-day life.

He could handle the “stylus,” or Malay pen, with some dexterity, and with his really neat handwriting impressed the vulgar herd with the notion that he was a paragon of learning.

Inchi Benar bin Patut then graduated into the small English school, where he did six months with the language which so mastered the great Napoleon. Benar did not make much of it for his short term at Skola, nor during a similar period at Apa Suka. Here “influence” got him into the envious position of office-boy in the great legal firm so long established in that centre.

In all his after life-time, he was never forgetful to let his clients, and his victims, know that he had been in the firm of Messrs. Douthwaite and Dunse. He did not condescend to particulars, so it was not known in Dunia that he never rose higher than office-boy, or messenger. He did not actually, after the first few weeks, sweep the stairs and wash the floors—that his “brothers,” the “Tambies,” did.

He was a handy youngster, and learned not a little in hearing the clients, who nearly all spoke Malay, state their cases. And by being called to fetch and carry the books needed by the different gentlemen in the office, and hearing them, though he looked the very picture of unconscious blessed innocence, he came to gather quite stores of erudition, and his quick

wits made suggestions for his own coming triumphs in the days which were yet to dawn.

Benar was ambitious, and, when he could get no higher rise in his "gaji," he one day was missing as he sent word to attend the funeral of his "orang toah" (who had conveniently died again), so this gave him the excuse for disappearing. Douthwaite and Dunse did not consider his lack of service would seriously cripple the working of the firm's business, so did not take proceedings against him for leaving them without giving the customary notice as required by Statute XXX, Section 21, of—the exact title I fail at the moment to recall.

He began at Dunia by declaring to all and sundry that already in Apa Suka he had gained the reputation of being a great "criminal lawyer," and had acted as counsel in several sensational cases, in which he had so ably defended the accused that there was nothing for the judge and jury to do but to give an acquittal. As, however, he knew that the ways of his native place were quieter and much less exciting, as a rule, than that great centre of population from which he had come to benefit them, and incidentally himself, he was prepared to see to cases of all sorts which might require his services, and he would always be conveniently found at his office, in his house, close by the courts of justice, every day for business, save "Hari Jemahat," when, of course (pious soul), he would be at the mosque, and on holidays, which were as frequent as when he did not wish to see any one,

as was the case of every one of the officials the Padre ever had to do with in that model state—such was the Kingdom of Dunia!

For an extra consideration to collect evidence (suggestive word!) and work up cases he would travel, at the expense of his clients, anywhere where they made it worth his while to go. Wherever he went, he did not let his shadow grow less behind him. He dressed in the best clothes the principal "godowns" in Apa Suka could supply. His credit seemed good somehow with people who really did not know him at all, and small marvel that they had to wait long for a settlement of the monthly accounts they systematically sent him, and at last sued him for with scant success in the palmy days of yore, before the hand of the "orang puteh" was felt. But that is now ancient history.

Benar did well for himself while he was a "lawyer," so that, when a vacancy occurred on the bench of magistrates, he was nominated by his friends, who expected a quid pro quo in due time, to the post to which he was duly appointed in the rapid course of events of that favoured land—death, promotions, dismissals, with one or two committals and imprisonments of these "high officials," who were now bent on making as much as possible of the remaining opportunities before the White Man took them more firmly under hand, as there was great need that he should and shoulder another burden in that miserable land.

The son of Patut found himself installed in

the highly lucrative, honourable and responsible position of chief magistrate, the " Tuan Hakim " of Dunia.

It were a task to trace and recover the annals of his doings; but some things, many indeed they were, which were as open as the day, so patently unjust, that they could not be hidden away.

The Padre heard many a strange tale, but always conquered his curiosity and stayed away from the courts, or would have witnessed numerous scenes to amuse as well as anger him. But whether he would or not, he could not but hear what was going on day by day. He, like his colleagues in China, refused to take up " cases " for the Chinese, as the Roman Catholics did, much to the disadvantage of the Church of Christ, though it brought them adherents, and increased their influence of a kind, the character of which was not the best for them or their people. But it is impossible not to realize the strong temptation to men of feeling, with a sense of justice stirring in them, not trying to do something in the face of so much that is so clearly wrong, and altogether out of joint, and must be until another spirit and better methods, the direct result of Christianity, take possession of China and Malaya.

The Padre, in explanation of his own position and action in the matter, was summed up by him in saying that Christianity taught men principles to guide them in all the affairs of life, and these should be left to work themselves

out without the help of priest or parson. He would be no party to prostituting the Chinese Church into a social club, or "kong-si," as a sectional, factional, institution.

Once or twice he did enter his protest, but would have done the same had the parties not belonged to his episcopal oversight. Just as readily, indeed, did he act to protect a 'ricksha puller whom he would see beaten on the streets by some Eurasian or Malay who would not pay his fare.

One of the many ways the unjust judge had of adding to his ill-gotten gains was the common practice, which Benar was by no means the originator of, for from time immemorial such had been the custom, of having those who had business with the police and magistrates' courts to give almost daily attendance, and to hang about for hours, on postponed cases. These "bichara" events were made an intolerable burden, so that both sides of the contending parties should be compelled to engage pettifogging "lawyers," à la Benar, as "counsel," who gave the judges part of their gains; it was freely spoken about of the shameless manner in which the so-called "Tuan Hakims" received bribes from both sides, unless they found one side could pay much better than the other; the highest bidder would at last get a settlement for a money consideration.

This was the rule in Malaya, as it is in China to-day, and was universal in India, until the gracious, open fair-dealing as between man and

man came with the rule of white man, whose laws are not only based on the eternal justice and mercy of the Almighty Himself, but are operative in the tone and temper of the administration, as a whole, in spite of now and then a man denying the Source from Whom all has come. It has not been in vain that the conscience of past generations has been enlightened by the entrance of the light of distinctly Christian teaching.

It seems incredible that for years it was true that men and women too could be hurried off to prison, without any trial, and kept there for months, and even years, without any enquiry, within a few miles of the "orang puteh" and Apa Suka.

Let those who will fling stones at the British Empire; it is far and away the best, purest, and noblest, as well as the strongest, upon which the sun has ever shone. Surely all lovers of Humanity should be thankful, and wish it better "luck" than ever in the past, in spite of not a little still in the way of shortcomings, out of which it is quite possible she shall yet, with the blessing of God, shake herself free.

XXII.

A DISAPPOINTED WIFE.

A Disappointed Wife.

———— ———'s mother died when she was born and her father's sister, a widow, who had lost her only child, mothered her and her father's other little ones. ——— was a model father, as he had been a devoted husband. He did not marry again till twenty years afterwards, when his family were all grown and scattered, and ——— just married and had sailed with her husband for Apa Suka.

Mrs. ———, her aunt, had been a most excellent "mother" to them all, though she was always "Auntie," from first to last to every one of them. The boys always sang her praises, and the girls gave her their affectionate esteem, and really felt, what young people do not always feel, sincere gratitude, and sometimes expressed it, and in their letters showed it.

Going from such an atmosphere of mutual love and sunshine, ——— ———'s life ought to

have been singularly happy and bright for herself and others. But it was not so.

Her husband, ——— ———, was a handsome man, with a distinguished manner, and he had quite a social success, owing to his versatile accomplishments. He was, moreover, a prosperous merchant in one of the oldest established and most enterprising firms in Malaya.

Their house and its appointments, her lady friends and social circle, her carriage and pair of beautiful fine horses, and a liberal allowance of funds to her monthly credit at the bank from her husband's income, besides a good settlement, which her father insisted upon ——— making on his marriage, to most people would seem to put ——— ——— in a very desirable position with every prospect of ample provision for her lifetime.

But a woman's life is more than mere material things can satisfy, though far from being indifferent to such things.

——— ——— had won her for himself, but he did not keep her. He was a man who was not satisfied with his wife alone, and his sensual nature asserted itself, as he continued to minister to it, and for long his wife knew not why he showed himself disagreeable to her. ——— wondered if she had been really so lacking in wifely duty as to give him cause to treat her as he was doing.

In company, appearances were kept up, and they were still frequently seen together, though

he visited his club and made engagements more and more apart from any consultation with his wife. She, in her turn, would go her own way, occasionally calling on, or driving out with a lady friend, but very often by herself eating out her heart with grief and disappointment. She was not of a disposition to quarrel readily, and bore mostly in silence the now studied neglect of her husband, whom she still longed to love and tried, in spite of all, to honour, and did her best to obey. She had not yet found out what he really was—absolutely unworthy of her. Yet in all such cases some narrow-minded clerics would refuse to grant relief!

If it had been a case of mere incompatibility of temperament, and of mutual disappointment through misunderstanding one another, such wounds could have been healed, as they daily are healed between men and women everywhere, and have been since time began. Re-adjustments there must be and will be in normally constituted marriages, but —————'s nature was essentially selfish and coarse, and he had never sought to curb his animal passions, but, covertly, before marriage and afterwards, sought to seek his gratification among women who were willing to minister to his lusts.

It seems incredible that he should have chosen as his wife one so utterly different to himself as ————— was. But, perhaps, he, like others, had fully resolved to turn over a new leaf and meant to be faithful to her.

Habits, once formed, however, and such habits

are not to be broken off so easily as such strong men, even as he was, in ability and will-power, vainly imagined, and sometimes, until they had tried, seem so confident can be done.

He had for years passed muster as a "man of the world," but one whom nobody had suspected of indulging in secret vices, but now it was apparent that he was neglecting his wife. The young fellows about town saw it, and said so, for they saw him gadding about with the "tinggil-tanggil" lot, who performed nightly, after ten o'clock, at a low house of entertainment, which they pleased to call a "hotel," but at which there never were any permanent boarders.

The young fellows were all in sympathy with _____, and would have liked, as they freely said, to have "kicked" him for treating such a nice wife as she undoubtedly was in such a shameful way.

News of an unsavoury character, sooner or later, leaks out, and in this case some items reached the ears of _____, who thought of what relief she could get out of this most detestable alliance at any cost. Surely her husband treated her cruelly enough, and he was notoriously and habitually living with other women, but to get relief she would require to go to England. No Divorce Court existed in Apa Suka under the "Christian" Government, in those days of which I write.

Recent legislation has given an ordinance whereby relief can be granted locally without the difficult and expensive procedure of former years.

——— argued the matter in her own mind. She consulted nobody, and finally came to the conclusion that to get evidence with which to go to London and “prove” cruelty, in the technical sense judges seem to require to have established, apart altogether from the proved infidelity of the husband, would be difficult, if not impossible. So she cast about as to how she could escape from the man she had now learned to loathe and to hate with an amount of intensity which surprised her, and made her feel that she must be a wicked woman.

She saw no way but to leave him, and go home to her father; but he was married again, and the dear, good, motherly auntie was dead. ——— could not bring herself to obtrude on her father's new wife, or to go to either her brothers or sisters in their recently established homes with her great and unending sorrows. So she did all she saw her way to do—she waited and wondered what would happen to her. At times, she did not really care what did happen. Things were so black in her loveless life, she often longed to die and be done with the whole long catalogue of wrongs, which had been done to her, so far as she could see without any cause or provocation on her part.

Among the young men who felt sorry for her, and did and said kind things, without giving her a too keen sense of their sincere and kindly interest in her and her hard lot, was ———
———, who was the next in the partnership in her husband's firm. He had often dined, and

still dined with them, on the now rare occasions she could bring herself to entertain ; but passing notables, and friends of the firm passing on to China, or going to India and Europe, had to have some attention shown to them. — usually formed one of these parties. He knew full well the sad state of affairs in the house of the ———s, and had a very poor opinion of his chief in consequence.

Mrs. ——— could not but notice his sympathy and unfailing kind attention to her, and he did not refrain from saying, as he got opportunity, how much he would like to do if he could make her life what it should be to her.

“That,” she told him, “neither you nor any other man can now ever do, since he whom I trusted with my all has made a ruin of my dearest hopes. Only death—his or mine—can end the miserable business.”

—— was more and more infatuated with the desire to possess her for himself, and urged her to run off with him.

“For your sake, my dear ——, I will give up everything and face and fight the world for you in a new land.” He pleaded hard with her, and promised to work himself to death rather than not establish her in complete comfort, if she would but link her life with his.

They kept their secret regard for one another very well, for few guessed what was going on in their hearts and lives for the next few weeks. But they met, time and again, and she felt she must trust him, since he was so willing to fore-

go all his prospects for her. But, for his sake, true woman-like, she fought very hard against the rising tide of feeling she feared would carry her away against her better judgment, and at last she yielded to his entreaties, and promised she would sail with him on a given date by the steamer he named.

The Padre saw them out, as he thought, having a canter across country on their spirited horses on the morning that they sailed for South America. They had gone afterwards to a house near the seaside, and had changed into ordinary clothing. They left their horses tied in a stable near by, and made their way to the wharf. Here the luggage, such as they had decided to take, was lying ready for them. The ship had sailed before _____ had got down to the godown for the day, and nobody told him, even when the news was known, what had happened. They let him find out for himself, and he got precious little sympathy from anybody. He felt so miserably small that he never wished to hear anything about his wife, or where she was, or what she was doing.

* * * * *

Years afterwards the Padre heard from an old lady friend, who knew the whole story, that she had died in sadly reduced circumstances. His efforts had not been a success, and he sank out of all ken.

END.

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