CHAPTER II

IF the English were surprised at the cession of Bombay the Portuguese colonists were appalled; and it is amusing to find the Viceroy of Goa employing the arguments of retentive imperialism to which recent debates on colonies have accustomed us. It was not because of Portuguese material interests that he opposed the cession; it was because "I see in the island of Bombay so many Christian souls which some day will be forced to change their religion by the English." [1] The natives, however, with that common but irritating blindness of conquered races to the superior qualities of their present masters, welcomed the change. They sent a deputation to the English, advocating an early occupation and criticising the theocratic centralisation of Portuguese rule, under which "none could with liberty exercise their Religion but the Roman Catholique, which is wonderful confining with rigorous precepts".

After prolonged debate, the new possession was formally handed over by the Portuguese to Mr. Humphrey Cooke, "whom", as the Viceroy remarked indignantly, "I know in Lisbon as a grocer." [2] This would not seem so serious a charge in English eyes, but for the fact that he appears to have been a very bad grocer; and Oxinden dismissed this episode in the new Governor's life with the scornful comment "he was a pretender to be a merchant". Worse than these antecedents, however, were his manners. The Portuguese found his attitude, during the difficult period of exchange of administrations, more than tiresome; he was "full of

[1] Danver's *Report*. [2] Danver.

boasting and bravado ". Worse still, his secretary was " an Awful Heretic " against whom the Portuguese had a special grievance, for he was really a Greek who had been a Catholic, served under the Portuguese Government, written a treatise in Arabic which he dedicated to the Viceroy of Goa, and now he turned up in Bombay pretending to be an Anglican and bearing the English name of Gary. It was unfortunate that when Gary (after Cooke had been ignominiously arrested for debt, escaped from jail and fled to the hospitality of the Jesuits in Goa) became Governor of Bombay he showed his zeal for his new religion by forbidding ministers of the Inquisition to make arrests in Bombay. " This is most insolent ", complained the Viceroy, " and as those who go there are those with open consciences our places and towns are being deserted "—a revealing commentary on the sincerity of the spectacular mass-conversions in Portuguese territory. But Gary's devotion to liberty did not extend beyond hampering the activity of the Inquisition, and in the exercise of his judicial functions he showed himself, as Dr. Fryer said, " a Person of Mercuriall Brain ". Being generally drunk his decisions were often odd ; one Tuesday he condemned a man to be hanged, the sentence being instantly carried out, and on the following Friday he called out the same man's name in court and finding no response, fell into a rage and directed the man's arrest for contempt. He quarrelled with the Home authorities who complained of his " Vaine glorious Boastings, seeking to magnify himself by debasing us (soe much as in him lay) " [1] and finally appointed another in his place. He settled down as a planter on the island.

None of the royal governors was very successful and the King was glad to hand Bombay over to the Company in

[1] Forest, *Home Series*, 1, 222.

1668, the governors thereafter being appointed by the Company.

The first of these governors was Goodyer, a modest man who had not looked for so high an office; as his friends remarked, "the unexpected charge much troubled him". He took up his residence in the old palace of the Portuguese governors which was

> a pretty well Seated but ill Fortified House, 4 Brass Guns being the whole Defence of the Island. About the House was a delicate Garden, voiced to be the pleasantest in *India*, intended rather for wanton Dalliance, Love's Artillery, than to make resistance against an invading Foe, for the Portugals generally forgetting their pristine vertue, Lust, Riot and Rapine are the only remarkable Reliques of their Ancient Worth.[1]

As if to avoid similar censure the English began, with a great display of vigour, introducing conscription among the startled natives, and forming them into train bands under English officers. They had to march to the beat of drums and learn musketry drill. To most Indians of the merchant class these manœuvres, modelled on the training of the regiments of London apprentices, were quite inexplicable. But Indians have always regarded the actions of their rulers as mysterious and for some time they seemed not to have realised that these parade-ground evolutions had any relation to war, for we find the Company repeatedly insisting, "They must be made used to firing lest in Time of Action they should start at the Noise or at the recoil of their armes." When the stricter Brahmins and banias found out the purpose of these wearisome exercises there was a great outcry and finally they were allowed to contribute money instead of serving. With their money the Company hired a regiment of obedient Germans. For the Governor's bodyguard were

[1] Fryer.

recruited 300 Bhandaris, or fishermen, armed with clubs. They were the only fairly stable military forces in Bombay, for though English soldiers were being constantly sent out as reinforcements they either died of scurvy on the voyage or of drink soon after arrival. But there always seemed to be just enough Englishmen to provide the sentries outside the Governor's residence. Their hours of duty were regulated by sand-filled hour-glasses and each time the hour-glasses ran out gongs were tolled. Probably the regularity of their duties kept them fitter than most of the English soldiers, for whom the hours of parade were very variable and for whom, outside their barracks, there was no possible amusement within their means except drinking. When drunk they often engaged in a little amateur highway robbery; which was at least less dangerous to the public than the sudden desire of a corporal to tie a "fired bandoleer" to a dog's tail—but in the struggle the bandoleer was thrown into the air and came down among a pile of thirty-five barrels of gunpowder, resulting in a heavy loss of life. Even if the soldiers left the punch-shops with the most innocent intentions there was no knowing when they might not stumble into trouble. On an April evening, for instance, a young trooper cantering light-heartedly down the road nearly rode over a Mr. Braddyll, who told the fellow to be more careful. The trooper replied, "God damn you. If I had a pistol I would shoot you through the head for a farthing." Mr. Braddyll's rejoinder "Would you so?" was not very spirited and the trooper naturally replied "Yes I would." Alas, Mr. Braddyll was a member of the tribunal before whom the trooper was arraigned for his insolence and it must have been with sober satisfaction that Mr. Braddyll signed the order directing that the trooper should receive thirty-nine lashes. Nor were the officers much of

an example to the men in the matter of sobriety, though of course their peccadilloes were viewed more indulgently. It was no doubt regrettable that Captain Wyatt, returning to barracks at dawn, should have, in a sudden access of drunken rage, thrashed a soldier for no imaginable offence, and then drawing his sword run him through the body and finally, when he was dead, trampled on his face ; but the Company felt that loss of his commission was perhaps sufficient punishment, for a gentleman would naturally feel this disgrace keenly.

It is probable that many of the deaths which pious travellers ascribed with gloomy relish to " that accursed Bombay punch ", were really due to the ordinary diseases of the East aided by the antics of contemporary surgeons. The favourite method of treating cholera was to apply a hot iron to the ball of the patient's foot ; if he winced that was a proof he would recover, if he gave no sign of pain then all hope should be abandoned ; and the doctor, having delivered this diagnosis, pocketed his fee and drove round to the next patient's house. With the advance of science new methods came into favour and for a time the following treatment was recommended by the medical profession as invaluable in all fevers.

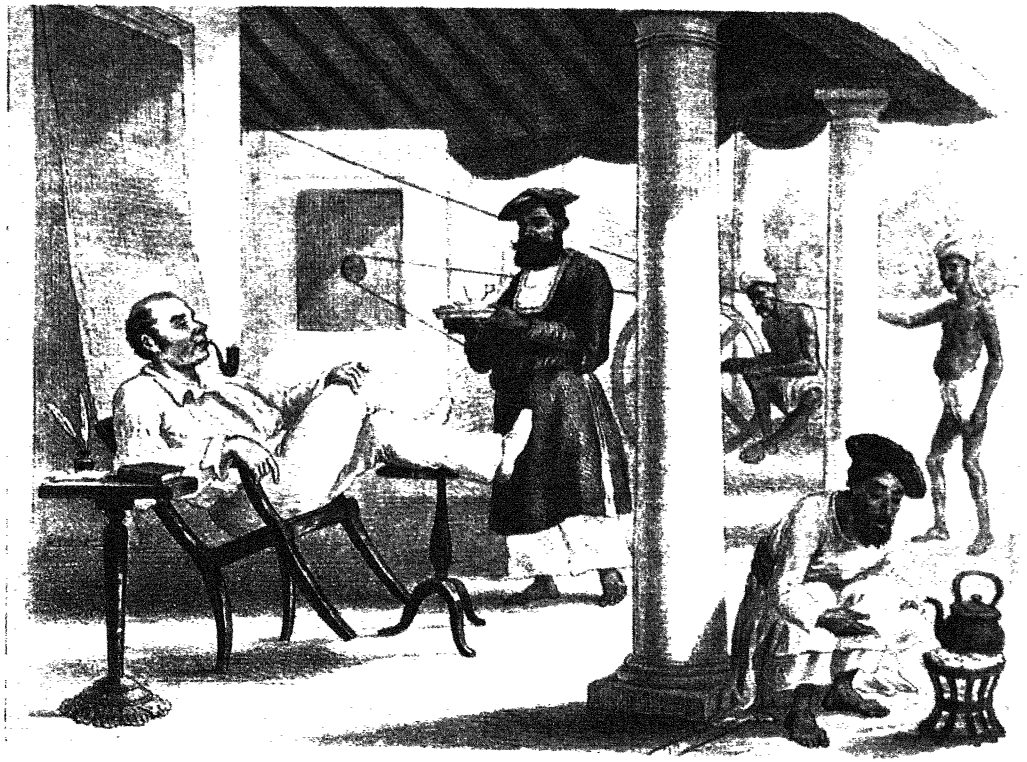
> Take an iron ring about an inch and a half in diameter and thick in proportion. Then heating it red hot in the fire, extend the patient on his back, and apply the ring to his navel, in such a manner that the navel may be as a centre to the ring. As soon as the patient feels the heat take away the ring as quick as possible when a sudden revolution will be wrought in his intestines.

Cholera was considered to be due to eating fish and meat together and its treatment consisted in applying a red-hot iron to the heel " so close that it touches the quick ". How many cures resulted from these methods of treatment are not recorded ; and the Company was, as always, less interested

in the physical, than in the spiritual, health of their employees. It was a pity that there remained in the island as evidence of Portuguese occupation, so many Catholic churches " thwack'd full of young blacks singing vespers ", and it was decided to build a Protestant church of " form proportionable to the small churches in England " so that the heathen should " observe the purity and gravity of our doctrines ". Five thousand pounds were collected for this purpose, mostly from the Company's servants " freely and conscientiously ", and it was disappointing that the whole amount should have been embezzled by the Governor, Child.[1]

But, even though no Protestant church was built for some decades, houses were being constructed all over Bombay. The Portuguese colonists who had remained in the island however much they might rail at the heretic administration, profited by the new comparative security from pirate raids to build palaces and " banqueting houses " and in the comments of English officials a certain jealousy of these " rich Dons " is discernible. Parsis were building country-houses on Malabar Hill and there was already a zoo " to keep the Company's antelopes and other beasts of delight ". The English were proud of their houses which so exactly resembled gentlemen's residences in London. Life was easy, for if the pay of Company's servants was comparatively small all lived beyond their means, depending on supplies from local money-lenders. Indeed while each ship from Europe was surrounded as soon as it entered the harbour by a small fleet of rowing-boats piled high with fresh fruit and vegetables, curios and silks, the first people to climb on board and welcome the new-comer to India were the money-lenders ; and though the lordly young European, pleasantly

[1] Hamilton.



THE COLONEL

self-conscious of his new breeches and well-fitting coat, might affect to despise as effeminate the rustling muslins and gold ear-rings of the banias he was glad enough to accept the offer of an immediate loan and to scribble his signature at the bottom of a document which the money-lenders with many compliments, salaams, and deep bows laid before him.[1] With almost limitless credit life was easy even for the most junior clerk. No work was done after one o'clock [2] when everyone went home for dinner which was eaten in wigs and flowered coats, to the accompaniment of violins and the gentlemen toasted each other with Madeira or Shiraz wine, served in cups of rhinoceros horn which was an antidote against poison. After dinner there was a long siesta and in the evening the hairdressers came to attend to gentlemen's wigs before they left their rooms for an evening ride or formal visit. Servants were mostly (except the butlers who were Parsis) slaves from Malabar. These were so cheap that they were presently exported in great numbers, though never with the reckless indifference to morality that characterised some other slave-dealing companies ; the directions being always careful to insist that " you should send near as many female slaves as male, because the male will not live so contented, except they have wives ". And sometimes orders for especial slaves were received from highly placed persons in England —once even from King Charles himself who

> desired to send to India to provide for him there one male and two female blacks, but they must be dwarfs of the least size that you can procure, the males to be seventeen years of age and the females fourteen, giving the commander great charge to take all care of their accomodation and in particular of the females, that they be in no way abused in the voyage by the seamen.[3]

[1] Hodge's *Travels*. [2] Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs*.
[3] Letter to Surat, quoted in Anderson's *English in Western India*.

As in Surat, the younger merchants paid great attention to their clothes and often astonished newcomers, who had provided themselves with serviceable suits of "hodden gray" appropriate for distant travel, with the elegance of their bottle-green coats, black velvet taffetas with gold embroidery, buff waistcoats and breeches and at their throats necklaces of amulets to guard against the many ills of the East, especially the stones they called "snake-stones" which were held to be an infallible protection against the cobra. Their talk was generally of dogs—bulldogs, "sleuth hounds and gray dogs". They held coursing matches on Malabar Hill and Dr. Hove had the satisfaction at one of these matches of starting a hare "as large as an European one". But sometimes in their excitement they stayed out all day in the heat and, their hats in spite of feathers and lace affording little protection against the tropic sun, developed heat-stroke or, as Ovington more elaborately expressed it, "the ambient air mixing with the natural, when it is fermented and charged, commonly proved too much for their constitutions". The richer or senior factors went farther afield for their sport; and for their amusement, the Company in 1692 started a pack of twenty hounds at Karwar, each hound to receive two pounds of rice a day (but no meat apparently), and the factors who visited Karwar were agreeably surprised at the hospitable manners of the local natives who welcomed them "with pretty black female dancers, who are very active in their dancing and free in their conversation". If one could not afford visits to Karwar or coursing-matches on Malabar Hill there were always the public whippings, floggings, brandings and bastinadoes which the new English courts awarded so plentifully and which provided a free entertainment for the idle. It was especially interesting when the victims were women,

for the judges of those days suffered no pangs of sentimentality or chivalry. A Hindu woman found guilty of theft was ordered thirty-nine lashes to start off with, to be followed by further instalments of thirty-nine lashes every day thereafter until she revealed where she had hidden the stolen property. In the middle of the eighteenth century a woman who abetted her lover in the murder of her husband was sentenced to be burnt alive. There was on occasion no prejudice against the use of torture if a conviction was required and the requisite evidence deficient. In 1720 the most respected Hindu in Bombay, Rama Kamati, was arrested on a charge of corresponding with Angria, the pirate chief. There was no evidence against him except a roundabout story by one witness who said he had been told by a dancing-girl he visited that Angria himself had told her that Rama had written to him. This fantastic piece of hearsay evidence was not enough for the court to convict on, so by order of the Governor himself, Rama's servant was put to the torture. After his thumbs had been wrenched off "the smart thereof" caused him to make a statement implicating his master. Rama was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment and all his property was confiscated.[1] At the time this case was the talk of Bombay, and as with most Frenchmen at the time of the Dreyfus trial, the general feeling among the English was that there could not be so much smoke without a fire and that there must be something in that story of the man who knew the dancing-girl who knew Angria. But when Rama died in prison eight years later he was forgotten, and though it was sub-

[1] For a full account of the trial see Malabari, *Bombay in the Making*. Though torture was not again resorted to to procure evidence, death by torture remained common all this century. In Calcutta in 1789 some robbers were tied down, their right hand and left foot hacked off, the stumps dipped in hot butter and the men left to die.

sequently discovered that the case against him was entirely false, having been got up by his enemies, that was little consolation to his impoverished family who never received any restitution.

The pirate Angria was a bugbear to the English in the early eighteenth century and even Europeans were on occasion accused of sympathy with him in the same way that accusations of Bolshevism were bandied about in post-war England. A seaman called John Stanmore had been attacked by his captain with a cane and had muttered that "it was a little way to Angria", which exclamation was held to amount to high treason. Poor Stanmore threw himself on the mercy of the court, pleading that he had had nothing to eat or drink all day and had been kept long hours at work; but the court with exclamations of horror at the "vile and dangerous principles" which must have prompted any cordial reference to Angria, sentenced Stanmore to receive, for three days in succession, thirty-nine lashes at each of the gates of the city in turn.

Stanmore's punishment would have been heavier had his pleading not suited so exactly the humour of the court. Indians often pushed the court to real severity by their, to English eyes, frivolous pleadings. A man charged with "knocking down a woman and taking from her ear a gold joy" was so rash or ignorant of English morality as to try and justify his assault on the ground "that his designe was only to lye with her". The court, deeply shocked at such a defence, which they dismissed as "Impudence", to show their disapproval of such pleadings condemned the man to three days' steady flogging, to branding with hot irons on the face and to perpetual imprisonment.

The trials that caused most public excitement were those for sorcery. The laws against magic were ferocious and

since most Indian (but not English) physicians were classed as sorcerers and large rewards were offered to informers, there was a constant stream of charges and counter-charges. Even an old Hindu woman who had admittedly cured a number of children with her herbal remedies was given eleven lashes to discourage her traffic with Satan. Trials for sorcery continued till the seventeen-seventies when they suddenly declined, possibly because the then Governor, Thomas Hodges, was himself interested, so rumour ran, in black arts and kept a private wizard whom he consulted several times a day.

After watching a buxom woman stripped and flogged for exchanging bets on the result of a case in the corridors of the law courts, it was pleasant to resort to one of the punch-houses which were springing up all over the city. One would be careful to examine the bowl in which the punch was brought, for, by a new Government decree, "if the Clerk of the Market's seal is not on any Bowle, it may be broken and payment of the punch lawfully refused", which was comforting to apply when one had drunk the punch. And after several bowls of punch the talk would perhaps turn on the charms of the last shipload of women from England—for the Company had now copied the Portuguese custom of drafting out a supply of women to their possessions in the East. They were classed as "gentlewomen" and "other women". They were not given dowries but were guaranteed their "diet" during a year in India. Trouble arose if they were still at the end of the year without husbands or sufficient money to pay their fare home. It was obviously impossible to leave them to starve, but the reluctance shown by the Company to provide them with a proper allowance and the continual haggling and bargaining had its inevitable result in a rapid deterioration of the

visitors' morals. Then, with what magniloquence the President and Council dealt with the situation! "Whereas some of these women are grown scandalous to our nation, religion and Government interest, we require you to give them faire warning that they do apply themselves to a more sober and Christian conversation." And when even these Olympian thunders were ignored, "the sentence is that they shall be confined totally of their liberty to go abroad and fed with bread and water."[1] In an age without shorthand the length and circumlocutions of letters exchanged between Bombay, Surat and London argue a pleasantly aristocratic leisureliness (even when real anger breaks through the suave periods as when attention turns to Mr. Watson, "that scandalous Chaplain—let him have no solace from us, he is no more our servant, banish him the Island . . .")

Of course if women arrived in the marriage-market with dowries of their own, there was no longer any question of prevailing on the Government to support them if they failed to find husbands; the difficulty was to prevent senior Government servants interesting themselves in the dowries. A Miss Ward had actually £3,000 of her own and the Governor, Sir John Gayer, decided that a lady with that capital was just the wife for his son. Unfortunately before he made known this decision she had fallen in love with, and married, a junior clerk. The Governor declared this marriage void and succeeded in marrying her to his son. But presently she had an affair with a schoolmaster "who", in Mr. Hamilton's words, "was ordered to teach her to write good *English*, but, neglecting those Orders, he taught her something else, and was discovered Practising, by a

[1] Letters from President and Council to Deputy Governor December 18, 1675, and January 17, 1676.

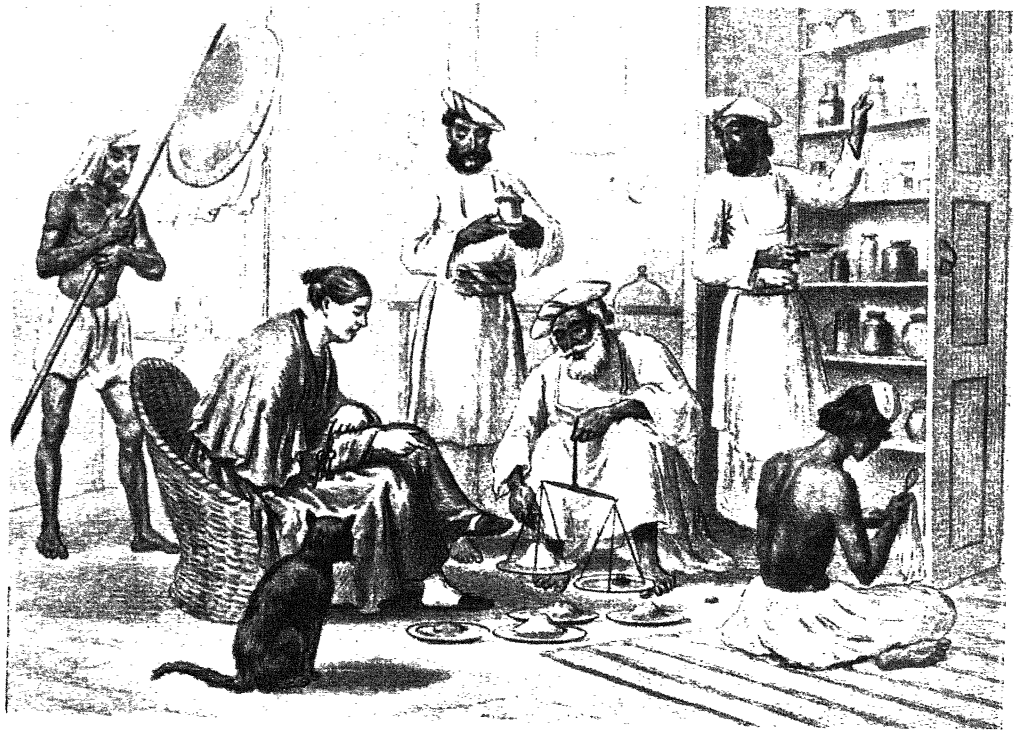
watchful Mother-in-law ; and the poor Husband's Head aked as long as he lived ", in spite of his father's causing the schoolmaster to be arrested and sent home in chains.

Occasionally all Bombay was fluttered by some exotic romance. In 1685 a Company's servant, " a young beautiful English gentleman ", while on a commercial mission, attracted the fancy of the Queen of Attinga, a very wealthy ruler, who offered to seat him on her throne. " But he modestly refused so great an honour. However, to please Her Majesty he treated her with the same Civility as *Solomon* did the Queen of Ethiopia or Alexander the Great did the Amazonian Queen, and satisfied her so well that she made him some presents." [1] She lived in the pepper country of the southern coast ; and her territories were already becoming famous for the big-game shooting that visitors from England found there. Two young noblemen intending a short visit stayed there three years, delighting in the variety of game, in the mystery and beauty of the great forests and in the simple hospitality of the jungle folk. But generally as the eighteenth century progressed it was the English settlements on the east coast that attracted travellers. Surat declined rapidly with the collapse of the Mogul empire, and cultured English visitors inevitably reflected on the fate of Tyre when they rode through the almost deserted bazaars. Bombay itself was continually menaced by Maratha power and by Malabar pirates. They were " scrambling and unquiet times " and the senior officers were seldom men of ability or, if the number of alleged embezzlements are any guide, of ordinary honesty. The Members of Council continued to dine in great state but they could no longer afford to offer the hospitality of the Company to junior employees, who now had to seek

[1] Hamilton's *New Account.*

refuge in taverns and punch-houses. So weak were the armed forces that an envoy from the King of Persia had to be sent away without setting foot on the island lest he should relate to his master the nakedness of the land. In May 1707 there were only six servants of the Company in Bombay, and of those Henry Coster was " wholly disabled by his unaccountable sottishness to hold a pen ". And the main occupation of the English merchants seems for the next few decades to have been the prosecution of various internecine feuds. The appropriate note was struck by Gayer when in 1703 he described Sir Nicholas Waite of Surat as " That Grand Apostate of the infernal regions " whose only concern was " to cut our throats at one stroke to promote his unbounded Luciferian ambition. Had we not assurance ", he added a little unconvincingly, " of the hellish contrivances of the forenamed Monster we should not write in such a Stile." Quarrels arose quite unexpectedly and over the most trivial matters. When a Muhammadan prince asked for the loan of an English doctor the Governor, Sir John Gayer, concluding that the native assistant surgeon of the Government Hospital could be spared, directed that " that black fellow " should be sent to the prince. This decision was arrived at without consulting the head of the hospital, Dr. Skinner, who vented his rage by sending a long letter of personal abuse to the Governor. Sir John sighed and remarked, " This most scurrilous answer shows the Pride and Factiousness of that vain man." Another doctor, by name Maxwell, having been dismissed on account of his " lewd debauched life " settled down contentedly in Cochin as a receiver of stolen goods.

Quarrels raged in the Council chamber. Mr. Mewse, the Third Member of Council, who was considered " unfit for virtuous conversation ", broke another member's head



THE JUDGE'S WIFE

with a bottle of wine. The Right Honourable the President Stephen Cott went further than this; he not only broke a bottle on the head of Mr. Peachey who had accused him of laxness in Sabbath observance, but directing a shrewd kick at Mr. Peachey's person "regularly doubled him up". Taking advantage of Mr. Peachey's temporary disablement he soundly "cuffed" him, and as Mr. Peachey limped from the room he threw a slipper after him. He followed up the triumph by publicly taunting Mr. Peachey whenever he met him; he instigated one Robinson to give Mr. Peachey a beating and while this was in progress he leaned over a balcony and laughed provokingly; he pursued Mr. Peachey and gave him, as Mr. Peachey complained, "on my right side a blow which was a stoppage to my breath"; finally he had Mr. Peachey arrested and put in prison just "to plague him." It is perhaps not surprising to learn that during this period the Provost Marshall was so unfortunate as to fall into delirium and have to be confined and denied access to alcohols; while the Council sighed over "having too many such as he is in one fort" and opined that it would be "much better to be rid of such a scabby sheep".[1]

The eclipse of Bombay during the eighteenth century by the more prosperous settlements of the east coast is forcibly expressed by a minute of the Council in 1825. "For a century and a half Bombay has been of little importance to the Company. . . . A settlement on the coast of Africa could scarcely have been a subject of less consideration." But before considering those more prosperous settlements of Madras and Calcutta the story of Mrs. Draper, whose association with Sterne has made her more familiar to most English readers than all the generals and presidents who were her contemporaries in Bombay, may be briefly considered.

[1] These details from P. Anderson's *English in Western India*.

Eliza was born in 1744 at Anjengo, in Malabar, where her father was employed in the English store. A district of jungles and mudflats and endless creeks; a village of thatched cottages hidden among tall palms that hissed and swayed in the warm damp wind. There was no school here for Eliza and one can only suppose that it was from her parents that she learnt her varied accomplishments. She was ugly, and yet even as a child there is evidence of her extraordinary charm. The tree under which she used to rest after her evening stroll along the beach was known for a century as "Eliza's Tree". The Abbé Raynal who met her long afterwards in Bombay wrote ecstatically of her fascination. "Anjengo," he exclaimed, "you are nothing but you have given birth to Eliza!"[1] and the Abbé knew all the most accomplished women in Paris in that great age of conversation, wit and charm. And James Forbes, who so seldom praised without qualification, admitted with a sigh that a description of her attraction was beyond his powers. "Her refined tastes and elegant accomplishments need no encomium from my pen." But in Anjengo there were few to admire her and she must have been grateful to Mr. Daniel Draper who, on a visit from Bombay, proposed to her. Gloomy, pompous and twenty years older than Eliza, he must nevertheless have seemed a most desirable husband both to Eliza and her parents, for he was a great man in Bombay, Secretary to Government and already spoken of as destined to the highest posts. She was happy with him at first and when, some years later, he suggested a visit to England she was enraptured. On the ship were two Bombay friends, Commodore and Mrs. James. The Commodore was something of a hero, for he had attacked and broken the power of Angria; while his

[1] *Histoire Philosophique des-Deux Indes.*

wife was a woman of culture with many friends in literary London. Among them was Lawrence Sterne, and she enjoyed " the almost unique distinction of being the only woman outside his own family circle whom Sterne never approached in the language of artificial gallantry, but always in that of simple friendship and respect ". Soon after they arrived in London, Mrs. James gave a dinner-party and among the guests were the Drapers and Sterne. Sterne fell instantly and desperately in love with the ugly but fascinating girl from India, and she was swept off her feet by his tempestuous and tragic style of wooing (so different from Daniel's formal expressions of affection). He affected to believe her still unmarried and would write—

> Pray, Eliza, do not think of giving yourself to some wealthy nabob, because I design to marry you myself. My wife cannot live long—she has sold all the provinces of France already. And I know not the woman I should like so well for her substitute as yourself. Tis true I am ninety-five in constitution and you but twenty-five—rather too great a disparity this ?—but what I want in youth I will make up in wit and good humour. Not Swift so loved his Stella, Scarron his Maintenon, or Waller his Sacharina as I will love thee and sing thee, my wife elect."

Eliza who knew nothing of Sterne's life believed all this rigmarole. " I believed Sterne," she cried, " implicitly I believed him ; I had no motive to do otherwise than believe him just, generous and unhappy." In the letters they exchanged she called him " mild, generous and good youth " and he called her his " Bramine ". But when Mr. Draper's leave came to an end Eliza had to follow her husband back to Bombay. Sterne's letters became increasingly hysterical. " Eliza, from the highest Heaven, my first and last country, receive my oath ; I swear not to write one line in which my friend may not be recognised." They were not destined

to meet again, for soon after Eliza's return Sterne "was taken ill at the silk-bag shop in Old Bond Street"; he was carried home to his lodgings and there "put up his hand as if to stop a blow and died in a minute". Mrs. Sterne and her daughter, finding some copies of Sterne's letters to Eliza, tried to blackmail her with the threat of publication. Eliza wrote in alarm from Bombay to Mrs. James. "To add to my regret for his loss, his widow has my letters in her power (I never entertained a good opinion of her) and means to subject me to disgrace and inconvenience by the publication of them." Although this threat never materialised, the rumour of Eliza's correspondence with an eminent man of letters had, as Eliza complained, "somehow become extremely public at this settlement" and in her constant alarm lest the rumour should reach Daniel's ears she must have been very grateful for his sudden transfer from Bombay to Tellichery where he had been appointed chief of the factory. She was happy in this new station and tried to forget the past. She began to interest herself in her husband's work and even worked as his amanuensis. She enjoyed her new importance as wife of the head of the factory, she was flattered by the deference of the Indian employees and merchants, and in her letters she extolled their superior culture, describing the place as the "Montpellier of India". She wrote that

> the Country is pleasant and healthy . . . our house a Magnificent one, furnished too at our Master's expense and the allowance for supporting it Creditably what you would term Genteely, tho' it does not defray the charge of our Liquors which alone amount to six hundred a year. . . . Our Society at other times is very confined as it only consists of a few Factors and two or three Families; and such we cannot expect great intercourse with, on account of the heavy rains and terrible thunder and lightening to which this coast is peculiarly subject six months in the year. 'Tis call'd that of Malabar

> . . . Mahé is not more than seven Miles Distant from us (Yet very few civilities pass between us and the Monsieurs) and Cochin (a Sweet Spot) about two Days' Sail.

Unfortunately for Eliza's virtuous resolutions Daniel received a new promotion and was recalled to Bombay and appointed Member of Council. Once more Eliza attracted admiration and when she appeared at balls at Government House in hoop and farthingale factors and cadets besieged her for dances. There was not, of course, much competition; there were only thirty-nine ladies in the station, thirty-three of them married, five widows and one "Winnifred Daires, Unmarried Woman" as she was somewhat ungallantly described on an invitation list. The Governor was then Hornby, and his interest in magic and the fact that he was "ignorant not only of the first principles of Government, but of the ordinary knowledge requisite for a gentleman" [1] did not prevent him from giving a series of successful balls at which Eliza was always the chief attraction.[2] The Drapers now lived in a house at Mazagon, called Belvidere, a long yellow building, formerly a Portuguese convent, on a mound overlooking the sea and pleasantly shaded by palms. Cadets and factors would walk along the sands in the mornings to call on the Drapers (morning calls were then fashionable), and would sit and talk in the airy drawing-room. They were probably very cheerful, for the first morning visit of almost every cadet was to some other cadet's quarters where he would be welcomed with draughts of punch and of "arrack and water, which, however cool and pleasant at the moment

[1] Donald Campbell, quoted in Douglas's *Bombay and Western India.*

[2] The Indians were interested in the powder, paint and towering headdresses of ladies bound for these balls. But the patches caused them acute anxiety, and one Indian sent a message to Mr. King expressing sympathy for his wife's black boils.

was succeeded by the most deleterious effects." [1] Then, sufficiently refreshed, they would set out on their calls, not without some jeers at the few virtuous youths " who devoted their morning hours to music, drawing, literary improvement and other rational pursuits ". Probably the visits and compliments of the young factors and cadets would have kept Eliza amused without involving her in any serious entanglement, but for the sudden interest that the severe and frigid Daniel began to take in the housekeeper, Mrs. Leeds. Eliza noticed that when he went to his bedroom for his afternoon siesta, he used to call for Mrs. Leeds to help him put on the " Conjee cap " that he wore in place of his wig when resting. It always appeared to take Mrs. Leeds a long time to help him with his cap and Eliza had to protest against " your avowed preference for Leeds to myself ", but Daniel paid no attention. It is difficult to blame Eliza for finding compensation in the ardent suit of a naval officer called Clark ; and when Daniel's middle-aged infatuation for Mrs. Leeds made life at Belvidere intolerable for Eliza, she let herself down by a rope from her bedroom window and took refuge on Clark's ship, leaving behind a pathetic note for her husband, " I go. I know not whither, but I will never be a tax on you, Draper. I am not a hardened or depraved creature. The enclosed are the only bills that I know of, except six rupees to Doojee, the shoemaker." She was received with enthusiasm in literary circles in London and now, no longer troubled by scruples over their effect on Mr. Draper, authorised the publication of Sterne's letters to her. She died in 1778 and was buried at Bristol. The epitaph on her tomb " In her Genius and Benevolence were united " is a curious contrast to that on the gravestone of Sterne, " Ah ! Molliter ossa

[1] Forbes.

quiescant." Daniel, having become President of the Bombay Council, retired in great affluence and lived very virtuously in St. James's Street where no one had heard of Mrs. Leeds.