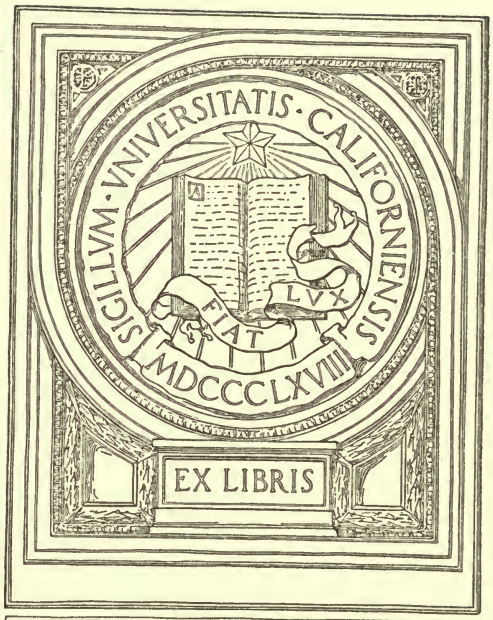
GARRISON TALES FROM TONQUIN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GARRISON TALES FROM TONQUIN

By

James O'Neill

BOSTON
COPELAND AND DAY
1895

TO SISTER FRANCES

EREWHILE MARY O'NEILL

WITH HER BROTHER'S DEAREST LOVE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY

WITH China and Japan the world has at length grown familiar; in as far as the Occident can comprehend the Orient, the daily life of the Mongolian race has been made known to us.

There are, however, some branches of this race of which little is said. Since 1884 the French have had possession of the northern province of Annam, and it is this part of the extreme Orient that the following short tales may serve to illustrate. Even in this province of Tonkin, — or Tonquin, as we write it in English, — the Annamites are divided into several distinct peoples; but how each may differ from the other would be a problem for the ethnographer. French rule was not gratefully accepted in Tonquin. These poor "savages" did not at once comprehend or appreciate the honor of being subject to France; so they made desperate efforts to resist French invasion.

France professed to have right as well as

might, and said, forsooth, that it was to free the poor Annamites from Chinese cruelty and injustice that she stepped in. The Annamites having grown used to Chinese authority, doubtless considered that the devil they knew would be better than the one they did not know, and that to exchange Chinese government for French would be to fall from the frying-pan into the fire; and accordingly they made what resistance was possible.

Those who survived the struggle accepted their new masters with the resignation of the rat that welcomed death when the trap snapped.

But not all of them: since many banded themselves together, and fled to the mountains, where they built strongholds in which defiance is still offered to French invaders. Similar "piratical" bands had always made similar resistance to Chinese rule, and until justice and equity reign in the East, or until the Annamite race dies out, piracy or brigandage will probably flourish in Tonquin.

Already France has made great changes in this country; she has spent millions of money, expecting an adequate profit, but the profit has not yet appeared; and more than once she may have repented of her generosity (!) and wished to retreat; but that such

men as Admiral Courbet, Francis Garnier, and others, should have lost their lives for naught would be too lamentable; and having involved herself so far, retreat would be too great a disaster.

By the force of her army, France maintains her hold on Tonquin.

In Parisian newspapers you may read that Tonquin is pacified, and a quibbling explanation will be made when the news arrives that such and such an officer has been killed by the "pirates." No; Tonquin is not yet pacified, and it will probably be a long time before these bands of pirates or patriots cease to exist.

The Annamite religion is Buddhism; the language is as different from Chinese as French is from Italian; it is a monosyllabic language, and in some ways very simple and easy to learn, while in others, it is exceedingly difficult. The differences between Annamite and Chinese dress, customs, arts and sciences, etc., are marked; but that the Annamites have been materially influenced by the Chinese is evident. Inferior to the Chinese they certainly are, but this is probably the result of long subjection, rather than of innate mediocrity. That the Annamite is not an abject or cowardly race is evident from the fact that resistance to in-

justice continues to be made; and that it has preserved individuality in so many instances seems proof of a certain superiority; and so it seems to me that it merits the notice of our Occidental minds.

RŒBKE

"*Ich hatt einen Kameraden.*"

ONE day I sat cleaning my rifle, — trying to clean it rather, and not succeeding at all. We had been out at target practice, and now with dry rags I was trying to remove the soot from the barrel.

From my soul I loathed the work, and my disgust must have been apparent in my face, for Rœbke came forward and took it from me.

"O, but you musn't wet the rags," I exclaimed, for I saw him dip the one on the end of the ramrod into a basin of water.

"Why not, pray?" he asked.

"Because some moisture might be left on the inside of the barrel, and that would cause rust."

"*Might* be left, yes; but I do not intend to leave any. The time you spend in trying to get the soot out in your way will not be needed in getting all the moisture out in my way."

Very dexterously he did the job, and in a little while my rifle was shining; fit to pass the inspection of a gunsmith.

"You see," he went on, "if one will be careful and exact, he may use expedients which are forbidden to others; one need not always choose the hardest method of doing a thing because it is the safest; of course a bad swimmer must walk around and cross on the bridge, but if you can swim as well as you can walk, why, you may plunge in and get across first. You may even have your clothes dry before the other fellow arrives."

Rœbke was not given to talking much, and this little spurt of philosophy surprised me. He had been at Gex for a month, but I had never noticed him particularly. He and Dare had arrived with a detachment of "*bleus*," and they had been put into our squad.

Now, Dare was a handsome, loud-spoken fellow, so all our attention was given to him; and in this way Rœbke had come among us unnoticed.

"Come on!" I said, "if water is good for rifles, then wine is good for us. Come on, I'll pay you a *quart*."

This was a weak joke; still I was surprised at the way he took it.

"O, excuse me," he said, "I did not clean your rifle in order to earn a drink."

"I did not suppose so, either," I retorted, "or I would not have let you do it. Now don't stop me from liking you. Besides, you may pay for the *quart* yourself if you are so very stiff-necked." Then he excused his speech and we went off to the canteen.

If I had thought to draw him out over one glass of wine it was because I did not know my man.

As we talked together,— I believe we talked shop mostly on that occasion, but some people can talk of logarithms and make them interesting, — as we talked, I say, I wondered at my lack of perception. How was it that I had given my attention to the addle-headed Dare, and overlooked Rœbke? Well, henceforth I would repair my error; and, indeed, Dare quite faded from my horizon, and Rœbke grew great before me. Desmond, who was an unobserving Irishman, once asked me why I wasted my time talking to Rœbke, and I said: "O, there is no accounting for taste, you know; some waste their time one way and some another. Every one cannot be interested in Gaboriau's novels." And so, every evening, all that Algerian summer, Rœbke and I would sit on Esther's tomb in the old Jewish cemetery of Gex, and talk of everything human and divine.

Before the summer was gone we had grown somewhat familiar with each other, so once I ventured to ask: "What brought you into the French army, Rœbke?"

He looked at me in a strange way, and said slowly: "Do you wish me to tell you?"

After a moment's consideration I replied: "No, perhaps you had better not; on second thoughts I am sure you had better not. Please forget that I asked you about it." But he did not forget, and our companionship was somewhat spoiled after that: he was wishful to tell me the story of his life, and I was anxious to prevent him. After that I was employed in the *Bureau des entrées* at the hospital, and I saw little more of Rœbke for a time. Then, with mystery in his manner, he came to me one evening and asked me to come and talk with him.

The summer had passed and the night air was cold, but we went again and sat on Esther's tomb. Thistles gone to seed and dry grasses made the place look desolate; we might have gone to the canteen, or to a Moorish coffee-house, but unconsciously we went to the old spot.

"You know," Rœbke began, "that I am going to Tonquin."

"No, I did not know," said I; "but I think

you are wise. I am thinking of asking to go myself."

"O, will you? I wish you would," he cried. "If you come I need not tell you yet."

"Need not tell me what?" I asked.

"Why, the story of my life; how I came to be here."

"But, my dear fellow, you need not tell me in any case, need you? True, I was curious for half a minute,— you seem to be so well fitted for a better life; but now, believe me, I have not the least wish to know; and consider this," I went on, "in your life you may have committed some crime; you may have worked some evil; if it were so and if I knew it I might say — I would say, knowing your present character as I do — that nothing in your past could ever make any difference in my regard for you now. Yes, I would say this, and I would mean it too; yet, try as I might, I should not be able to forget what you might tell me; it would influence my thoughts of you in spite of myself, and I would regard you accordingly. No doubt this seems selfish in me, to object to hearing your story; but I know myself a little, and I know you a little. Evil, yes, there is plenty of evil in all of our lives, and my belief is that the wisest course is to hide it,— to put it away as far as we can,— out of sight. It will

spread if we tell of it. Of course confession would give relief: sins always seem smaller when we talk them over. I have concluded that the right punishment for our evil deeds is to be obliged to keep them hidden."

All this time Rœbke listened in silence; already it was too dark for me to see the expression of his face. At last he said: "How romantic you are! I did not say there was any crime or any evil in my past life, did I?"

"O, no; nor did I say there had been. I only said that if it were so I did not wish to know it."

"Well, there has been evil," he said, "but not of my doing. If what I have to tell you regarded only myself, I should not hesitate for an instant; but others are involved, and so I hesitate. Now, if you are coming to Tonquin, I will postpone my story. I can tell you on the ship, or after we arrive. If I had known you intended to come I would not have called you out to-night. You see I have decided to go, and I shall probably never return. I wanted some one to hear my story; some one who would understand and know how to act; some one I can trust."

"But hold on, Rœbke," I exclaimed, "you think I am such a one? Indeed, you mistake." He interrupted my protest and

began to talk Schopenhauer. Finally he came back.

"One thing I will tell you now," he said. "I wear a wallet attached by a cord about my neck, — after the manner of German soldiers who carry their money in that way. Now, there is no money in my wallet, but there is a ring, and some writing; it is a writing in cipher, with a key which you can easily understand. If you hear of my death, please try to obtain possession of this wallet, and act, if you can, as the writing will instruct."

"Well, Rœbke," I said, "a minute ago you accused me of being romantic, but with your ring and your cryptogram you seem doubly so. But why do you talk of death? Thousands who go to Tonquin never come back, I admit; but that is no reason why you and I should not come back, if we go. However, if it will relieve your mind, I promise to do as you wish."

The moon had arisen, and lighted up the white tombs around us. The night wind rustled through the dry thistles. A strange, weird feeling was in the air.

I was glad when Rœbke stood up. "Let's go and drink to our safe return," he said; so we went off to the canteen. . . .

On the ship there was no chance for Rœbke

to tell me his story: we were not quartered near each other, and on deck there was always some one else present. "When we arrive," he said. But when we arrived in Tonquin there was still no opportunity; and then we were sent to different posts: he to Yen-Bay and I to Yen-Luong.

Twice I was at Yen-Bay, but found him absent. On my third visit I met him, and we talked a little. He was unwell and gloomy.

I tried to arouse him, to bring him out of his phlegmatic indifference, to show him how unhealthy it was to sit moping in such a climate; but he listened to me as if I were far away and he had not understood. Another time I found him when I was on my way to Ka-Dinh, and we, with Fensch and another, spent a few hours together; and then on my return I saw him and made an extra effort to stir him up.

"See here, Rœbke," I said, "you will not learn the Annamite language; nay, I do not blame you; but there is no reason why you should not learn English."

When I said that he jumped up and said: "Why, I know English already. Do you know it too?" Sure enough he did. Our surprise was mutual. "Why, oh, why did we not find this out sooner?" he cried, "then

I could have told you my story on ship-board and no one else would have been the wiser."

"But it is not too late now, is it?" I asked.

"We have not time for it to-day," he said, "but when will you be up again?"

"I don't know, but surely in a week or so; and I can bring you some English books. You read English?"

"O yes, why — I am an Englishman."

"What! You an Englishman!" I did not believe my ears.

"Yes," he said positively; "but you will understand when you hear my story. Bring me your English books by all means."

It was two weeks before I was sent to Yen-Bay again.

I had some good books, — some of Stevenson's, I think, — and I was anxious for Rœbke to have them.

At last an escort was commanded to take something up to Yen-Bay, — money, I believe it was, — some bags of piasters, and I was told to get ready.

Then DeLanny came running to me and begged me to let him go in my stead. He wanted to see his comrade. But I refused; I wanted to see Rœbke. Again he pleaded, but I was deaf. What, after waiting so long

for a chance? No, DeLanny could wait for his turn as I had done.

On the way I began to ponder and question. What strange thing would Rœbke have to tell me? Was it really something worth making so much of a mystery? "Every one," I thought, "imagines his own little experience is of the greatest importance in the world." — "Pshaw," returned my better sense. "Not Rœbke; he is a man of genuine commonsense; he does not make mountains of mole-hills; surely it will be an elephant at least that his mountain will give birth to. What sort of an elephant, I wonder!"

I learned, on reaching Yen-Bay, that Rœbke had gone out with a hunting party, on the route to Ka-Dinh, and that he would return in a few hours. I was tired, so I lay down and went to sleep.

I was awakened by some one who said, "It's Rœbke! I tell you it's Rœbke!"

"Where? what?" I cried, and I sprang up. Yes, it was Rœbke, shot through the breast by a pirate's bullet, and they were bringing him in on a bier. So his premonition was true.

For a time I was stunned; then I said I would help to prepare his body for burial. And I remembered his desire: that I should

take the wallet with the ring and the writing and do for him as these might explain to me. Already two informarians were undressing him, and I ran to them. Yes, there was the wallet on the cord about his neck, as he had said. "I am his friend," I stammered; "he said I should take this wallet; it contains a ring and some writing; that is all; I will show you."

"All right," said one. And then I went to take the wallet, but I staggered back, aghast. I found that the thing about his neck was only the semblance of a wallet, tattooed and painted on the white skin.

I never learned Rœbke's story. He is buried on a hill, back of Yen-Bay; his coffin was of woven bamboos, and we put palm branches on his grave.

PÈRE LORAINE

ABOUT twenty or thirty years ago there was a new voice heard in Paris. It was not a mighty voice like that of Père Lacordaire, perhaps, but it was like an echo of his voice, full of sweetness and consolation; and no one could hear it unmoved. It spoke to the heart rather than to the mind; and so all good women — aye, and all bad women — flocked to hear it. Duchesses and laundresses, Maries and Magdalens, sat down together and listened, — listened till the fire of love was kindled in their hearts; till tenderness and sympathy succeeded pride and scorn; listened till they turned and kissed each other.

It was at Saint Sulpice that Père Loraine began to preach. He was but a young man newly ordained, and no one had ever suspected his power; and no one was more surprised by it than himself.

His life as a student had not been remarkable at all; his superiors and professors had

found him somewhat dull in matters of theology, and except that he was clever in geometry and languages, nothing had ever been said of him.

The superior of the Sulpicians had been appointed to preach the Lenten sermons that year, but he fell sick, and his task was given to the young priests in turn, till it was the turn of Père Loraine, and then he preached from mid-lent till Easter, and Paris listened.

Would he hear confessions? asked the duchesses. Would he advise them in things spiritual? Would he direct them personally? Would he — would he lose his own soul? he asked. No. After Easter he disappeared. Then the duchesses went to the bishop to get him back — and the laundresses would have signed the petition if they had known how to write. Well, the bishop said yes, and Père Loraine came back and preached eight more sermons; and after that Paris heard him no more.

I think he worded his sermons in a very simple manner; and they were mostly about simple everyday matters; only, by his voice and gesture, and by the fire of love and faith which burned in his heart, his words were sublime — on his tongue was the true eloquence.

Of course his bishop sided with the duch-

esses, and he would have had him remain so as to reflect glory on the church, only Père Loraine decided otherwise. In his youth he had determined to become a missionary, and for this purpose he had learned languages.

To remain in Paris and be adored by fine ladies, yes, that would be delightful; and he could almost convince himself that it was his duty; else why had God given him this power of touching hearts? Such eloquence as converted the people of Paris would be wasted on the barbarians of the Orient. Yes, it really seemed as if God had intended him for this life of ease and elegance in Paris.

But would it last? Could he retain his power over men when his ears and his heart would have become filled with himself? His power, he knew, consisted now in the truth of his purpose, — because he himself felt he could make others feel. But how would it be when flattery had accomplished its work, — when he should no longer see or hear or feel anything but his own magnificence, his own glory? Why, then God's glory would be forgotten, and he would have nothing but empty husks wherewith to feed the people; these they would refuse, and they would turn and rend him. No, a thousand times no: he would leave the duchesses

to their own devices, and he would go to Tonquin as a missionary.

Gravely doubting, the bishop assented. I do not know what took his place with the duchesses after that; but, doubtless, they did not lack amusement. As for the laundresses, why, they had their work as usual, I suppose, and that is a great deal. The contention Père Loraine had with his bishop was trifling compared with the struggle he had with himself. Death could claim no greater sacrifice of him than this which he was about to make. It was a death in life which he had chosen. How could he exile himself from all the things he knew and loved?

His mother — yes, and his friend!

O, it was bitter — bitter! . . .

But Christ had called him, and how could he shut his ears to that? How could he make as if he had not heard?

Ah, he *had* heard, and he would obey, — yes, cheerfully. At least his lips should smile, and none should know how his heart might bleed.

Peace would come in time, too; and he would forget his friend and his mother? Why not? Surely God would not forget her, so why need he fret?

But, now, again: should he remain in Paris he might soon become a bishop — the ladies

would see to that. And as a bishop, what great powers he would have of serving God and the Church; there would be money to build churches, to educate young men for missionaries. O, money and influence for endless good, whereas now — Back, Satan! Get thee behind me! . . .

Twenty years ago the Far East was not so much in people's minds as it is to-day. Stories of murdered missionaries were heard occasionally, but it was still the West which attracted attention. So Père Loraine was soon forgotten. Sometimes his mother may have heard from him, or sometimes his friend; but very soon communication ceased, and he was as one dead to his sometime friends; yet here he was in Tonquin all this time, about his Father's business. He had been very cautious in his work; first he had assumed the habits and dress of the people; he had learned to wear sandals and a turban. The *Kay-oh* was quite like a cassock anyway, except that it was open at the sides. Then he had learned to eat rice with chopsticks, and to sit on the floor while doing it; he could even smoke the Annamite pipe. In this manner he was able to establish a little school in which he began his work of introducing Christianity.

Slow, very slow work it was, and he could never flatter himself with a great result.

True, the natives loved him, or they seemed to, and they would say the prayers and make the signs he taught them.

But Buddhism was not supplanted for all of this. Père Loraine felt it and grieved. Did the fault of this lie with him? Not at all; it was in the eternal nature of things that it should be so. The tree which has grown awry for many years may indeed be bent straight, and will remain so while your hand holds it; take your hand away and it will fly back to its natural form. Ah, you say, but its *natural* form is perpendicular! Is it? Who planted it, then? And is *your* straightness perfectly straight? Think! With fire and sword the Spaniards labored for three hundred years to put down idolatry in Mexico, planting Christianity in its stead; yet when an idol was unearthed there a few years ago, it was seen that some one had come in the night and crowned it with flowers. Surely at this rate the worship of Buddha might well withstand twenty years of one man's influence. Aye, for twenty years Père Loraine had labored; and now, with strength and vigor gone, gone so quickly in this strange climate, he still toiled. Ah! if by any means he might save some; for though prematurely old and feeble, his faith and love were still young and strong within him.

During these long years of waiting — of waiting for the end — he had amused himself with one of his old studies; it was a little link to bind him to his past, and to remind him that after all he was a Frenchman and not an Annamite. As a student he had been fond of geometry, and had stood high in the class, and now he made use of his knowledge; here he could put it in practice. Many days and nights he had spent in making maps of his district. Carefully he had traversed the winding paths, through rice-fields and over mountains, from village to village, tracing everything in accurate precision. The natives did not understand it; there were still many things about him which they found strange and unaccountable. This may have caused them to venerate him all the more, or it may have made them mistrust him.

They could remember a time when his speech had been hesitating and uncertain, and even now his accent was peculiar. No, he was not one of themselves, and they did not understand him. No, nor he them: to this day he would ask foolish questions — why they did this or said that — things every one should know without asking. He had told them many strange things, too, such things as were quite true, and yet of themselves they would never have found

them out. How had he learned them? Who was he, anyway, this strange man?

Then came the year 1884, and they forgot him. There was something of greater interest to think of. Here was their country being invaded by foreigners. What did it mean? And Père Loraine may have asked the same question: What did it mean? For so many years he had heard no news of Europe; no sign from any western land had appeared; and now it was evident, from the rumors he heard, that some European power was invading Tonquin. Ah, it would be the English, he supposed, spreading farther their conquests in India. But no; it was — yes, it was the French; his own countrymen! What a resurrection of old thoughts for him! What emotions must have filled his breast when he recalled his old, half-forgotten mother-tongue! Ah, how his heart leaped at the thought of speaking it — and being understood. But hold! what would this invasion of Frenchmen mean for this people of his adoption? Would they see a new civilization with favor? Alas, no; for already there was news of much fighting and bloodshed.

He had tried to teach Christian charity to his flock; but he feared they would not be able to submit cheerfully to oppression and

to love their enemies. Alas, this is such a hard doctrine to understand, and far harder to practise.

Well, I suppose Père Loraine was very tired of his task, and that his chief desire was to lay it down; and to this end the approach of European civilization must have comforted him, since thereby the march of Christianity would be more rapid. Yet after all was this a positive good? Would his people thrive under a European civilization? He could not tell. Twenty years of Oriental life had changed his new world ideas; thus, to instance a small thing, it seemed now as right and natural to eat his food with chopsticks, as at first it had seemed awkward; of course he would gladly resume the use of knives and forks, but of what benefit would knives and forks be to these Annamites? What benefit had he derived from chopsticks? And by one thing, judge of all the rest.

When will we learn that the manners and customs which differ from our own are not, therefore, evil and barbarous? The chief difficulty encountered by the French in their invasion of Tonquin was not the resistance made by the natives; that was indeed a serious check in certain places, so that the lives of many good men were lost by it, but worse than this was the climate of the country, so

fatal to Europeans; and then there was the difficulty of the language, so that a right understanding between the French and the Annamites was seldom attained. Next was the difficulty (for the French) of not knowing the roads — not knowing how to get from one place to another. They had maps, it is true, but usually these were inaccurate; thus a mass of irreparable errors was made in every campaign. Very seldom did it happen that a scheme for a combined attack succeeded: companies which should have been in a certain place at a certain time were miles away, wandering vaguely through marshy rice-fields; all because they were misguided by the natives, or by their own maps.

It became known to the officers of a certain corps that somewhere in their neighborhood was a missionary who, as they supposed, would be able to give them desirable information, and perhaps assistance. They had seen certain natives wearing crosses, and when questioned they were found to know a few words of Latin; such words as *Christus* and *Maria*. It was possible that this missionary might be Spanish, or even Portuguese, yet most probable that he would be a Frenchman; so the officers decided to seek him out, and the next day three of them with an escort arrived at his village.

What Père Loraine's feelings were when he first heard the voices of his own countrymen speaking the language of his youth, those will know best who have experienced the same. Indeed, it is only in foreign lands that all the music of our native speech comes home to us. What old scenes can it not evoke! Everything so long forgotten comes back as we listen, and in an instant we are home again with Youth and Beauty and High Aspiration.

What the result of this French invasion would be, whether good or ill, was not now to be considered, and in any case nothing could be altered; so, while the natives regarded their teacher wonderingly, he poured forth the history of his twenty years' exile to his countrymen. Yesterday it did not seem that he had any interest in any kingdom save God's, but now, most eagerly, his ears drank in the news from *la patrie*. Nay, but he asked for news of his mother and his friend. Alas! he had thought — but of course they could not know. And so they talked, forgetting their surroundings and the cause of their meeting; but when the past had been told over they began to consider the present, and the officers made known why they had come to him: could he, Père Loraine, help them with guides, interpreters, and maps?

And they left him to consider it. His natural impulse was to comply with their wish, and aid them to the extent of his power with his maps. See! they would be of use at last; and with his advice, telling them all that his long experience had discovered — hold! would not this be the act of a traitor? Verily it would be like delivering the keys of a castle to its enemies — these keys which he had obtained by subterfuge.

This subterfuge had been justifiable, he believed, by the end for which, till now, he had used it; but would he be honest if he used weapons so obtained for anything short of this end? Was the welfare of his fatherland a sufficient excuse for him if he gave over the keys or the maps to these officers? He hesitated till morning; but when the officers came he had decided.

Yes, he would help them. It might be wrong — he feared it was; and yet with or without his help the result would be the same; namely, the French would take Tonquin, and his resistance would retard them but little. Yes, here were his maps, and old Mot-Ba, there, would serve as a guide and interpreter, and — God speed to them!

For these they thanked him and went their ways.

As in a dream Père Loraine goes apart

into a little room, and all day long he sits there thinking of what he has done; but thinking most, I ween, of his lost youth, which is all back again so suddenly. Had he been wise? Would it not have been better if he had remained in Paris and withstood the temptations to a life of luxury? Ah, things looked so different now!

Perhaps self had led him to Tonquin, and not alone God's voice; perhaps, after all, his life was a failure. O, in very much he knew it was a failure, and this was a bitter thought. What were the few converts he had made here compared to the thousands he could have turned to God in Paris? Nay, but surely God's voice had called him to this particular work; he had heard it so plainly, again and again. . . . Had he? Had it really been God's voice — or his own wish? *Had he not heard what he wanted to hear?* "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and in an agony of soul he drops on his knees. . . .

There is a tumult without: natives in a rage running to and fro. What was this their teacher had done? Sold their country? Given maps and a guide to the enemy? Ha, the traitor! for this he had come to them; they could see now that he was a Frenchman himself and no Annamite. So he had come

beforehand; he had sneaked in among them to learn their ways and their language, all, all, in order to betray them. And in a blind fury they dashed into the little room where the priest was still kneeling; and there, before his crucifix, they beat him down and with heavy knives hacked off his head.

HOMESICKNESS

"East, West,
Home's best."

HUGO, — that was what we called him, — Hugo Heilmann; but it was generally understood that this was only a *nom de guerre.* His real name, whatever it may have been, was well known in the Swiss canton from which he had come; for there one of his uncles was a bishop of the church, and another was a dignitary of state.

Hugo was only a boy when he began to read books of travel, and his favorite study was always geography.

His childhood was passed with his mother and some servants on the side of a mountain, with the view enclosed by other mountains, and it was this feeling of being shut in that first put thoughts of wandering in his head. He must see beyond; he must get out of his cage.

His mother, poor woman, had thought to keep him there, all to herself; but seeing how

restless he became, she resolved to send him away to school.

The bishop was consulted, and soon Hugo had exchanged one cage for another.

The mountains had shut him in from the rest of the world, yet he could climb to the tops of some of them and look out of a window, so to say; but here, inside the walls of this grim religious school, he began to stifle. Now, however, he could read and hear of the outside world; so he waited. Something would happen by and by, and meanwhile he studied geography, — other things too; and good reports of him were sent to his mother in the mountains.

But the something he waited for did not happen.

"I must make it happen," he thought; and so one Sunday he climbed over the high wall, and wandered at will through the town. There was music and dancing, and these amused him for a time; then as he turned away, a scout from the school came by, and taking his arm marched him back to his cage. He had broken the rule, so he must be punished; he must be locked in his own room for a week.

Two days he endured it, and then he asked to see the master.

"Please let me out," he said, "and I will not climb over the wall again."

"Your punishment will end on Sunday," said the master; "but if you are quiet and obedient you may be set free on Saturday."

By Saturday Hugo was in Paris. To make ropes of his bed-sheets and climb out of his window was a very simple matter. Others had done the same thing, why should not he?

He had some money and a watch, and other objects of value, so to buy a ticket and ride to Paris was also a simple matter. It seemed a great thing to Hugo, and he was in a fever of excitement and expectation all the way.

Both his uncles and his mother came in search of him, but they were too late; he had enlisted as a soldier in the Foreign Legion, and was over in Algeria before they reached Paris. He was indeed only eighteen years old, but being strong and well developed, he was believed when he claimed to be older.

"From bad to worse" is the commonest law of nature, and Hugo soon found that his condition was not improved. He had sought freedom, and he had found a heavy bondage. Truly he was seeing the world; seeing strange scenes and strange people, but all through the bars of his prison window. The restraint he had felt at home and at school was feather-light compared with the oppressing influence

he was now subject to. Already he contemplated escape. So it is; we make our bed all of rose-leaves, as we suppose, but find it full of thorns and broken glass — and of scorpions, it may be. Must we perforce still lie in it?

Hugo was no way inclined to make the best of it; the pleasure of seeing the world, on which he had staked everything, was gone; he felt only the thorns in his bed, and could think only of how to escape from them. Why not run away? He had run away from school very successfully — he would try it again. He waited only for a chance. "But there is no use in waiting for what may never come; so much I have learned; I will make a chance," he thought, and so the next day he was far from his regiment, walking along a broad, white road towards the city of Oran. Hunger and thirst began to attack him, but they could not make him forget that now, at last, he was free.

It was a great sense of liberty which filled his mind, and he would think of nothing else. At last he had his desire; and with joy in his heart he went along, singing and dancing over the dusty highway. Then all at once he stood still, for he heard the noise of galloping horses coming behind him.

Peering through some bushes behind

which he had hastily hid, he saw two officers riding past.

He lay still for a long time, then he began to tremble; all his sense of freedom was gone, and his mind was filled with new emotions. Where was he going? What was he to do? How could he find food? The Future, grim of aspect, stood sphinx-like before him.

"I must get out of Algeria," he thought, "away from French possessions. I'll make my way somehow into Spain." Hereupon he fell asleep and dreamed of the Alhambra. It was dark night when he awoke, and he felt great thirst. For an instant he could not remember what had happened, and when it all came before his mind he shuddered.

He started on his way, but looking up at the stars he found he was going back instead of forward.

Quickly he retraced his steps, and hearing the barking of dogs, he was aware that a village — at least a habitation — must be near.

As the moon came up, he saw, to the right, the dark outline of an Arabs' tent. "Good!" he said. "Now I will test the much-talked-of hospitality of the Arabs," and boldly he approached the tent. "If these Arabs had met me on the road they would have brought me back to my regiment

and claimed a reward, but if I come to them as a guest they must treat me as a friend."

And so it was: not bread and water alone was he given, but goats' milk, with dates and Koos-Koos. Then on sheepskins he slept till morning; but before his hosts were awake he arose and stole away, even as they had warned him to do.

Many days and nights did Hugo wander about, now losing, now finding his way; sometimes living on unripe fruit, and sometimes fed by the Arabs or by Spanish farmers. Eventually he reached a seaport and was wondering how he could cross to Spain, when the question was decided by a member of the city police, who took him in charge and had him sent back under escort to his regiment. A deserter? No; but he must be punished for "illegal absence from his corps." Moreover, as it was found that he had lost part of his equipment he must be court-martialed. Two years in the penitentiary was the verdict.

Alas, and had it come to this? Were all his dreams of freedom to end thus in prison? Nay,

> "Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage."

This is a fine thought, to be sure; but then Hugo did not think it.

While waiting for his trial he had read on the walls of his cell many wise maxims: "Misery does not exist for the philosopher." —"The door of death is not locked."—"A thousand years from now, what will it matter?" *et cetera*.

He read them all over and over, and day after day; but he saw no meaning in them: they did not seem to apply to his case. Of course he had been foolish, but surely he had done no great evil that he must be so greatly punished. He had only wanted liberty, and had always found captivity. Why was it? This was the question which troubled him, and he could find no answer to it. Perhaps it was all to teach him the lesson of patience. Patience! this virtue of the dumb animals — why should it be so necessary for us? Why must we fold our hands and wait? —Why?

"Pshaw!" said Hugo; "I cannot understand it. I would gladly resist, but I find I must submit."

Thus in bitterness and silence his two years were passed. . . . After that they sent him to our regiment, then stationed at Tiaret, to finish his military service; and there I came to know him.

Why he made a confidant of me I do not know. I did not like him in the least, but seeing how unhappy he was, I listened to

him patiently, and showed him a half-hearted sympathy — almost more than I really felt. "What is it you most regret?" I asked him.

"I regret everything. All my time is passed in thinking: if I had not done this! If I had not said that! And the knowledge that these things cannot be undone is my one grief."

"You had much better forget all about it, and make up your mind to do your duty now as well as possible. You have failed in your duty to your mother and to your schoolmaster; now your duty is to France. You must try to be a clean, obedient soldier. It is not too late to start on a better road; you are still young." But nothing I could say ever seemed to take hold of him. "You must look forward," I continued. "Think of the joy of returning to your mountains. At your age you have no right to despair. Some day you will go home, and all you are now going through will be like a dream: you will wonder if it really took place in your life. The fact that nothing — neither misery nor joy — is of long duration should teach us submission."

"O, I see you will teach me philosophy," he returned; "I have read it all on my prison walls. But is it true? Do you feel it yourself? Can you stifle present pain by contem-

plating the time when it will be past? Can you?"

"No, I can not," I answered. "Misery is a reality for me, and I am afraid it always will be. But sometimes I can laugh at it; sometimes I can put it aside. Otherwise . . . . Can you not remember Georges Daudin? It is perhaps a poor comfort to think how we have made our own misfortune; yet there is a certain grim satisfaction in *paying our scot*, in bearing the results of our foolishness. If you will only cultivate a sense of the ridiculous you will find pleasure where now you find sorrow."

"Is that your plan?" he asked. "Do you succeed in it?"

"Please leave me out of the question," I answered. "I know what I say is true; it does not matter whether I act on it or not."

Poor Hugo! he tried bravely to be patient, but I could see that he suffered a great deal. I wondered whether he would ever look cheerful. One day he came to me with a light of hope in his face. "Do you know? I am going to Tonquin; and I shall desert again at Port Saïd or at Singapore, as it may turn out."

"If you will take my advice," I began; but remembering that no one ever takes ad-

vice which does not correspond with his own wishes, I broke off and started again.

"Have you looked at all sides of the question?" I asked.

"No; I have considered nothing but the success of my plan. I suppose if I should fail in it, I would be worse off than ever; but I shall succeed."

"Well, and if you do, if you manage to get free of the ship, what will you do in a strange country, without friends and without money?"

"O, I will be free! I will go and come at my pleasure."

"Yes; till you are arrested for vagabondage."

He looked a little rebuffed at this, but his new idea was not to be lightly shaken. "I shall try it, anyway," he said; "and if I fail — why, '*The door of death is not locked*,'" and he smiled sadly.

"I need not tell you that you are a fool, since you know it, and you will not thank me for any advice; but tell me, you have lived this life three years: can you not endure the rest of it? It will not kill you, and later on you will see much that was delightful in it. You will have forgotten all the fatigues and annoyances, and will call to mind how soundly you slept after a long march. You

will remember your strong, healthy appetite, which made the rough food so good.

"Then your heart will beat faster as you think of the affectionate brotherhood which existed between you and your comrades; you will have forgotten their names, perhaps, but their faces will come before you often and often, and you will ask yourself if you really were unhappy in this life."

But Hugo was not heeding me; he was thinking of other things. He was at home, and he saw visions.

He saw a large Swiss châlet built against a mountain, with heavy stones holding down the roof. He saw his mother sitting out on the veranda waiting. The cherry-tree, all in bloom, cast flickering shadows here and there as the wind played in its branches; showers of white petals flew circling through the air, and some of them fell at his mother's feet. "She does not feel them," he thought; "but if my lips could touch her feet, then she would feel."

And he saw the swallows flying in and out at the eaves, and he thought: "They bring her no message from me; she does not heed them; but when I return she will not sit still; then this look of sorrow will leave her face." . . .

Hugo caught my hand. "You don't

know," he sobbed. "How can you know what I suffer? I am homesick. Do you know what that is? I cannot wait, I must go home. Every day is as a year. I count the days; I count the hours. You say this is childish, that I am a fool; you are right, but I cannot help it. I try hard to forget my home, but every incident reminds me of it. I try in vain to overcome this feeling and I am utterly unhappy."

"But at least you have not lost your reason," I said; "you can still consider the matter logically. See: you want to go home as soon as possible, but you are determined to do something which, nine chances out of ten, will defer your return indefinitely. This is not wise. Have you learned nothing from your past experience?"

"It is you who will not understand!" he cried. "How can a man who is dying of thirst hold back his hand when a cup is held out to him? The cup may contain poison, you say. And what of it? he is dying anyway. Also, there is a chance that it may contain water. O, I will not, I cannot wait! I will do as I say; and if I fail, I will give up the struggle."

And so Hugo went to Tonquin. . . .

I often asked for news of him, whether he had deserted at Port Saïd or at Singapore, but no one could tell me.

I hoped he might have succeeded, and whenever I remembered him I pictured him at home with his mother. . . .

Our transport reached Tonquin in May, and at once we were sent on up the Red river to our respective posts.

As we passed through the other posts along the route we were greeted with enthusiasm by the old comrades, many of whom we had known in Algeria. In particular were we well received at Cham-Khé: every one, men and officers, came out to welcome us. No, not every one, either; for as we were shown into a large *cania* where we were to pass the night, I saw a soldier sitting apart in a corner. Something in his attitude looked familiar, and after I had arranged my effects I walked towards him. "Why, it is Hugo!" I cried. "Halloo! have you forgotten your friends?" and I went near and touched him. By an effort he pulled himself together and wished me a cold welcome.

Then he sank back into thought — or into an absence of thought.

"What is the matter?" I asked. "Are you ill?"

"No, — yes, — I don't know." And then he made another effort and regained something of his old manner.

"You did not succeed?" I questioned.

"You did not manage to get away at Singapore?"

"No; I did not try. I might have done it, but I saw my mother, and she bade me not to attempt it."

"You saw your mother? Where? How?"

"O, I saw her while I was asleep. Do you laugh?"

"No; why should I laugh?"

"But I have not seen her since, and I fear" — and here he paused and said no more.

"What's the matter with Hugo?" I asked of Müller, who came up to greet me. "He has not had a sunstroke, has he? Or has he taken to drink?"

"O, no, nothing of that; he is always the same. I don't know — nobody knows what ails him. He never speaks unless we speak to him first, and he does nothing but sit and mope. We have tried to shake him out of it, but you see how he is. Now we just let him alone."

The next morning, before we continued our journey I talked again with Hugo.

"As far as I have heard and read you are taking the right way to fall a victim to this climate. I don't suppose your life is of much value to yourself, but you should not forget that your mother is waiting for you to return.

For her sake you must come out of your melancholia. You should be a man; you must not act like a boy."

"O, I know all that," he replied; "but you see there is no hope in my life. I will soon know — I fear my mother is dead; but I have written home to one of my school-fellows for news; I expect his letter soon. I shall keep up till then, till I know for certain."

"Well, and if it is as you fear?"

"O, then — 'The door of death is not locked,' and who knows what will happen?"

"Look here, Hugo, I've something for you. You used to be interested in the study of geography. Have you ever tried astronomy? Here in my *sac* is one of Flammarion's most interesting books, 'The Plurality of Inhabited Worlds.'"

A little light was in his eyes as I began to speak, but it soon faded.

"O, thank you, but I know all Flammarion's books. Astronomy, that is to say the stars, are too far away; we can only theorize about them."

"Have you tried to learn the Annamite language?" I asked.

"No; but it is bread I desire, and you offer me stones. I ask for my home, and

you send me to the stars, or you bid me remain in Tonquin. I tell you I cannot forget."

"Well, here is another thought for you, then. You think, you are sure, that you would be happy if you were at home; but you ought to know that happiness is not attached to any particular place in the world. We have happiness in ourselves, or, as is most often the case, we do not have it at all. Of course, certain conditions, certain outward circumstances, may augment or diminish our happiness, but they cannot create it.

"Let us suppose that you were to go home to-morrow: you believe that one sight of your mountains would put all your sadness to flight. Perhaps it might; but in a few days your sadness would return, and you would ask, 'Is this all? Is this what I desired so much?' Then your discontent would return, and you would recall with regret all these scenes which now you seem to ignore.

"Be sure that if ever you are to find happiness in this world, you must not seek it outside of your own heart. Plant seeds of contentment, and happiness will grow from them."

"Yes, you were always free with advice;

nay, I see, too, the force of your words, but they all fall dead before my misery."

"Well, here is still another thought for you. From all I have read, added to what I have felt, I believe that the love of one thing may make us indifferent to another; so it would be wise for you to learn to love something or some one here present, rather than to break your heart longing for what is far away."

"O, 'words are indeed the physicians of a distempered feeling,'—you remember the quotation; but I ask you with Job,—who was also a wise man,—'What doth your arguing reprove?'"

"Good-by, then," I said; "I must go. We are to be at Yen-Luong; will you send me a letter now and then?"

"Perhaps,—or no; I had better not promise. Good-by!"

We had been at Yen-Luong for a few weeks when one day the *dramh*, that is to say, the letter-carrier, brought me a letter from Hugo.

"Because you desire my happiness," he wrote, "I will tell you that I am now happier than you can well imagine. You remember I wrote to my comrade, asking him to send me news of my mother, and desiring him to keep silent about having heard from me.

He at once brought my letter to my mother, and she has written to me, so kind, so good a letter. You cannot know how happy it has made me, and how doubly miserable at the same time. Never has my desire for home been as ardent as it is now. How can I endure to wait, now that I know my mother has forgiven me! I pray you write to me. I will try to be patient; there is no other means of being at peace — no other means, except . . . Adieu!"

The day after I received this letter I was sent elsewhere with an escort, so I put off answering it till I should return. But when I came back I no longer thought of it. I was sure to see him later on, so I let it go, and after another week I heard from him again.

I was fast asleep one hot afternoon when Kautor came in and shook me by the shoulder. "O, what do you want?" I grumbled; "I wish you would go" — but looking in his face I changed my sentence, "What is it?"

"Hugo is dead. You know Hugo Heilmann, at Cham-Khé. He left a letter for you here" —

"Did he kill himself?" I asked.

"Yes."

I took the letter and went down to the

pagoda in the bamboo grove to read it in peace.

It was very short: "Adieu, dear friend! I cannot bear it any longer; but '*the door of death is not locked!*' — HUGO."

SLOVATSKI

BY sickness and death our company had lost a large number of men, and those of us who remained had double duty to perform.

It is stipulated that soldiers shall sleep six nights out of seven, yet if we spent two nights a week in bed we were fortunate.

The result of this was more sickness and more death, till we lost courage and even ceased to grumble.

What was the use? Perhaps we too would fall sick, and then we would be sure of a rest, —at the hospital or in the cemetery. The outlook was grim, but anything would be better than this struggle.

When seen of men and approved, it is pleasant to act bravely and to sacrifice one's self; but when your officers ignore everything but their own well-being, and take your best service for granted, then the strain seems futile, and despair and slack service may result.

At last we heard good news: a transport ship was bringing a large reënforcement of *Legionnaires*, and all the posts on the Red river were to be strengthened.

How eagerly we waited, making an extra effort, stimulated by the hope of better times!

A great amusement was to speculate as to who would come; whether any of the old comrades from Saïda would be sent to our post. We longed for something — anything that would recall the past; so, even Gofin would have been welcomed with delight, though at Saïda we had ignored him — poor old Gofin, the scapegrace of the regiment! But there were Lenoir, and Casanova, and Denkwitz, and scores of others who might come, — what a welcome we would give them! For me, I was in a high state of jubilation: the last letter I had received from Herx told me that he was sure to come with the next transport. This was the glad thing for me to think about. Herx, who spoke such exquisite German; whose voice made harsh gutturals more soft and sweet than all the Italian vowels; and when he repeated Heine's songs — ah, there never was such music! If only he would be sent to our post, — that was the doubt which kept me subdued.

But at any rate I would meet him, and

our correspondence would continue less brokenly.

I had never seen Herx but once; we had been thrown together for a day, but as water joins with water, so had we rushed together in a marvellous reciprocity of thought and sentiment.

A year after he had learned my address, and since then our letters had been as frequent as possible. He did not say so, but I knew it was mostly the hope of meeting me that was bringing him to Tonquin, and so I waited for him eagerly. . . . But no, he did not come — not to our post, at least; he had been sent off to Tuyen-Quanh from Ha-Noï, where the detachment had separated. Those who arrived at our post were all strangers to us. As they marched in we watched them in silence and dismay; not a face was familiar. They were for the most part young men, and how would they stand the service? Pshaw! we would soon be as badly off as ever, for these fellows would be down with fever before a week could pass.

There were three new men for our squad, and one of them was given a bed next to mine; his name was Slovatski, and he was a Russian; but as I looked at him my heart stopped beating. "Good Lord!" I cried in English, "don't you know me?" For as I

believed there was my old friend Leonard, whom I had known years before.

Slovatski looked at me blankly, just as Leonard would have done, then slowly he smiled and said in German: "You speak English, but I do not know what you say."

Of course it was impossible that this could be Leonard, but a more exact resemblance I had never seen. I explained this to Slovatski, and laughing over it we became friendly.

"Did you know any one on shipboard named Herx?" I asked.

"Herx? Was he a Rhinelander with a white beard and blue eyes?"

"Yes, he was a Rhinelander," I said; "but I don't remember that he had a beard — or — yes; that must have been he. Do you know where he has been sent?"

"To Tuyen-Quanh, I think, but I'm not sure; he may have stopped at Son-Tay. I get these outlandish places mixed up. I don't know yet what you call this post."

"O, this is Trai-Hut," I said, "one of the worst posts on the river; if you could have stopped at Kam-Khé, or even at Yen-Luong, you would have fared better. We used to be at Yen-Luong, but we came up here a few months ago."

The longer I talked with Slovatski, the more I was struck by his resemblance to

Leonard. It was not merely in his face, but in his whole person: the shape of his hands, the drawling mode of speech; everything about him but the German tongue reminded me forcibly of the year I had spent with Leonard in the Connecticut Valley.

"How is it you don't speak English?" I asked. "All the Russians I ever knew before spoke English."

"Well, I never had a chance to learn it; but if you'll teach me I'll begin." This was not what I had expected and hardly what I wanted, so I gave him a half-hearted response.

"You remember when you first saw me, you thought you recognized me. How was it?" So I told him in detail of his strange resemblance to my old friend Leonard.

"What! he is an American? I look like an American? How do you account for it?"

"I don't account for it at all. I only tell you the fact, and leave you to account for it — or to forget it, as you like."

But Slovatski did not forget it, and we never talked for ten minutes together without his returning to the subject. "Do you say your friend was *just* like me? The same hair, the same everything?"

"All but the speech," I said. "If you were

to speak English with the Connecticut accent the likeness would be perfect."

After that Slovatski stopped trying to learn English, and then another day he asked: "Did your friend wear a beard?"

"No; he only wore a moustache, just as you do." And after that Slovatski let his beard grow, and again he asked:

"Do I still look like your friend?"

"Yes," I said; "but if I had not seen you first without a beard I would not have noticed it, perhaps. But why? You seem to worry about it; there is nothing in it, only a chance resemblance."

"O, yes, there is something in it; nothing happens by chance. I don't want to resemble any one like that. One of us is enough in the world. Say, is your friend healthy? Is he strong? How old is he?"

"Why, Slovatski! what in the world ails you? What can it possibly matter to you that there is a man on the other side of the world who looks like you? There is not one chance in a million that you will ever see him." As I looked at Slovatski I saw that the mere thought of seeing Leonard made him turn pale. Well, what queer superstition was this? But, strangely enough, the more Slovatski tried to change his appearance, the more clearly did I see his resemblance to

Leonard; but finding how it worried him I never alluded to it. Again and again as I have watched him I have waited to hear Leonard's voice with the well-remembered nasal twang, so when Slovatski spoke German with the Berlin accent I have started at the incongruity of it. He would notice this and say: "O, I see; you think now of your friend in America. I don't look like him now, do I?" . . .

Alas, no; the resemblance was fast disappearing: the ruddy cheeks were becoming thin and pale; the full, red lips were growing drawn and pinched; and the merry blue eyes were shaded by dark circles. So the likeness was fast going; only the expression of the eyes remained, and the same smile showed the same white teeth.

"What is the matter with you?" I asked. "Have you the fever? You look very much altered."

"I don't know what it is," he answered. "I suppose it is the climate,— and I am always thinking of Odessa; wishing I were back there."

"Odessa? Why, I thought you came from Moscow."

"O, no, my home is in Odessa. I was at school in Moscow, and many of my friends are there; that is why I talk about it."

"Well, I thought no one but Jews lived at Odessa; that was why I was surprised. You're not a Jew, are you?"

"No, not exactly; but I dare say some of my ancestors were Jews. You don't like them?"

"O, I'm not particular; a Jew or a Gentile, it is all one to me."

"What ever started you to talk about Jews, I wonder. With me it is a sore subject. I would not have been here but for them."

"No? How so?"

"It is hardly just to say that, either, I suppose. You see I wanted to marry a Jewess, and my father would not have it; so we had a quarrel instead of a wedding, and I ran away. Minka — her name was Minka — would not marry me without my father's consent, so I quarrelled with her too! That made me desperate; and being in Paris without any money, I enlisted in the Legion, like so many others. You are sure I don't look like your friend in America now?"

Thus it was: whatever we talked about he always came back to that old question. "No," I said; "not as you did when I first saw you. But what of it anyway? Why do you care?"

"I care, because I believe that if two look

alike they are alike, and one of my kind is enough in the world. Do you see?"

"No, I don't see; or at least I see that you are what my friend in America would call a *crank*, which means as much or as little as you like."

This was my last talk with Slovatski. In the night I fell sick with some bad fever and was taken next day into the store-room, where I was expected to die. Fischer died, and two others of our squad, but I began to recover.

When they could move me I was taken down to the river and embarked in a Chinese junk. No sooner were we started southward than I began to feel strong and well, and my first impulse led me to stand up and see what was taking place.

Besides the coolies who were guiding the junk, I found that there were two other *Legionnaires* aboard — and one of them was Slovatski; he lay in a corner, and he was delirious.

I turned to the other, who was sitting up, and asked where we were going.

"Why, to the infirmary at Yen-Bay; that is, if you live till we get there."

"And you? Are you ill too?"

"No, I am going down to replace a fellow at Than-Ba."

"And is there no escort with us? Are we three alone with the coolies?"

"Yes, quite alone. Are you afraid of pirates?"

"No."

Then I crept over and looked at Slovatski; he was unconscious. I put my hand on his head and felt it to be hot, and his temples throbbed under my fingers. He was talking fast and furiously, but in a low tone. What he said was in Russian, but the word "Minka" recurring often, I supposed his ravings to be of the past.

"Is he going to die?" I asked of the other.

"Yes, it looks like it."

"Can't we do anything for him? Did the captain send no medicine with us?"

"No, there is nothing we can do that I know of. But how is it that you are better? You were worse than he when we started."

"I don't know; I suppose it is the motion of the junk that has revived me." Poor Slovatski! if only I could revive him! I got cold tea and hot wine for him, but could not arouse him from his sleep.

Alas, that we grow so selfish under suffering! I felt — I knew — that Slovatski was dying, and for my life I could not care much about it. So many had died; so many whom

I had known and loved; and now one more was going, that was all. Yes, if I could have saved him by any possible means I would gladly have done it, — but how?

Since then I have thought of many things I might have tried,but at the time I thought only of cold tea and hot wine, and why either of them occurred to me I cannot now imagine; perhaps my head was still muddled from the fever. Poor Slovatski! his heavy breathing kept time with the noise of the poles with which the coolies guided the junk; and I lay down near him and listened.

As we approached Ngoï-Thie the night came on, and with it a chill wind; so I thought I would lend my blanket to Slovatski. As I wrapped it around his feet I heard him muttering in German. "What is it, Slovatski? What can I do for you?" I whispered.

"O, is it you?" he gasped. "Say, do I look like him now? I don't look like him now, do I?"

O, so eager was his question!

"No, O, no!" I cried; "you never looked like him; how could you? It was all a mistake. I only said — that you must forget it. Here — here is some tea; you should like tea, being a Russian."

But before I could get it he began to rave again. I think he was repeating Russian poetry, for his words were measured and

rhythmical. It may have been Pushkin's verses which he was reciting, if I had but known.

I lay down again and listened. I was cold without my blanket, but I knew Slovatski would not need it much longer, so I waited.

Presently the motion of the junk ceased, and on calling to the other fellow, I found that we had stopped for the night in front of Ngoï-Thie.

"Shall we go ashore?" I asked.

"No; we will be as safe and comfortable where we are," he said.

Slovatski went on breathing heavily, but with more and more difficulty; now that the noise of the boat's motion had ceased I could hear the "swish, swish" which his breath made in surging between his closed teeth. Sometimes it would miss, but only to begin again with more force.

I thought I would go to sleep for a while, feeling sure that the complete stopping of Slovatski's breathing would awaken me; I would know that to be the end, and — I could have my blanket again! I soon fell asleep, but with my mind full of Slovatski I began to dream of him.

I was still asleep, I suppose, but suddenly I grew conscious, as I thought, of some one leaning over Slovatski, — some one holding a lighted candle. Was it one of the coolies?

for I saw long black hair hanging over to the floor; and then slowly the figure turned, and a white face, very beautiful, looked at me — a Jewish face! Aye, it was Minka! But when I sat up and rubbed my eyes, I saw nothing, — only Slovatski's white hand moving vaguely through the air.

The sound of his breathing was no longer audible, so I crept over to him and took his hand and listened. . . . "One in the world is enough," he said. "One of us is enough." And then something rattled in his throat, and Slovatski was dead.

I told the other fellow, but he only grumbled something, angry at being disturbed for such a trifle.

The coolies who were awake burned incense and sweet-smelling wood, while they murmured, "*Shim, shim Buddha, shim, shim Buddha*," and I know not what else, all in a monotone. For me, I sat there quite still, thinking.

Slovatski's journey was over; but, alas! mine must continue; so gently I removed the blanket from his feet, and warmed by it I was soon asleep.

A SPIRITUAL COMBAT

WE always called her "*Muoï*," which in the Annamite tongue means ten; and this name would seem to indicate that she was the tenth daughter of her family, though, in fact, few Annamite families are so numerous. Muoï was theatrical; she had lived at Ha-Noï, where she had learned many wonderful things. The reason why she had left the Annamite stage was a secret, guessed to be an affair of the heart which she had had with a French officer, since dead. I dare say this rumor was true.

She always wore the finest and gayest of silk garments, of which she had somewhere and somehow gathered a great variety. At the time I speak of, Muoï was mistress to a civilian functionary in the Administration, but she had very loose rein, and ran about the place at her own good pleasure. She was no way beautiful, but she was always so bright and fresh looking, and had such soft, sweet manners, that we were always pleased

to meet her; and then she had learned and adopted certain European customs which set her apart from the other *Kongois*. For instance, although she smoked cigarettes, — many European ladies do that, — she did not smoke the Annamite pipe, nor did she stain her lips by chewing *betel*. Neither were her pretty teeth covered with black enamel, as according to Annamite fashion they should have been. Probably the defunct French officer had been the chief factor in producing such result. However, we all found that Muoï was charming, even though her nose was flat and her eyes were oblique. She had learned to speak French fairly well, and it was amusing to hear her answer grammatically when we would address her in the jumble of "pigeon French" best understood by the natives. Her voice was not musical according to our ideas, but never have I heard a voice so soft and pleasing; and in this she was not unlike other Annamite women, whose tones are surprisingly agreeable to the ear: the poorest peasant woman scarcely speaks above a whisper, and always of birds, yet without being strictly musical. in a soft, purring, twittering way, suggestive

One day I went down to see Muoï's proprietor, and found him fast asleep in a hammock, while she, at a little distance, was

amusing herself with a sword exercise, which was a remembrance from her past theatrical experience. I held my breath; but she saw me, and glad perhaps of a spectator, continued with fresh vigor. Such a sight as it was! O, a sight to be remembered forever! Of course, I did not understand it, but as she went on, I fitted a meaning to it which seemed to apply aptly enough. I dare say the true original meaning was far other; but of true art — and this was the truest of art — who will restrict or limit the meanings? So much precision; such an exactitude of motion. Every gesture, every thrust, every stroke, every feint, — all had been learned with mechanical accuracy, and she now performed them with a vigor, a swiftness, a fire, a fury, which fascinated and dazzled me. But what did it mean? With what or whom was Muoï fencing? With a shadow? A spirit? Yes, so at least I understood it. She was warring with an evil spirit. Was it perhaps with the ghost of the French officer, her whilom lover? How her sword flew! O, she would win, I saw that, in the pride and courage flashing from her dark eyes! At times, after a heavy stroke, by which for an instant the evil spirit was beaten back, Muoï would toss her sword high in the air, spring and catch it as it fell, and then

flourish it triumphantly, as if in an ecstasy of conscious superiority.

And then I wrongly thought the end had come. She redoubled her strokes, she made them heavier; there was no more play, no more flourishes; all was now serious, for the spirit must be vanquished. No trembling in the small right hand, no nervousness in any of her swift movements; and yet I caught my breath lest by a chance she should fail; for all idea that it was only play had left me, and her failure would have distressed me. Faster and faster flew her sword, till at last, with one great wheeling stroke, she seemed to win. Then with a wild laugh of triumph she cast her sword high in the air, nor did she try to catch it as it fell ringing to the floor.

. . . . . .

As I said, I thought this was the end; but not so. After she had sat for an instant, gazing at the sword which lay at some distance from her, she started up, uttering a suppressed cry of terror. She seized the sword and recommenced the fight. But, whereas before all had been so exact and accurate, all was now hurried and nervous. Now, as her strokes fell on all sides, I seemed to understand it. Now it was no longer one shadow, one spirit with which she had to fight, but here was a horde of evil spirits. All the

haunting memories, all the black shadows, all the dreadful ghosts from out her past life, — there they were, all of them, all in armor before her, all surging and raging madly against her. It was noon of an Asiatic summer day, yet I saw these ghosts distinctly, conjured in my mind as they were by the art of Muoï's movements.

Her sword, as she sent it circling through the air, might keep them off for a time; but the conflict, bravely and courageously as she fought it, was too unequal; no merely human force could prevail against that ghostly army. O, yes, she must fail; she knew it; but still she kept on, with a wild fear — the awful terror of death — visible in her ashy face. My excitement grew so great that I cried aloud, for, following so closely with my eyes the strokes she made, I became gradually conscious that her chief effort was made against one of these spirits, the one who was boldest and strongest of the throng; and to whom I gave the name of *Remorse*. Ah! let her but slay him, so I thought, and all the others will fly off. But, alas! she lost hope; she knew she must fail, and the knowledge of it unnerved her arm, and made her movements uncertain and faltering. Then came the end; her long, black hair became unfastened from the *baba* in which it had been twisted, and

fell in thick, straight locks down to her knees; this, blinding her, and checking her blow, ended the fray. She threw back her hair with her left arm, and stood for an instant quite unguarded. Then the sword of *Remorse* struck in and pierced her to the heart. She shrieked out a great sobbing cry, dropped her sword, flung wide her arms, and fell forward on her face.

In a minute she jumped to her feet, and, with a laugh at my excited expression, went and picked up her sword. She was pleased to have interested me, and seemed grateful when I complimented her. She asked me if I thought the ladies of France could act like that; whereupon I assured her that the "divine Sara" herself was not equal to anything like it; but Muoï had probably never heard Sara's name before, so she did not appreciate the extravagance of my praise.

And then I came away, for I had forgotten what I had come to say to Muoï's proprietor.

THE STORY OF YOUP-YOUP

IT was in the year 1884, and already Youp-Youp was past the prime of life. She was a Kongoï, that is, an Annamite woman; but she was frequently called *baïa*, which means "old woman." She was one of the poor people; her ancestors had all been coolies, and she herself had been a cooly; but now, on certain days of the week, she would sit with her gossips in the market-place to sell the produce of a small garden, in which she worked on the other days; she toiled with patient industry, yet the few *sapiques* which she gained were scarcely sufficient to pay for the rice she ate.

Perhaps, counting by time rather than sorrows, Youp-Youp had not yet lived forty years; but gray hair, wrinkles, bent form, and palsied movements seemed to declare that she had lived for ages and ages. Such teeth as she had were covered with black enamel, and the habit of chewing *betel* did not improve her appearance; her eyes had, per-

haps, never been very large, but now they were so concealed by wrinkles that unless she were astonished or frightened, they never became visible. Youp-Youp is what she was called, but in her youth this name may have been modified or extended by family or surname. I do not know about that.

Now, though she was a person of so small estate, of such insignificance, the story of her last days is not without interest, and so I will tell it as I interpreted from the scraps of it which came to my ears.

Perhaps I ascribe motives to Youp-Youp which never moved her; possibly the last six years have altered her story, and the facts of it may have been quite different from the present account; but I will give its details, which are not untrue to human nature — human nature which finds like expressions throughout the world — in Pekin as in Paris.

Youp-Youp lived at Ngoï-Lao, a pleasant village on the left bank of the Red river, a few days' journey north from Ha-Noï. The *cania* (bamboo cabin) which she occupied was clean to see, and the small garden behind it was managed with provident foresight: before one crop was reaped, another would be all ready to replace it; now cucumbers, anon tomatoes, and salad all the year round.

Youp-Youp had long outlived her family;

one by one her husband and children had been taken hence by cholera, and in sign of mourning, the *baba*, or turban, which she wore on her head was white instead of black. I suppose she often wondered why she was left to such a cheerless life in this world, why she lived on after all whom she had loved and lived for were taken. When the past holds few joys, and the future offers small hopes, it requires much courage and endurance to live; still, Youp-Youp lived on like that till the year 1884, and then her life became eventful.

. . . . . .

At the village of Ngoï-Lao it was told by one to another that the French were coming, — the French, who had taken all the chief cities of Tonquin, were now, in this year of 1884, laying hold of the towns and villages, and would soon be at Ngoï-Lao. One of the most effectual means of opposition practised by the Annamites in small places was to poison the wells, burn the *canias*, and having destroyed all the provisions which they could not carry, to run away into the mountains, whither the French could not follow them. This indeed was a negative sort of opposition, yet it retarded movements and increased the difficulty of the French invasion. This was the course which the

villagers of Ngoï-Lao proceeded to adopt. Youp-Youp was told of the threatened danger, and invited to go to the mountains with her neighbors; but she chose to remain — to remain and take her chances with the French. After all, the French could only kill her, and she might as well die at home as in the mountains. No one tried to dissuade her, for in questions of personal safety little thought is given to the whims of an old woman; so when all her neighbors had fled, Youp-Youp sat alone in her house and waited. Whether she prayed to Buddha and made him offerings, or whether the habits and labors of her life had left her brain too dull to think about abstract subjects, is all matter which may go unanswered. The fact is, that next morning, when a large detachment of French soldiers arrived at Ngoï-Lao, Youp-Youp was their most unselfish benefactress. They came worn out by fatigue and hunger, wounds and sickness; and if Youp-Youp had not been there to render aid, few of them had ever gone much farther. When she found that they did not kill her, as she expected,— perhaps hoped,— she at once evinced her willingness and ability to help them. She got clean mats for them to lie on, she showed them the one well which had not been poisoned, she dressed their wounds, she

gave them her rice,— all she had,— and when they would return her any signs of thankfulness, she would wrinkle up her face and whisper, "*Oo-tia! Linh-tap flancais tot-lam, tot-lam!*" (Well! well! French soldiers very good, very good!)

. . . . . .

Time passed, and the story of Youp-Youp's ministrations to the French became known and talked of in high places, and the result of the talk was that the French government awarded the military medal to Youp-Youp, — a decoration which entitles the owner to an annual income of a few francs. I do not suppose Youp-Youp ever understood it, but now, with the medal and the pension, she found herself to have become an important personage in the land. Ngoï-Lao was in a favorable position, and the French, seeing this, lost no time in establishing a military post there; so in a few months the village was rebuilt, and Annamites who had made peace with the French came from other parts to live there; even some of its old inhabitants came back from the mountains, and these were certainly surprised to find Youp-Youp still alive and even prosperous.

Now, you will remember that Youp-Youp belonged to the class from which coolies are taken, that she had been a cooly herself, and

albeit that she still shut her eyes and whispered, "*Linh-tap flancais tot-lam, tot-lam!*" she must often have had a different idea when she saw how the "*linh-tap flancais*" treated the coolies. Did she never say to herself, "*Linh-tap flancais tsou-lam, tsou-lam*"? (French soldier very bad.)

The Frenchman, sick and worn with fatigue, is quite a tender-hearted person compared with the Frenchman healthy and in power. Well, but the French had paid her for her kindness, and purchased her favor; and at first it was with a childish pleasure, almost like happiness, that she wore her military medal. In sooth, it looked out of place, pinned to her coarse brown tunic; yet she wore it always, at first, as I said, with pleasure, but afterwards with shame and chagrin. Of course, it was jealousy alone which made Youp-Youp's neighbors resent her present fortune; but they made it appear to her, by daily word and innuendo, that by having helped the French, she had helped the oppressors of her people; she, whose fathers and forefathers had been coolies, had taken sides with their masters. And so shame and regret were on the underside of her life, though she still continued to whisper, "*Linh-tap flancais tot-lam, tot-lam!*"

. . . . . .

Farther up the river was another village, larger and more prosperous than Ngoï-Lao. Youp-Youp had once been there in her youth, and still had a remembrance of the large market-place and the great pagoda.

One day it came to the ears of her understanding that the French were going up to take possession of this village, and the villagers had not been warned of it. This time it was intended that they should not have time to run away to the mountains. Here is what followed: the morning when the French arrived at the village gate, the form of an old Annamite woman was seen crouching before it. The sun had not arisen, and in the obscurity she was not recognized. They ordered her to open the gate, or to get aside out of the way; she did neither, and so some one thrust his bayonet into her back and shoved her from the gate. She did not cry out; she wrinkled up her face, and whispered for the last time, "*Oo-tia! Linh-tap flancais tot-lam, tot — !*"

But again she struggled to her knees, and tore something from the breast of her tunic and threw it from her as though it were a coal of fire; it was the military medal, for you see already that this was poor, sad-hearted old Youp-Youp whom they had killed. No one knew what she was doing

there; she had been seen at Ngoï-Lao the day before, and to have come so far she must have walked all night long.

What I like to think is that she had come with the intention of warning the villagers of their danger, but worn out with fatigue, she had been unable to open the gate and accomplish her purpose.

ECKERMANN AND TANNEMEYER

WHAT the secret between these two men may have been will never be known. I could not even find a plausible theory for their actions. They came together for the first time in their lives (so much my research seemed to prove) on the French transport ship "Colombo," out from Oran with soldiers for Tonquin. They came from different regiments of the Foreign Legion, and by some mistake they were quartered near each other on the ship; still, never was any acquaintance formed between them. With the rest of us they were both friendly and pleasant companions, but towards each other they were silent and unconscious; so much so that I and some others began to speak of it. Why did they ignore each other, we asked; for come to question them separately about themselves, we learned that they were both from the same city in Bavaria.

Then we supposed they were members of some secret society, the incomprehensible

rules of which they were observing. So we laid traps for them, that we might discover if this were the case; but no, not at all. In the course of a week I became very friendly with each of them, and tried several times to bring them together in conversation; but I never succeeded. Anon, by quoting the sayings of one to the other I hoped to arouse their curiosity in each other. They were both musical, and from Tannemeyer I learned a number of Bavarian folk-songs. Speaking of these to Eckermann, his interest flamed up, and eagerly he asked me if I knew any more, and where I had learned them. "Why, I learned them from Tannemeyer," I said. "He has a long repertoire of them." Hearing this, Eckermann became as cold as a fish, and took no further interest in Bavarian folk-songs.

Tannemeyer was constantly trying to sketch; he had a passionate longing to learn how to draw, and pencil and paper were never long out of his hands; but for all his effort there was ever something wrong with his drawings. He knew it and sighed.

Then one day while I talked with Eckermann, he took from his pocket a small notebook to illustrate the point in question; a quick stroke or two of his pencil showed me that he was a clever draughtsman.

"Hallo!" I said, "where did you learn to draw?"

"At Munich," he answered. "Why?"

"O, nothing much; but will you lend me your note-book?" I saw it was nearly full of very beautiful drawings.

"Well," he said, "my sketches are not for show, and I have some things written in my note-book, so I"—

"But I will not show your book to any one, except to two or three of my friends. Nor shall I or any one read a word of it." I felt as if I were playing him a trick, for I saw he did not suspect that one of my "friends" was Tannemeyer.

Still I must see whether these drawings would leave Tannemeyer as cold as the folk-songs had left Eckermann. It was quite the same.

At first Tannemeyer glowed with enthusiasm. Had I made these sketches? and would I lend him the book to copy them? and would I teach him how to draw?

"But these are not mine," I said. "I could not make a line of them."

"Whose, then? Whose are they?" he exclaimed.

"They are Eckermann's," I answered, as naturally as I could."

"O," he said, and handed me back the note-book.

"But I am sure," I went on, "that he will be glad to lend you his book, or to give you lessons; he is a genuine good fellow is Eckermann. By the way, why do you never talk to him? He comes from your country; you'd be sure to find him very amusing."

"O, thank you; you are very kind; but please give him his note-book, and do not say you showed it to me."

"But why? Why not?" I insisted; "What in the name of commonsense is the matter with you two, that you must treat each other in this absurd way?"

I saw I had pained him by my question, and I began to apologize, but he hushed me up saying:

"Really I do not know in the least what it is that is between us; I have tried already to overcome it, but I could not. One cannot mix oil and vinegar, you know, — perhaps we are like that."

"But have you never spoken with each other? Have you never tried to overcome this antipathy?"

"My dear man, there is no antipathy, as you call it; it is not that, nor is it any lack of sympathy, either. I tell you again I do not know what it is. Whenever I try to analyze my feelings for Eckermann, I grow faint, I begin to shudder; in fact, I cannot

fix my thoughts on him for any length of time. Never have I spoken to him, nor he to me; and never have I spoken of him before. If you will oblige me, please do not let us mention him again."

"But — well, forgive me, I have been indiscreet. I see it. Still, my reasons were neither selfish nor idle. I simply wanted to bring two good fellows together, that they might find the time less heavy. Will you forgive me?"

"O, certainly," he cried; "it is rather I who should claim your forgiveness for my unreasonable whim, as it must appear to you."

"Not at all," I expostulated. "I can quite understand that it is no fault of the oil that it cannot mix with the vinegar, and if I have failed to find a vehicle, I must eat my salad without a dressing, that is all. But," regretfully, "I would have delighted in having brought you two together. I am sure the conjunction would have been delectable for the rest of us."

I do not think Tannemeyer understood me; he stared blankly, and sauntered away.

The ship sailed on.

At Obok — or was it Aden? — we stopped to take on coal, and some of the natives

came on board to sell fruit and other merchandise; but owing to a lack of money among us, the commerce was slow. We had nothing but our pay usually, and that hardly sufficed to furnish tobacco.

Latterly I had lost interest in the mystery of Eckermann and Tannemeyer, or rather my attention had been given elsewhere and I had not thought about them. Now, among these venders of fruit three fakirs had come on board, bringing charmed snakes and other odds and ends of their profession. With these they sat in a corner of the deck and began to juggle.

In their strange raiment and with their dramatic gestures they formed a picturesque group.

A crowd soon circled around them; I approached late and had to remain on the outskirts of it, but there I saw what was more interesting to me than all the tricks of the snakes and the fakirs: there was Eckermann rapidly making a sketch of the group, and at two steps behind him stood Tannemeyer gazing over his shoulder with his soul in his eyes; he was trembling, and his fingers clasped and unclasped. I thought at first he was looking at the snakes; but no, it was at Eckermann's work he was gazing. Suddenly his face grew white, and he stumbled over

to the taffrail, gasping for breath. Unconsciously Eckermann went on sketching. In a minute I went up to Tannemeyer and said: "You look ill. Do you suppose you have a fever?" He looked beyond me for an instant, and then with a visible effort he dragged his thoughts back to the present and said, "What?"

I repeated my question. "Are you not well?"

"O, yes, I'm all right; why?"

"O, nothing; you look somewhat pale, that is all."

I felt somewhat ridiculous. I had hoped that he would have told me about the scene I had witnessed; but no, he made no mention of it. Presently out came his pencil and paper and he began to sketch, so I moved away. Then on repassing, a moment or two afterwards, I saw on Tannemeyer's paper the very scene which Eckermann had sketched: the three fakirs juggling with their snakes. This time there was nothing wrong in Tannemeyer's drawing.

I ran to Eckermann. "A moment!" I exclaimed. "Please let me see the sketch you have just made, only for a moment." He looked at me in surprise, but he gave it to me. I ran back to Tannemeyer and begged him for his sketch, and he gave it to me.

Then, tremblingly, I compared them; they were marvellously alike; no one could say that both were not the work of the same hand.

I turned and showed them to Tannemeyer, and he — fainted.

I saw him falling, and as I sprang to catch him I dropped the sketches. With the help of a comrade I got Tannemeyer down to the doctor's room and there I left him. I hurried back to find the sketches, but one of them — Tannemeyer's — was lost. Some of the sailors were looking at the other. I claimed it and brought it back to Eckermann, and told him the whole circumstance.

He listened in silence, and when I had finished he said: "How long will it be before we reach Colombo, do you suppose?" I looked at him in wonder. "I don't know," I said; "but why? What makes you ask such an irrelevant question after what I have just told you?"

"Well, what shall I say, then? Shall we talk about the weather?"

I was rebuked again. "Forgive me," I said, "some time I may learn to mind my own business."

"O, don't mention it," he returned, and then seeing that he was pale and nervous, I left him.

Returning that way shortly after, I saw him gazing abstractedly at his sketch.

Next day we heard that Tannemeyer was ill of a fever and was quartered in the ship's hospital.

And the ship sailed on.

Whenever I tried to talk to Eckermann after that he seemed absent-minded and uninterested, so it came to pass that our friendship waned.

Occasionally I asked for news of Tannemeyer, and heard that he was improving in health.

We had reached Colombo at last, and had stopped again for coal. As I stood at the taffrail watching the strange scenery a familiar voice greeted me, and there at my elbow was Tannemeyer.

"*Grüss Gott!* Tannemeyer," I cried. "Are you better? I rejoice to see you on deck." Yes, he was quite well again and glad to be out of the hospital.

As we stood there talking a crowd of natives came swimming up, and crying as they swam: "*À la mer! À la mer!*" Then a throng of soldiers and sailors ran over to where we were standing and began to throw pennies into the water, whereupon these natives would dive after them and fetch them up between rows of gleaming teeth.

Tannemeyer had his hand on the taffrail, and in the crowd another hand had been laid upon it. As though this other hand had been a coal of fire Tannemeyer whipped his hand away and stood trembling. Yes, it was Eckermann who had touched him quite inadvertently.

Tannemeyer went back to the hospital and remained there for the rest of the voyage. Even at Saigon, where we sojourned for several days, he did not appear, so I began to forget both him and Eckermann.

Thus far our passage had been calm and pleasant; no storms, and even the heat had not been as great as we expected. But now, on entering the China Sea, rough weather began, so we remained much of the time below decks. As we coasted up along Annam we were able to see land nearly all of the way. I think we stopped at Hue, but I can remember nothing of it, not having been able to go ashore.

Soon we reached Haï-Phong, where we disembarked from the big "Colombo" and boarded a small river steamer. Here I saw Eckermann and Tannemeyer again. I noticed that they still held aloof from each other, but my interest in my new surroundings was so great that I thought of little else. I was taken up with trying to learn a vocabu-

lary of Annamite words and phrases so as better to understand what I saw and heard.

Eventually, through artificial canals and natural streams we entered the Red river, or the *Song-Koï*, as it is called, and came rapidly up to Ha-Noï, where many of us were to remain. I expected Tannemeyer would have to stop there; but no, although he belonged to another regiment in Algeria, and would naturally be sent to a different district here, still by some most curious oversight, or strange fatality, he was still with us. At Son-Tay, then, perhaps he would be changed; but not so, he was with us for good, it seemed. Well, I was glad, for I thought that if he and Eckermann remained together, some explanation of their actions toward each other might result. But seldom now did my mind dwell on anything but the unfamiliar beauty of the country and the incomprehensible chatter of the natives, many of whom were with us on the boat acting as engineers, cooks, pilots, etc.

Chinamen, too, were there as clerks and officers. These wore very wonderful garments. Somehow I had got away from the commonplace things of life, and, yes, there were stranger things in the world than the little mystery I had been studying.

It was in the dry season of the year, and

when we had reached Ba-Cat-Hat, — or Vie-Trie, as it is now called, — just where the Lo-Ciang empties into the Song-Koi, we could go no farther by boat; already we had been stuck fast in the bed of the river more than once. So to Hong-Hoa we must go afoot, and there we would be directed to the various posts we were to occupy. Ah, after nine long weeks of sea voyage we were joyful to be able to march, in such weather, through such a country.

Well, whom should I go with? Luick and Rœbke had gone off together, and Siegfried was starting with Haas. While I stood hesitating, Tannemeyer came along and proposed that he and I should march together, help each other over streams and bogs, etc. I had a misgiving at first; I would rather have gone with Eckermann.

I always felt there was something uncanny about Tannemeyer ever since he had made the sketch.

Eckermann was a strong, handsome fellow, with a quick perception, so that he could always grasp my meaning before I spoke it, — nay, better than I could speak it, for my tongue often blundered over German genders. Tannemeyer was slower of comprehension, I thought, and his conversation was not easy to follow; this was owing to a

peculiar accent and to a way he had of letting the final word or syllable die on his tongue unuttered. He had a well-featured face, but a look of great sadness gleamed in his dark, melancholy eyes.

I was somewhat surprised when he proposed to march with me, for since his second illness I had seldom spoken with him. I am afraid I did not express much pleasure in my voice nor in my glance when I acceded to his proposal, for he noticed it and made as if to draw back; but with as much sugar on my tongue as I could collect I begged him to march with me, saying we would go famously together; and so we did.

Never can I forget the charm of his companionship on that march. His mind opened and expanded under the influence of our surroundings, and it revealed to me delicacies and beauties I had never known. Wherever had he learned this subtile tact, this forgetfulness of self, this exquisite manner? He had mystified me on the ship, but now he dazzled me. He knew my moods by intuition, — when to be silent and when to speak; what to say and what to keep from saying. I *saw* the wonders of the landscape, but he put them into words for me so that I not only saw, but *felt*.

There were strange birds singing in the

thickets, wild new tunes I had never heard before; and then Tannemeyer would sing an echo of their music till my heart leaped and thrilled to hear him.

What! I asked. Was this a German? Surely not; only one of the Latin race could disclose so complex a character. I asked him about it; was he indeed a Bavarian? a *Baier?* Yes, for three generations his people had lived in Munich. But before that? He did not know — he had never thought to ask. Why? "Because I am trying to find a key to your character," I said. He looked at me in a surprised manner, wondering perhaps what was unusual in his character that it needed a key.

But already the walls of Hong-Hoa were in sight, and the enthusiasm of his manner abated perceptibly.

Once more he was the Tannemeyer of the ship. But the beauty of the country through which we had come and the fascination of his companionship had made an impression on my mind which years could not efface.

At Hong-Hoa we remained several days exchanging our Algerian uniforms for those of Tonquin.

Here I met some old comrades from Saïda, so the time passed quickly with new experiences each day. Would we go and

drink *tschum-tschum?* Would we smoke opium, — or the Annamite pipe? Would we ride in a *pousse-pousse*, and take tea in an Annamite kitchen? Oh, there were countless things we might do. But the days passed, and we who had just arrived must proceed farther up the river. As far as Cam-Khé we went, and there we had to separate, some going to one post, and some to another. Most of us were for the same company, and we would probably meet again; nay, as we were all of us to be along the river, we would probably meet again, so no one thought much of the separation. About half of our number were to remain in the vicinity of Cam-Khé and the rest of us started on, Eckermann and Tannemeyer still with us. But Tannemeyer, it seemed, was to cross the river directly. He with a dozen others was to reënforce the post of Than-Ba.

We came to the junk which was to ferry them over; already some were aboard, and Tannemeyer was waiting for his turn. Then suddenly he dropped his rifle, gave a wild, hoarse cry, and came running back. Eckermann saw him coming towards him, stumbling as he ran, and he understood. His lips parted too as if to cry out, and in an instant they were sobbing on each other's necks. Such a passion of love, despair, and

anguish, please God, may I never see; two strong men between whom never a word of friendship or affection had passed were now delirious with grief at the thought of separation. It was more than I could bear to see: I turned away to hide my own tears. It was soon over. Before the surprise caused by this scene was passed, Tannemeyer was in the junk and off from shore.

There was the suspicion of a laugh in the air, and the certainty of curious comment, and questions from the comrades; so before anything of this sort could happen I ran up to Eckermann and began to talk to him soothingly of indifferent things, giving him no time to answer me, and leaving no chance for the others to break in with questions; nay, most of them had tact enough to look aside and see nothing; but I gabbled on, flying from one subject to another, till Eckermann had recovered his mind from the ordeal it had just been through. He understood my motive, and thanked me with his eyes. By my presence of mind I had saved him from questions and ridicule, and he was grateful. Of course if I could have done it in some other way, and left him alone with his emotion, it would have been better.

All this time I was burning to question him myself, but by an effort I refrained,

hoping that he would confide in me. Once he stopped and looked me in the eyes. I was sure he was about to speak.

As well as I could I expressed sympathy and understanding in a glance, but he sighed deeply and went on.

I had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. He could not tell me what was on his mind, so I did not vex him by asking. During the rest of the way to Yen-Luong, where I was to remain, he and I marched together. He chose it so. I enjoyed his company in a measure, and would have enjoyed it more had he not been so absent-minded; hitherto he had been quick and alert of thought, but now while speaking his mind would wander and he would forget what he had started to say. I knew very well that all his thoughts were of Tannemeyer, but by no sign did I show that I knew it, nor did I mention Tannemeyer to him.

I have since regretted this, and I wish I had been less delicate in the matter, even at the risk of giving offence. Some light might have resulted; something might have prevented the outcome of the affair which was stranger than all that had gone before.

We reached Yen-Luong at last, and there I parted with Eckermann; he went on to

Yen-Bay, the next port, where he was to be quartered. . . .

For a month or longer I remained at Yen-Luong before anything happened. Some of us fell sick with the fever, but I had no time for that; I was too busy studying the ways of the country.

Then it was reported that the Governor-General, M. de Lanassan, was making a tour of the posts. Already he was at Cam-Khé and would soon arrive at Yen-Luong. It made a stir in the air when this news was told, but the excitement did not touch me, — no, a French dignitary might be seen in any place at any time; but a genuine Annamite dignitary, with his umbrellas and his palanquin, — a *ton-doc*, for example, — would be something worth seeing. Well, but M. de Lanassan would have Annamite personages in his suite, it was said. O, in that case I was open to enthusiasm.

So he arrived, this governor-general, and he complimented us on the order and cleanliness of our post; and then — God bless his kind heart! — he commanded extra wine and tafia for us.

A frowzy-headed little man as I recall him, with a pleasant manner of speech. We had been instructed in the manner of saluting him, with his proper title, and so on, and we

were warned that all deference was his due. But military men have a way of regarding all civilians, even the highest, in a condescending, half-contemptuous way; and taking the cue from our officers we were no way overwhelmed by his presence among us. Had he been a military general now, we would have given him a different reception. The French soldiery of Tonquin is piqued and jealous that there should not be a military government there, as in Algeria; consequently there is a lack of unity and sympathy in the land. I saw, it is true, only a shadow of this; but there must be a substance in order to cast a shadow.

Before this governor-general left us, we heard rumors of a band of pirates having been seen farther up the river; so our captain deemed it wise to send some of us with him for an extra escort in case of an attack.

I was elated over this, for I should thus see some of the comrades at the other posts.

At Yen-Bay my first question was for Eckermann. Even as I spoke his name I saw him running toward me. All his bearing was joyful; indeed, he was radiant, not alone in his white uniform, but in his face and manner. Ah, this new life, so strange and enchanting, who would not be pleased by it? What, sickness? fever? O, no indeed; not

he, — and in a week or so there would be pirate-hunting, with tigers thrown in! What more charming life could any one desire? True, there was a sad side to it. So many good comrades dying and being killed; but death had to come some time, so better die here than in one's bed at home.

"Have you heard anything from the others?" I began.

"Only that Haas was drowned, and that Pillerel has been killed by sunstroke."

"Have you never heard any word from Tannemeyer?" I asked.

"No; what of him? quick!" and all Eckermann's manner changed, his face turned pale.

"O, nothing; I know of nothing," I answered, indifferently. "I guess he's all right. Drosz was up from Than-Ba last week, and he reported all well; we would have heard if it were otherwise. But say, has Tannemeyer never written to you?"

"No."

"Nor you to him?"

"No."

Then Eckermann grew sombre, and I spoke of something else.

Next day we continued our journey, the governor and his party in a *chaloupe*, and we following in Chinese junks. The scenery as

we ascended became wilder and more picturesque, and I longed to have Tannemeyer with me that he might interpret it. What glowing thoughts it would have brought to his mind! With what gorgeous sentences he would have described it! And I — I was not quite blind to it, only it oppressed me, and I wearied of it, and desired to return to commonplace sights.

We went as far as Traï-Hut and then returned. As we halted at Yen-Bay on our way back, I resolved to have an understanding with Eckermann. Yes, I would beg him to give me a kind message for Tannemeyer, whom I should probably see on my way down the river. I went up to the casern and called out: "Halloo! Eckermann, where are you?" I was in a hurry, for we had only an hour to stay. "Eckermann!" I cried. "Where's Eckermann?" I looked at the comrades who stood stupidly staring at me. "Where is he?" I demanded. "Can't one of you tell me where he is?" I read fear and consternation in their faces. Then one who had yellow hair and a soft voice came to me and whispered: "Are you Eckermann's friend?"

"Yes, yes; for God's sake tell me what you mean. Is he — is Eckermann ill?"

"No; not now, he shot himself yester-

day through the heart — we buried him this morning." . . .

And now what should I say to Tannemeyer? And how should I tell him this awful thing?

Vainly I had sought in Yen-Bay for some clew to Eckermann's suicide; no one could throw the least light upon it. There had been no letters for a week; he could have heard no bad news. They said, forsooth, it was insanity, yet could not tell of any change in his manner.

I was sick with grief and horror, and now here we were at Than-Ba, and what should I — what could I say to Tannemeyer? I hoped he would have heard the news already, and that my lips need not tell him. I asked cautiously whether any word had been heard from up river. No, nothing for weeks; and then I ran up to the pagoda where the soldiers were posted.

I found Tannemeyer sketching in a corner.

He sprang up as he saw me and ran and embraced me in true German fashion.

"How goes it?" I repeated.

"O, very good, I think. I have an Annamite grammar, and I will soon know something of the language, and then the scenery! O, yes, I am quite happy; we have a good officer, and there is always something

new to interest me. You have been up the river, you say, as far as Traï-Hut? I wish I had been with you. Did you — did you stop at Yen-Bay?"

"O, yes; and I too wish you had been with me. I wished it continually. You would have helped me to understand what it meant, you would have revealed the secret of all that beauty. Ah, what you see here is nothing to what I have seen; you must go farther north.

"'That's the appropriate country; there man's thought,
Rarer, intenser,
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer.'

"But you don't know English. (My God! how should I tell him!) That's from one of our greatest poets; do you know him? Robert Browning? But I dare say he has not been translated into German. Why, there are even English people who have not read him. But, then, not all of you in Germany read from Jean Paul, do you?" I stopped, out of breath.

"Did you say you had halted at Yen-Bay?" he reiterated.

"O, yes, it's a very fine post, Yen-Bay; quite the best on the river. They have not to live in bamboo *canias* as we do at Yen-

Luong; they have two large caserns there, built of brick, quite as good as any in Algeria. By the way, have you heard any news from Saïda?"

"Did you see Eckermann at Yen-Bay?" And so it had to come. Nay, in spite of my fencing he had read it already in my eyes. I crept up close to him and put my arm on his shoulder, and I told him all the fearful tidings. I thought he was going to fall, and I pressed closer to him and took his hand. He was not conscious any longer of my presence; he looked beyond me, off into space—far off into eternity he gazed. Then slowly he stood up and went outside. I watched him as he leaned over the parapet and stared down at the river. I had seen grief often and often, and, pity me! I had seemed to feel it; but never anything like this, never anything so awful as Tannemeyer's grief as he stood gazing on the river—the very air was full of it. I sat within the doorway, shuddering. No, no; it could not last, and there, while I looked at him, Tannemeyer turned and waved me farewell. A pistol was in his right hand. I saw a flash and heard a report; the next instant Tannemeyer lay dead in my arms.

THE COOLY

ONE morning it was made known to the captain that three coolies from the water-carriers were lacking. Thereupon he sent some of us down to the *lie-thung* (mayor?) of the village to bid him send us three other coolies. As we entered the *lie-thung's* house he was just fastening up his hair, in a Grecian knot you would have said.

He smiled a nervous welcome as he stopped in his toilet, and motioned us to be seated on the broad platform, on which his bedclothes were still lying. When he had served us with tea from a porcelain pot, we told him, in "pigeon" French, what we wanted.

What! three more coolies? O, impossible; there was not one to be had in all the village. Of the three who were missing, one had been drowned the night before in the river, another had broken his arm, and the third had the fever. . . . Alas, no; there were no more coolies in the village. But in the

neighboring villages? we suggested. Ah, there he had no jurisdiction; he was only the poor *lie-thung* of Yen Luong, and our captain's most obedient servant — *fai, ni?*

O, exactly; quite so, we assured him; and then we let him know our captain's full order; namely, that if he failed to send us three coolies, he himself should be taken and forced to do the work of three.

Oo-tia Buddha! Was this possible? Would we force him, the chief magistrate of his village, to labor with his hands — to do coolies' work? Had we neither pity nor justice? no bowels at all? no hearts?

And think, now! How in the name of Buddha could he help it, if the lazy coolies must fall into the river — and take the fever? Was he to — O, no, it could not be possible; we had only made a French joke — ha, ha! Never could the kind captain think — ah —

And there he stopped his whimpering, for he saw in our faces that it was French earnest, and no joke at all.

So he said if we would come with him he would see; yes, he would try what was to be done. Then we went out with him into the village.

First we found the cooly who had the fever; he was lying in the sunshine, shivering pitifully, quite unable to stand up. The

lie-thung talked at him for a long time in tones of indignation and displeasure; all of which drew nothing but groans from the poor wretch. Finally the *lie-thung* gave him a kick, and turned to us with a smile. He had an idea.

"Come," he said, and led us to the house of the village schoolmaster. I forget the Annamite name for him.

Why, of course the school-teacher could carry water for us well enough, anyway till the fever left the cooly. Certainly it would be more in keeping for a poor school-teacher to turn cooly than for a *lie-thung!*

That was his idea.

But we found this school-teacher to be an old, a very old man; far too feeble for our use.

"Him one good cooly, *nieh?*" whispered this miserable *lie-thung*.

The old man looked at us in wonder, while his long, fleshless fingers rattled the beads of an abacus.

As we stood there considering what we had better do, the schoolmaster's son came in. He was a bright-faced fellow of sixteen years, perhaps, strong of limb and quick of movement.

"Him one better good cooly; take him *nieh?*" insinuated this abject *lie-thung*.

Yes, we said, we would take him; but when our intention was made known the father fell at our feet and implored us to spare his son; saying that he and his family were not of the cooly class; saying that they worked not with their hands; that the shame of such work would kill them; saying, also, that his son was but a child, — his little one, his *tin-yow*, — never able to do this work of carrying water. Surely we would have pity. Pity? Yes, I suppose we felt it, but, alas! we had no permission to show it. Turnkeys and soldiers and hangmen must all shrug their shoulders and disclaim responsibility; and if their hearts ache over it, they, in turn, are to be pitied.

Seeing no relenting in our faces, the father said he would go in his son's stead. We laughed at this, explaining that the lad was the stronger, and so more suitable for our purpose. Up to this time the son had been passive; but we could see the blood come and go in his face, and the light in his eyes gleamed and faded while we talked. Then, as his father's proposal to go in his place became clear to him, he started forward, gathered his father up from our feet and stood between him and us.

"Me good cooly, come!" he said.

Then we went out together, leaving the old man to lament.

Well, here was one cooly, but we must still have two others, and we advised the *lie-thung* to make haste and find them, else —

We were passing through the market-place, and there he laid hold of a battered old *kongoï*, saying she would do for a cooly, that already she had worked as one. She was a vision of dirt and rags, and her face — *ouf!* She said she was able and willing to go, if she could be sure of getting the right number of *sapiques* for her work.

Therefore we did not let her sex stand in the way of it, and straightway we engaged her.

Then, as we stood wondering where we would find the third cooly, and half inclined to force the *lie-thung* to the task, a poor rice-planter came along. He had been buying a pair of paper shoes, all ornamented with gold and silver tinsel, which he intended, I dare say, as an offering to Buddha; he seemed in a great hurry to go home and present them. That misfortune should meet him on his pious errand was very sad; but Buddha gets so many paper shoes offered to him, that one pair more or less can never matter. So we reasoned, and so reasoned the *lie-thung*, for he whispered: "Him three good coolies — *nieh!*"

So we persuaded the farmer to change his plan and come with us.

Here, then, were our three coolies: a farmer, an old woman, and a young boy. The *lie-thung*, chuckling over his own escape, bade us a hasty good-morning, and returned to his tea and his toilet. We went up to the post with our coolies. . . .

The name of the schoolmaster's son was Mot-li, but for no obvious reason we called him Charlot. He proved nearly equal to the task imposed on him. It was indeed sad to see how his veins stood out and his muscles were strained as he struggled up the hill with the heavy buckets.

Our post was on a high bluff, and all the water needed had to be brought up from the Red river (the Song Koï) which ran below. Twelve coolies were kept at this work from early till late. There was an overseer — a *caï-cooly* — to spur them on with a rattan should they flag in the toil. I saw Charlot on the evening of that first day; there were dark purple welts on his back where the rattan had stung him; and his shoulders, where the bamboo pole had rested, were all swollen and bloody. Not having been trained to such work, it was doubly hard for him.

Yet he came back the next day, and his father went to plead with the *lie-thung*

for his release. The *lie-thung* referred the matter to the captain, but finally took the bribe and promised to find some one to replace Mot-li.

But on that second day of water-carrying, as Charlot was swaying up the hill with his load, the captain came riding down and saw him. He was gracious enough to say that such work was not suitable for one so young, and that Charlot might be employed as *boy-quat*. This meant that he could pull the *punkah*, or great fan, in the officers' dining-room; and when not working at that, he could act as scullion in the captain's kitchen.

This change was made; and as Charlot was able to speak a little French, and was, moreover, of a pleasing countenance, it was probable that he would obtain preferment. From a cooly he might mount to an interpreter — or even to a *caï-cooly*. Anyway, he seemed contented, and was exact and careful in his new work.

The *kongoï* and the rice-planter were soon released from their engagement, but Charlot remained with us. We all encouraged him, and showed him favor; so he came to be glad that the change had been made in his life. Then, as hope and happiness had returned to him, and as everything seemed to go well, it all came to a sudden end. One

afternoon, at the flood-time of the year, Charlot stood watching how the great current below went sweeping past.

There were great trees, pieces of junks, carcasses of dead animals, all sorts of fragments, with now and then a human form, all floating past on the surface of the river. As he stood there watching the awful panorama, the chief cook of the captain's kitchen came out and disturbed his musing.

"How many, Charlot?" he asked.

"*Nam*, — five, me see five! last one, him cooly! *Oo-tia!*" answered Charlot, who had been counting the floating corpses.

Then the cook sent him down into the bamboo grove to gather dry sticks with which to make a fire in the morning.

Away went Charlot, singing as he went some monotonous wail which passes in Tonquin for music.

While with us he had learned to sing "*La Marseillaise*" (after a fashion of his own), but this afternoon he was gloomy; he had been looking at death and was afraid; so he sang a song of his own people, doleful to hear.

As the cook stood in the doorway of his kitchen he listened; vaguely and more indistinctly the notes came up as Charlot descended.

And then, suddenly, instead of the final

refrain which the cook waited for, he heard a loud, prolonged shriek which chilled the blood in his veins, albeit the hot fire was at his back.

He looked down into the plain, and, after a moment of intense expectation, he saw a fearful thing: a great tiger came bounding out of the grove, and ran across the dry rice-field to the forest beyond. Charlot was clutched in his mouth and his head was hanging lifeless. . . .

And the next morning there was a sorrowful sound heard without the post, — the sound of an old man's bitter grief.

There in the dust, without the gate, sat the old schoolmaster asking for his son, — his little one, — his *tin-yow !*

And there he sat all day long, and for many following days, crying to every one who went by for Mot-li, — for Mot-li !

Then one day this wailing was not heard, for the schoolmaster lay dead — there by the outer gate of the palisade.

"LE BUIF"

"Ne sutor ultra crepidam."

WE had been to Ka-Dinh. I must shrink even now when I remember Ka-Dinh, and all we had to endure in going there. As usual, I had quarrelled with O'Rafferty. Geniets had remained at Yen-Bay, Siegfried also; thus there was no one in our squad with whom I cared to talk. I must march in silence, then, listening to others, and learning my world. Behind me came Rotgé, a burned-out Parisian, and after him marched poor Richet, of whom I tell what follows.

A dull, silent fellow, too stupid to resent Rotgé's gibings. When we were in garrison at Yen-Luong, he was cobbler "*en pied*" for the company. This was why Rotgé never called him anything but *le buif*. His shoulders were bent, and as he trudged along his bearing was no way martial. He did not appeal to me strongly, hardly at all, indeed, and so I never tried to turn the tide of

Rotgé's sarcasm. Richet would smile at it in a mild way, dimly seeing that he was being lampooned, but more flattered than offended thereat.

"O, but you are a hard-head, Rotgé, and I know you — hey?"

Then Rotgé would glance at me, but I had not heard.

At length we reached Yen-Bay, and there we were confounded to learn that Richet had been named corporal in our absence. What! surely not Richet *le buif!*

"Yes, truly, who else?"

Had we been told that Boulanger had been renominated minister of war we had not wondered; but this! Why, we had not even known that Richet's name was on the list of the *élèves caporaux*. All the same, so it was, and we could only wonder what the result would be. The result was sad. Little souls are sooner caught by ambition than great ones, just as a straw hut will take fire more readily than a stone palace.

At Yen-Luong we had all found Richet so stupid, that unless we had a pair of *brodequins* to be mended we hardly ever spoke to him. He talked in a slow, drawling voice, not pleasant to hear. He was generally alone, yet when he had earned a little money by supplementary cobbling he would spend it

freely with Rotgé, or with any one, and at these times companions never failed him. But he was not morose at other times, only dull and silent. Well, well; and now he was no longer Richet *le buif*, but Corporal Richet, if you please! We shrugged our shoulders and sniggered. He himself was as much astonished as we, but instead of finding some means whereby to reject his nomination, he took it in perfect seriousness, for forthwith he began to believe in his own ability, and, yes, he would demonstrate to us that he was less stupid than we supposed — *hein?* Then on several occasions the other corporals proved to him that he was unwise in trying to carry it through; they made it quite plain to him that he was an *imbécile*, so he spoke at times of renouncing his rank and going back to his cobbling — h'm. . . . If he had done so, all might have gone well; but he kept on. He was able to keep on with it because we were still on the march, so his service was simple enough; also, the others helped him. Then a day came when he was given the *ordinaire* in his charge; in other words, he must attend to the distribution of rations for his company. This is often the work of a sergeant, but every corporal should be able to do it, since all that is required for it is a little knowledge of "the three R's."

But, ho! poor Richet was aghast. He knew the prices of sole-leather, but little else. He never could have performed this new service had the others withheld their help. On looking back, we saw how this charge must have weighed upon him mightily, far more than we imagined at the time. It was then that Sergeant Dreck began his thieving, began to steal from our rations, thinking that all the blame would fall on Corporal Richet. Wine he stole, and tafia, and canned meats, and who knows what all. Richet saw the deficit and trembled.

We, however, knew that he was quite innocent, and we all felt at once that Sergeant Dreck was the greedy one who had pilfered from our stores. Richet was deeply moved about it, and he spoke of paying us from his own poor pocket. We resented this, and tried to pass it over. Still he fretted about it, and his work weighed upon him more than ever.

During our long, wearisome marches Richet was often unwell, but his silly ambition made him hold out, even when his physical forces were far from equal to the effort. Pounding leather on a lapstone had not trained him for marching, so he suffered more than the rest of us. But just before we came back to Yen-Bay for the last time,

he said he would not return with us to Yen-Luong; he said he had a cold, and he would remain at Yen-Bay and enter the infirmary there.

We laughed at his assurance; we were all fit enough for the infirmary, but we knew that a cold or even a *bronchite* would not be a sufficient reason for getting in. But as Richet was so sure of his affair, we said nothing to daunt him. We were used to his moods by this time, and noticed nothing new. I remembered afterwards how excited he was that night, — all about two Corsicans of another squad who began to fight over a game of chess. We would have let them strangle each other in peace, but not so Richet; he jumped between them and cried out: "I forbid you! I am Corporal Richet, and I forbid you! I forbid you, I say!" So much energy and noise coming from the phlegmatic Richet surprised me, and astonished the Corsicans so much that they forgot their quarrel. The next day Richet was grieved and chagrined because he was not admitted to the infirmary. We pursed our lips and looked askance.

On leaving Yen-Bay we learned that Sergeant Dreck had been stealing our rations again; so we threw it in his teeth, and jeered at him openly. Richet looked gloomy and

almost desperate; he still had charge of the *ordinaire*, and by this time he could manage it if not interfered with. But Dreck was unabashed, and said that our corporal was a fool. "So between a fool and a knave we may go hungry," we snarled. "And you are not the fool!" In settling back into garrison life we forgot all about Richet and his new rank.

There came a day which was very hot; a thick, stifling vapor seethed through the air; the sun seemed quite near to us, for through the vapor we could look straight at it and never blink. There it was, just overhead, a ball of pink fire spinning in space. The river below us ran quickly past, as if it feared to be turned into steam before it could reach the sea.

The rice-fields beyond had been under water the day before, but their moisture was now fast disappearing into the air. I put wet napkins on my head and crept away to a dark place. . . .

Next day I was all right, but many others were on the sick-list. One came in and said that Corporal Richet was drunk ever since the night before.

That seemed strange, for since the Chinaman had been evicted from his canteen down by the river, we had no means of getting drink;

and, thinking it over, Richet had never been a drinking soldier. But there,— as we could hear him gabbling nonsense out at the kitchen, I concluded that he must indeed be drunk. How purblind we are! We see things happening day after day, yet when the natural effect of such happenings arrives, we gape at it as if we had seen no foreshadowing of it.

For half a day, then, we believed Corporal Richet to be drunk, when indeed he had become a jabbering, gibbering idiot.

At the first there was a grain of sense or consequence in his talk, but by evening he was mad as a hatter. And still he would say a thing which would make us laugh; we are ever so ready to laugh, that the grin on a skull may start us. But again he would begin to talk about his mother — and that was gruesome. The strange thing was that Richet should be talking at all, for never had he talked so loud before. Some of us had never heard him speak till then; but now how he raved! This is the way he went on: "I will beg you to remark one thing. I'm no fool — not I. I am cute, I tell you. Look here! — but no matter, — ha, ha! I can do anything — everything — and I'm not afraid — no — I'm a corporal, hey? — well, I'll become a sergeant too, and so on up the line.

I'm not a fool, I tell you; I'm cute — I'm too sharp for you. I know the world, — and there's my mother. O, she'll be pleased with me now — for I'm going home, I tell you, — yes, I've got my discharge, and I'm going home — home to see my mother. How she'll laugh! She'll be satisfied with me now — she always said I was no fool, and she knows me. How she'll laugh! ha! ha! ha!"

He would begin these short phrases in a low voice, but as he went on he would increase the sound so that the last words were loud and triumphant. It was a woeful thing to hear, and when we could stand it no longer we persuaded poor Richet to go to bed in the adjutant's room, which was vacant.

"In the adjutant's room? Why not! for I'll soon be an adjutant too, ha, ha!"

Next day he was sent to Yen-Bay, but he soon returned on his way to the hospital at Ha-Noï. He was pale and sleepy and hollow-eyed — and still ceaselessly gibbering. And still I can hear him say: "How she'll laugh! ha! ha! ha!"

So, had he never gone beyond his last, it would have been better for him, and for his mother.

A DREAM

"*And without a parable spake he not unto them.*" Matt. xiv. 34.

AND so I lay down to sleep with my head pillowed in the hollow of Buddha's left foot, — there where he sat cross-legged on the ground.

A dim radiance flickered within the pagoda, partly from three rush-lights, and partly from our camp-fire without the walls. From where I lay I could see, indistinctly, the forms of seven other images, ranged on one side, and opposite them, and far in the back, were many more immortals which I could not see; but all of them, like Buddha, were wrapped away in Nirvannah, with never a consciousness of any intrusion, or of any desecration in their sanctuary.

Outside I could hear the irrelevancies of my comrades; they were telling each other what delectable things they would eat when they were back in Paris; and one recounted in a lingering voice the whole beautiful *menu* of a three-franc dinner at the *Palais Royale*.

Ouf! I tried to shut my ears to all that, and I thought that I too would fain find Nirvannah; so I turned, saying I would sleep. But my eye caught sight of another group of images.

There was a central female figure, framed about with smaller shapes which represented the human passions; so I understood it. See! there was Gluttony, with Drunkenness reeling above him. Anger and Lechery and all the rest in a hideous circle, whence the Woman looked forth in sad serenity. What was it? Had she given birth to these? Or were they —

And so I slept.

And I dreamed that you and I were standing together on a wide, barren seashore. Far away from us the sea rolled peacefully in, making no sound; and very far away to the left we saw the misty outline of a cliff.

Suddenly I knew the place, and I was afraid. Gêrome has made a picture of it; only in the place where we were standing he has painted a lion, — a fierce lion, with outsprawled legs and lashing tail. In my dream I shuddered lest it were behind us and I should see it. As we stood, the cliff seemed to advance towards us; nearer and nearer it came, and watching it I forgot the lion. Then, moved by a quick impulse, we ran

forward to meet it. As we sped along, the wind arose and blew up clouds of red sand; but we did not stop.

I thought: "Ah, we are in Algeria, and this is a sirocco; there is nothing to fear." Then, through these sand-clouds, I saw that the cliff had changed into a great stone temple of strange construction. I looked at you in wonder and said: "See, it is not a mosque, nor a marabout; neither is it a pagoda, nor a synagogue; for whose worship or honor can it have been built?" I waited, but you made me no reply. I saw then that you did not hear me; you did not know you were there; you were asleep or entranced, without consciousness of anything; you did not even feel my grasp upon your arm. All the horror of the unknown came upon me, and clutching your hand I hurried you along.

Presently we came close to the temple; deeply cut in its granite walls I traced strange figures and hieroglyphs.

Before us was a wide courtyard, flanked by two wings of the temple; it was paved with large squares of red-veined marble, and in the centre stood the image of a cow carved from stone, short and thick of body and perched on legs, or rather on four sculptured columns which raised it up to the top of the temple. Then I turned again to you and

said: "O, I know now what it is, and where we are; this is the Bull Apis, and this temple was built for its worship. You see we are in Egypt, in Ancient Egypt. Come, we will go into the temple." But lo! as I spoke you had gone, and the Bull Apis had gone, and I was alone.

Before me the cold granite walls still remained, but carved now with dragons and symbols of Buddha's worship. As I stepped upon the marble slabs of the courtyard, blood oozed out of them and clung to my feet. When I saw this I stood still, unable to move for fear. Then slowly the two great doors of the temple opened towards me, and a priest came out. On his head was a towering red turban, and I supposed him to be a Brahmin, — only how came he into Egypt?

As I looked in his face, all my fear vanished, for in his eyes I saw nothing but the purest, tenderest love. Infinite sympathy was in his glance, and I was fain to abase myself at his feet.

But I held back, I knew not how. Something, many things about him surpassed my comprehension. Senses and faculties were his whereof I had no knowledge. Ah! I thought, but if I go into the temple I shall learn them; I shall acquire them for myself; I shall be like him, and shall wear a tower-

ing red turban! He knew my wish before I could speak it, and motioned for me to enter.

The doors closed upon me, shutting him out. I found myself in an inner court, which was paved with porphyry. There were no windows, or any lamps; yet all the place was filled with purple light.

Here were more priests, all clothed like the first one, and lying on the floor in front of them were six Roman cardinals, all asleep, their hats hung on pegs in the wall above them. In an instant I understood; already I was acquiring new powers of perception. These cardinals were missionaries, who had come to convert the "heathen" priests of this temple. They had been preaching, all of them together, and were sleeping now after their ineffectual exertion.

As I stood looking at them, one at the end, warned in his sleep of my presence, awoke, and, raising himself on his elbow, he waved me back with a sweeping gesture. He and his companions, with their hats, seemed strangely out of place, yet I did not smile. Gently one of the priests made him lie down again, and re-covered him with the silk blanket which his gesture had displaced.

I asked this priest whether I must remove my shoes before penetrating further into the

temple, for I saw piles and rows of shoes and sandals at the door.

"Yes," he said, "for they are stained with blood."

Then all at once I felt myself going, rushing down a long corridor, together with a mass of strange, unfamiliar people. I could hear them talking, but understood no word. But it seemed that I should soon come to know everything; once let me reach the inner sanctuary, where already I could see moving forms, and then all tongues and all mysteries would be plain to me.

Suddenly I stopped and let the people sweep past. I felt the cold pavement under my bare feet. I wanted to remember where I had left my shoes. I was sure I had removed them, for there were blood-stains on my hands; but where were they? I could not think. So I was drawn in opposite directions; the intense desire to learn what was beyond drew me forward. I could even see through a glass wall portions of a strange ceremony. A man clothed in cloth of gold stood before something and worshipped. Confusedly I could hear what he was saying. One word, always the same, he kept repeating in a solemn chant. I strained hard to hear it. Buddha? Brahma? Jehovah? Jove? Allah? No, neither of these; and yet

all of these, and many others, all expressed in this same word. Ah, this word, if I could learn it, would be the key of all things known and unknown. I took another step forward, and felt again the cold flagstones under my feet; and then the necessity of finding my shoes forced me back. Well, I would return and find them, and still be in time to learn this word. Back I flew to the doors and began a hurried search among the rows and piles of dusty shoes. I would know mine by the blood on them, I thought; but I looked in vain.

Shoes and sandals of every shape and size; but mine were not with them, — none of them were stained with blood. Wildly I ran from pile to pile, from row to row, — my search was useless.

Then the people began to come out, and I saw with dismay that the rite was over. It had ended while I stood turning over dusty shoes. This was remorseful. I stood back in a corner and wept, with my face to the wall. Then I thought: "I will wait here till every one is gone, and if any shoes be left, I will take them." Soon I heard the outer doors close, and looking around I saw my own shoes lying near by. Eagerly I seized them, and was hurrying away when one of the cardinals came and said they were

his shoes. "No," I cried, "for mine have marks of blood on them, as you may see." He snatched them from me, but in an instant he let them fall and started forward and stopped. I looked to where his gaze was turned, and saw a row of mummies standing against a wall. As we both stared at them they fell forward on their faces and flew into fragments at our feet. The cardinal backed away, and I saw him changing into a painted mummy himself. As he recoiled he fell backwards over my shoes and flew into fragments just like the others. . . .

Then I awoke in a great trepidation. The camp-fire was burned out, but the rush-lights showed me that all was well. I could hear the deep breathing of my comrades, asleep near by, and the quiet tread of the sentinel as he passed to and fro outside.

Thoughtfully I turned and kissed my pillow, and slept in peace till morning.

DE PERIER

"If I can gain Heaven for a pice,
Why need you be envious?"

I WAS sitting, one day, while journeying to Tonquin, on the ledge of a two-storied hen-coop in the stern of the vessel. There were other hen-coops on the opposite side, and sheep-pens farther along; wisps of hay were sticking to the bars of the pens, and paddy — that is, unthreshed rice — was scattered about the coops. At Singapore we had taken more sheep aboard, — an Asiatic breed, with broad, flat tails. Were the chickens "Brahmas," or "Cochin-Chinas," or "Plymouth Rocks"? I could not tell. I saw that they looked low-spirited as they crouched in a corner, and I called, "Biddy! biddy!" and "Chick! chick!" but they gave no heed.

Soldiers of the Foreign Legion and of the Marine Infantry went strolling up and down the deck, while others squatted in groups playing *loto* or *piquet*. Presently a fellow

dressed as a *chasseur d'Afrique* came and perched on the hen-coop opposite and began to stare at me. I liked his face, so I stared back at him. I had noticed him frequently before, particularly as he was the only one of his corps on board, and I had intended to ask some one about him, but had forgotten. Now, as we sat there, dangling our feet listlessly, we took each other's measure. What his judgment was he told me afterwards; what mine was I kept to myself till now. I thought his face was unusually handsome, having only two defects: a sensual mouth and a weak chin. I had seated myself up there with the hens for the purpose of reading "Minna von Barnhelm," but when this *chasseur* came along, I stuck the book between the bars of the coop, and stared uninterruptedly till O'Rafferty passed, and I called his attention with the tip of my toe and asked him who my *vis-a-vis* was, and "*que diable sient il faire dans galère.*" I knew O'Rafferty would soften to a bit of French, so for the sake of the quotation I humored him.

"O, he? I don't know exactly. Why do you ask me? Did you think I knew him?"

"No," I answered. "I did not suppose you would know him, or would care to tell if you did. I only asked you because I was

too lazy to get down and ask some one else."

Then O'Rafferty went on, and my right toe tingled. The chickens came forward, and picked at "Minna," so I rescued my book and began to read.

But pshaw! with that fellow's big gray eyes gazing at me I could not read, and I did not care to look at him any longer. So I got down and went forward. I found Gregoire, a big Belgian of my company, sitting in a shady corner, reading an ancient copy of "Le Figaro." I squatted down beside him, and asked him what was the news.

"O, nothing new," he yawned; "the Pope is still in Rome, it seems, and Bismarck at Berlin."

"Delighted to hear it; but say, who is the *chasseur* with the white hands and the big eyes? But as there is only one, I need not describe him. Do you know anything about him?"

"Yes; shall I introduce you? I know him well enough; he's a splendid chap; he killed an Arab — a *spahi;* that's why he's here. His colonel got him off that way. He's to go to Ha-Noï and enter the marine infantry there. He's a journalist, I think. Shall I introduce him?"

"Perhaps," I said, "but not now. I want

to take in what you have told me. How did he come to kill the *spahi?*"

"O, I don't know the details; it seems the *spahi* was jealous, and thought De Perier — that's his name — was flirting with his wife, or trying to; so he called De Perier a *sale roumi*, and De Perier slapped him, so they had to fight, and De Perier spitted him clean through. Then there was a fuss. Caïd somebody or other of the tribe of I don't know what, wanted vengeance. But the colonel of De Perier's regiment was a friend of De Perier's papa, and so all the punishment he got was thirty days *au clan*, and then they shipped him off here to Tonquin, as you see, and he'll change his corps, that's all."

"Thanks, Gregoire," I said. "I'll tell you to-morrow whether I wish to be introduced to your friend or not."

"What's that? My friend? I did not say he was my friend, did I? I know him somewhat, but there is no friendship between us."

"O, I beg your pardon, but as you praised him so much, I supposed you felt kindly towards him."

"And so I do feel kindly towards him; but that is far from having him for my friend."

Well, I noticed as we sailed that every one felt kindly towards De Perier, yet no one

seemed to make a friend of him; at least he was generally alone. Of course, being of a different corps, there was some reason for this; and yet one would expect that, being in the same squad (or *plat*, as we say at sea) with a few of the marine soldiers, some of them would have fraternized with him; but not at all; they left him quite alone.

When it came to the point of having Gregoire introduce me or not, I refused. No; De Perier attracted me in a way, but he repelled me at the same time.

"No, Gregoire," I said; "there is something queer about him. I don't know what. You feel it yourself, and you don't know what it is. Well, I don't want to know."

After that I thought no more about De Perier till he was leaving us, at Ha-Noï. Then, as I watched the others disembarking, I saw him running about shaking hands with everybody, and with me too before I knew it, or had the presence of mind to dodge him.

"*Au revoir*," he said; "I'll see you again."

"The deuce you will!" was what I thought, but I said: "Well, *au revoir*."

I certainly never expected to see him again, and as nearly as I can remember I never wanted to. He was no more to me than a face in a crowd; a handsome face, perhaps, but not recalled with any delight.

Yet we did meet again, as he predicted, and this was the way of it: I was sent to Ha-Noï to give testimony in a court-martial case, and as the trial was delayed for two or three months my stay there was prolonged.

I was quartered in the citadel with a company of marine infantry, and I had nothing to do but amuse myself and ward off mosquitoes.

One evening a tall "*marsouin*" came into our chamber and made himself free of a place on my bed, and forthwith he began to talk to me. I looked at him sharply, and tried to remember where I had seen him before; he saw my hesitation and said: "What? You forget? But I told you I would see you again. Don't you recall the *chasseur* on board the 'Colombo'?"

"Yes, vividly," I assented; "but you're not he; you're not De Perier?"

"O, yes I am, and quite at your service."

Sure enough; he had the same large gray eyes, only now I saw another light in them: the pupils seemed larger, and the expression was somehow different. Moreover, the large sensual mouth looked drawn, and fell at the corners more than formerly; yet, of course, it was De Perier: his voice was not changed, and as he talked I recalled it.

"Say," he said, "why did you not let

Gregoire introduce me to you on ship-board?"

I was taken aback by this sudden question.

"Did he tell you that I refused then?"

"No, he never spoke of you to me; but I knew what was in your mind. Don't you remember the day we sat staring at each other from opposite hen-coops? I came near saving you the trouble of asking O'Rafferty about me by coming over and telling you myself what I saw you wanted to know."

"But — but — but how did you know I asked O'Rafferty? Did he tell you?"

"Why, no; can't you understand? I read it all in your face."

"Indeed? You seem to have remarkably clear eyesight." And suddenly I turned and stared at him again straight in the eyes. "What," I asked, "do you read in my face now?"

"Why, you are wondering how it is that I have changed so: whether it is the climate; and whether I have the fever, and so on. Am I not right?"

"Quite right," I replied; "but you need not answer these questions till I ask them audibly."

I was vexed with him, and with myself, more than there was any reason for being; he saw it and said: "Come, let us go out for a walk; you do not wish to go to bed yet."

I did not want to go out with him in the least; but neither did I wish to sit there talking with him. I turned my face away that he might not see what I was thinking, and then I opened my lips to make some excuse; but what I really said was, "Yes, let us go for a walk." Out we went; I felt the same repugnance to him that I had spoken of to Gregoire, and now I partly understood it; it was because he had the power of reading my thoughts, and forestalled me with answers and comments before I spoke. But that was not all. I kept thinking of Doctor Fell, and wondering whether he guessed it; perhaps he did, for he worked hard to amuse me, and make me reconsider my verdict; and when he had talked for a time about Algeria I did reconsider it. He struck the right note when he began about that country, and I listened with open ears. "O, yes," I said, trying him; "but here in Tonquin we have this wonderful vegetation, and in Algeria it is all barren plains."

"Wonderful vegetation! look at it! green, green, green — eternally green! and I am sick of it, and I burn to get back to my barren plains. There one is free — one can breathe; ah! wait till you know Algeria as I do and you will agree with me."

"But I agree with you now," I said. "I, too, prefer Algeria to any other land."

"Only not to France?"

"A thousand times to France."

"Ah, but you see my mother is in France, and so I"—

After that first evening I felt no more repugnance towards De Perier, and the days were long till the evenings when he would come and sit on my bed and talk. Sometimes he was on guard duty and could not come, but six evenings out of seven we were together.

Once I asked him about his prospects: what would he do when his service was finished?

"O, I shall probably never get out of my track; I shall reënlist."

"Reënlist!" I screamed; "but you told me you hated the life. You don't propose to try for promotion, do you?"

"Not at all. Yes, I do hate it, but what else can I do?"

"You frighten me! What else can you do? Why, you might better do anything than become brutalized here in the army! I thought Gregoire told me you were a journalist?"

"So I am — or so I was once; but that's a dog's life too; and then — but don't let us talk about it."

"As you choose," I said; "but how about your mother? You said she was in France; will you not wish to return to see her?"

"I said, please do not let us talk about my future; but since you will have it, I'll tell you that — that I" —

Then he got up and went out, and I saw him no more till the next day, which was Sunday; then he came in the afternoon and invited me to go out in town and call on some of his friends. No way loath I went with him.

I wanted to lead our talk back to where it had so suddenly ended the night before, but he started off on another track; he began to tell me of a girl whom he once wanted to marry — on whose account he was here. "Why," I interrupted, "from what Gregoire told me, I thought it was for killing an Arab that you were obliged to come here."

"O, yes; but if I had not been in Algeria I could not have killed the *spahi*, and if it had not been for Catrine I would not have been in Algeria. What says your English proverb? 'For ze want of ze ridère ze cheval was los',' hein!"

"Ah, quite so, I understand. By the way, do you not speak English?"

For my sins I asked it! Forthwith he began to recall Ollendorf's English, and he

floundered about for a time in impossible sentences.

"O, excellent, excellent!" I exclaimed; "I admire your memory; but to go back to Miss Catrine; how was it her fault that you went to Algeria?"

"O, the old story: she loved some one else — at least she married him — and I had the misfortune to wound him in a duel. I had confidently hoped that he would kill me, but he didn't, as you see, so I went off to Algeria. What great lengths we go when once started; just like the rest of creation, we have to submit to the law of inertia, we — but here we are at Robert's; come in."

We were in a by-street, lined with low-roofed, Annamite dwellings.

We entered a large room just off the street, and I was introduced to Robert and to his Annamite wife. He was a middle-aged man, employed as a town clerk, or something. It was interesting to see how she deified him, and pleasing to see how kind he was to her; but nothing else about either of them attracted me. After the usual speeches of courtesy had been made, I found that Robert spoke English quite readily, and he was glad of a chance to show off his ability. All at once he whispered to me, "Have you known De Perier for a long time?"

"No, but be careful; he understands a little English; he will hear you."

"No; he is talking to my wife, he does not notice. If you had known him well, I would have asked you to help him, but as you are only an acquaintance"—

"Even so, I am willing to help him if I can. How does he need help?"

He looked at me sharply. "Don't you know? don't you see?" he whispered.

"Not in the least; I see he has changed somehow: he is not like what he was before coming here — I remember him on the voyage — but" —

"O, if you don't know what it is, I cannot tell you. I am sorry I spoke; please forget it."

"Certainly, I shall not mention it, but I shall be curious all the same. I have often heard him speak of you as his friend, but permit me to say that you were not greatly pleased to see him when we came in. O, no doubt you were cordial enough with the lips, but the light in your eyes went out. I used to feel quite as you do towards him, but lately I have grown to like him."

"And so do I; I like him, too, but" —

"But what? Speak out, man! You talk of him as if he were a murderer. I know that he killed an Arab, but it was in a duel, and" —

"O, I say there, you are not very polite, you others, with your English." It was De Perier who spoke.

"You are right," I said; "but please excuse us, 'tis so long since we have had a chance to speak it."

Alas! I saw that though De Perier had not understood, he had guessed what we were talking about. I was vexed with him for having taken me there, and with Robert for having dragged me into a false position. I was eager to get away, and so, for that matter, was De Perier. Before long we stood up to take leave. Robert's little boy came in just then, and he jabbered a jumble of French and Annamite to us, which relieved the strain, and we were able to come away laughing.

Robert seemed sincere in asking us to call again, and in an aside to me he asked if I would come alone the next day. I said yes, I would; but I did not feel very sure about it. I had had enough of Robert. As soon as we were on the street De Perier cried: "What did he say? Did he tell you?"

"Did he tell me what? I will tell you, De Perier, that your friend Robert does not please me at all, and I wish we had never gone near him. He hinted things — or something — about you, I don't know what — and

you have hinted yourself. Last night you — but please don't think. I am asking you to tell me what is in the wind."

"Well, see here," he cried; "it is in the wind, as you say, and if you remain at Ha-Noï you will hear it from some quarter; so I may as well tell you myself: *I smoke opium.*"

"Indeed!" I exclaimed. "The mountain was in labor and brought forth a mouse! You and your friend Robert make much ado about nothing."

"Ah, but you don't understand: I am a slave to it; I cannot live without it; *and it is killing me.*"

Yes, I saw it now. I had been blind and stupid not to have seen it before. Why, only coming down the river I had seen a Chinaman dying from this habit; but, pshaw! it could not be.

"Do you say," I asked, "that you *know* it is killing you, and you will not stop it?"

"No, I do not say that: I say I know it is killing me and I *cannot* stop it, — to stop it would be death, too, so far I have gone."

"But how — when do you smoke?"

"Every night; when I leave you I go straight to the pipe."

"But do your officers not know it? Has no one warned you, or tried to save you?"

"Yes, it is becoming known; but no; noth-

ing can be done for me. There is no immediate danger, however, unless I were to be deprived of it."

"Ah, but in your position as a soldier, how easy it would be to deprive you of it! Suppose for some breach of discipline you were put into prison for a few days or longer?"

"Well, I have considered that possibility, and in such a case I would be obliged to eat opium instead of smoking it."

"Yes, but how procure it in prison, even for eating?"

"O, I am always provided with a certain quantity for fear of being taken unawares, as you suggest; but I know there are thousands of circumstances in which I might be forced to forego it. You know, I suppose, — at least you have read, — that the after effects of the sleep are as horrible as it is heavenly. Well, the chief horror for me is the fear of having no more opium to smoke. I imagine that I am dying for lack of it, as I may be some day, and the agony and terror of this feeling are unspeakable. But that is only one of the horrors — and, pshaw! the delights are greater than the horrors, so why should I forego them? Don't speak; I know all you may wish to say. I have said it all to myself, often and often. I know it is a terrible state to be in. At least rational people so con-

sider it. But what is reason, anyway? Yet no; why should I seek to defend myself? You cannot judge fairly till you are as I am, and then you will judge as I do. Why is it that certain of us were born with such weak wills that we run headlong to destruction? Were we not created for this?"

"O, for God's sake, De Perier!" I cried, "do not talk such infernal nonsense! You fool yourself if you think it is your fate to destroy yourself. I cannot say that if you were to blow out your brains at once there might not be some merit and virtue in that; but to kill yourself slowly, mind and body, as you profess to do, strikes me as being the madness of a fool."

"It is worse than that," he cried. "I am almost rational now, and I see almost as you do; but in a few hours, when the desire to smoke returns, then it is the madness of a devil which fills me, and I am not myself; or I am myself at such times and not now. I do not know. I know that some experience one thing, and some another. My case is exceptional. I cannot hinder my fate. I can only submit."

"O, yes," I sneered; "that is the plea that every one makes; but it is false. Indeed you flatter yourself; your case is no different from thousands of others; you"—

"Hold on! you are wrong there," he cried. "Each case, each individual, is different in countless ways from every other individual; the circumstances of no two lives are just alike, and if you knew the details of my life — say, do you believe in inherited tendencies? But why should I seek to defend myself? I wish rather to condemn myself, and to warn you and every one from following in my path."

"But listen an instant," I said. "Is your case utterly hopeless? Can nothing — absolutely nothing — be done? Do you not desire now — now when you say you are almost rational — to stop in your course, to get back your strength and manhood?"

"I understand what you ask, but that is all; I have no desire for anything much, except for peace — and opium. What you call strength and manhood, what are they, after all, that I should desire them? Strength and manhood, forsooth! What are they for but to experience joy and pleasure withal, hein? O, yes; 'sane pleasures' and 'modest joys' — *Et in Arcadia ego!* — *Fichtre!* Are they to be compared in any way with the delights of opium? Never!"

"Alas! then I may hold my peace," I said, for to talk with him was like groping for a door in a blank wall; and then I shud-

dered. I, in my safety, felt so scornful, so unforbearing towards him. I was safe because I felt no desire to imitate him; yet if it were otherwise, would that be wonderful or surprising?

"Listen, De Perier," I said, "and try to understand what I mean. It is impossible that I should feel otherwise than disgusted with you. The old revulsion which I felt on the ship has returned to me; I know now why I feel it. But now I have another feeling in my heart for you — no, it is not pity: you need not wince — it is sympathy. Thus, even while I feel how terribly depraved you are, I have no stone to throw at you; not one.

"To me your fault seems very great, but that does not make it so; my standards are never what you or any one shall be judged by. I am something of a Pharisee, perhaps, because I *am* thankful not to be as you are, just as I would be thankful not to have a broken leg or softening of the brain; you see, there is no scorn of you in it. In my way I may have worse defects than this of yours, and — I have not yet left Tonquin. Who can tell that I may not become as you are? It is always possible. Realizing this, I cannot condemn you without condemning myself beforehand. Now, see here: if you think

that my companionship is of any value to you, I ask you to make use of it when you will, and as you will; but if you are indifferent, or can forego my society without loss, I ask you for my sake to do so. I believe that if I were to see you often I would grow used to the idea of opium, and — who is ever sure of himself? No; unless there be something to be gained for you by coming to see me, I will ask you not to come any more. This looks to be unkind; yes, it looks quite as if I threw you off because you were not good enough for me; but you know it is not so; you know — you must know that I care more for you now than I ever did before; and this is what makes your presence dangerous for me; being fond of you, I may easily grow used to your habit, I may just wish to try it — just to see; you know how easy it is to start on a bad road." . . .

To all this and much more De Perier listened in silence. We had come back by way of the lake, and there we sat down on a big stone bench to talk the matter over. I did not think he would regret the loss of my company; he had his opium to console him for any temporary disquietude.

See there! was I not half envious of him, of his ability to escape the vexations of life?

For my own part I would miss him bitterly

at first, but in the army one grows used to such separations; one can count on nothing else. He made some objection at first, but I was firm, and at last we agreed that he should come no more to see me, unless there were something of importance to say to me — which would not be likely to occur.

As we sat there looking out over the lake, seeing nothing of the beauty of it, I suddenly felt him clutch my arm, and turning I saw his face wet with tears, — weak, drivelling tears, I thought, — and my heart hardened towards him; but when he burst out in a storm of grief which shook him bodily, I was moved to relent.

"You were my last friend," he said, "and you cast me off; that is what I feel, and it is bitter. But it is not a great sorrow. When I left France and when I said adieu to Algeria I did not weep; yet my grief was greater than it is now, and yet this is bitter."

"Yes," I admitted, "it is. But, you see, for me it is necessary, and you care enough for me to wish me to escape the danger of falling into your condition. If I were morally stronger it would not be needful for us to separate — but" —

"O, I know it is for the best, and we will abide by our agreement."

Slowly he stood up and said "good-

night!" for the sun had gone down while we sat there, and the stars had come out. "It is 'good-by.'" I said. "Yes, good-by!" — and in the twilight he walked away, and left me sitting there. . . .

On the next evening, when De Perier did not appear at the usual time I was struck with grief. Indeed it was time I detached myself from him. But would he come? Would he break our agreement and come? Eagerly I waited and hoped; but no, he did not come. In vain I tried to read, so I got up and walked out — perhaps I would meet him. I summoned to my mind all the repugnance, all my disgust of him, but it was gone; nothing did I feel but the tenderest pity and sympathy, and the most ardent wish to see him. Up and down I walked, looking every one in the face, but De Perier did not appear. I went back sad and sorry. Why had I thrown him off? But I would see him somehow the next day, and beg him to forget what I had said; but why should I? If he had really cared for my company he would not have submitted to my request. So I continued wavering from one notion to another till a week passed. I was gradually schooling myself back to indifference and to something of my old repugnance.

But when he came running in to me one

morning, my heart leaped forward to meet him.

"Halloo! what is it?" I cried.

"I've only a minute to say adieu. I'm off to Son-Tay in half an hour. I shall never see you again, — I am glad to have known you" —

"Nay, it is not 'adieu' this time either," I said. "I shall see you again, I am sure; *au revoir* till then."

He looked at me in a strange way, and his big gray eyes clouded over.

"I hope we may meet again," he said, "but it is doubtful. Good-by!" and he was gone. . . .

Shortly afterwards I left Ha-Noï to return to Yen-Luong. The boat stopped for a few minutes at Son-Tay, and of one of the soldiers loitering on the wharf I asked for news of De Perier. He did not know him, but said that if he had lately come from Ha-Noï, he was probably *en colonne* — marching after pirates.

On reaching my post I found that our company was also to start out, and all was excitement over it. We would see something of the country anyway, and if we found any pirates — why, *tant mieux* — *ou tant pis!*

We had been marching a long time, it

seemed, when we were told of a preconcerted attack to be made on Song-Yam the next day. Two battalions of Marine Infantry were to arrive at the same point from an opposite direction. "So, then, I shall see De Perier to-morrow," I thought, and thereupon I forgot how tired I was and the mosquitoes ceased to bother me.

The attack was made; and after we had buried our dead — six was the number, I think — and cared for the wounded, we prepared to depart.

Just then a *marsouin* came into our camp asking right and left for me. "Yes? What is it? Is it De Perier?"

"How did you know? Yes, it is he, and he is dying. If you wish to see him you must come quickly."

"Ah, but I cannot go without permission; my company is to start directly, and I should be left. How has he been wounded?"

"Who said he was wounded? It's not that, he has a fever or something. He has been out of his head for the last three hours. I supposed he was raving when he asked me to come and look for you, but it seems you know him."

"Wait a minute."

I ran to an under officer and asked permission. Yes, I could go for an hour; it would

be that long before the company could start.

"Come on!" I cried; "quick! lead the way!"

In ten minutes we were in the camp of the marine infantry, and there, lying in the shade of a clump of bamboos I found poor De Perier.

My heart sank as I saw him. Death was near, and such a death! More horrible than I had ever pictured it. All his flesh was wasted and gone; only a skeleton was left, in which was an awful, visible agony. At first he did not know me, but I knelt down and whispered in his ear, "What is it De Perier? what can I do for you?"

"Ha! it is you! see! quick! you can save me! it is all gone — you know, my opium is all gone — for four days I have had none. Oh, for the love of France find me some quick, or I am lost! O, quick! quick!"

"But how? where? O, my dear friend, if my heart were of opium I would tear it out for you, but, alas!"

Suddenly I remembered: after the attack of the day before, some of our men had pillaged in the pirates' *canias;* perchance they had found some.

"Wait," I said.

Back I ran to our camp and asked hurriedly

whether any had been found, and who had it. Yes, Penhoat had found a small tin box of opium, and had sold it to a cooly for a piaster.

"Which cooly? quick!"

"That one, there, with the white rag on his arm." I had two piasters, so I ran to him.

"*Donne opium mow-lemvite!*" I cried. From his turban he took it, and like the wind I flew back to De Perier. No, I was not too late; he was still alive, yet the fire had died in his eyes, and he seemed calm.

"See, I have some!" I said.

Eagerly, furiously he snatched the box and pressed it to his heart.

"At last saved! — saved!" And then a new light shone across his face, and suddenly he sat up and with all his remaining strength he hurled the box of opium away from him.

"My God! De Perier, what have you done! You are dying, do you know? You have thrown your life away," and I arose to go after the opium.

"No; listen," he said, and in his voice was the ring of strength and manhood. "It is over; my agony is mortal, and why prolong it? To-day — to-morrow, or next year; what does it matter? Here; my mother's address. Write to her; tell her — tell her — ah!" . . .

A blur came over his eyes, his voice died away, and he sank back. Over in our camp I heard the clarion sounding "*sac à dos*," and I knew that my company was starting.

I bent over and touched De Perier's forehead with my lips. He was dead, and there I left him in the shade of the bamboos. I told his comrade whom he had sent for me, and then I rejoined my company, running for a mile before I came up with it. . . .

When we got back to Yen-Luong, I found Madame De Perier's address in one of my pockets, and I remembered what her son had said; so I wrote:

DEAR MADAM: You will have known ere this of your son's death. I do not know what report the authorities may have made to you concerning it; but whatever you may have been told was doubtless incorrect. I, as an eye-witness, can give you a more exact account. You must know that your son died on the field of battle (*le champ d'honneur*). Many brave soldiers were killed that day, but no one died more heroically than he. By submission to the enemy he might have saved his life, but with a courage almost superhuman he preferred death to bondage; and so his death was noble — triumphant.

Adieu, Madam!

I have the honor to have been your son's friend, and to remain your devoted servant. . . .

P.S. — His last words were of you. He bade me write to you.

THE WORST OF THE BARGAIN

THE nicest native I ever met was Pho-Xa. That was the name he preferred; but to certain Catholic missionaries he had been known as Paul. He had been "Catholica" himself in those days; he had been baptized by these missionaries, and, to some extent, educated by them. But he had recanted, and had resumed his name of Pho-Xa, and his worship of the great Buddha.

Van Eycke and I were going down the river in a *chaloupe* when I saw him first. Van Eycke was a Belgian who had a knowledge of many unspeakable things, of which he was always trying to tell in untranslatable French. The reason his speech was so unusual was because at home he had heard only Wallon spoken, and nothing but Argot in the streets. The mixture of these made confusion. By the time we reached Vie-Trie I had grown weary of his talk, so all without giving offence I bade him hold his peace. At Vie-Trie a few natives came aboard, and

among them was Pho-Xa. I was not observant of him at first. It was a rich family of quality which drew my attention.

There was a man with his two wives and a child, a little girl. After certain preliminary gestures of courtesy they installed themselves in a clean corner of the deck, and then they proceeded to drink *nyuk-tay* and to smoke the Annamite pipe.

The garments and jewelry of the younger woman were very fine and costly, and the inventory of them interested me. Her outer *kay-ow*, or tunic, was of sombre hue; but where it opened at the sides several others were disclosed, all of the most gorgeous colors, and each in the right relation to the others, so that none of them looked dull. Her *ka-quan* was of yellowish silk, and fell in folds over her black lacquered sandals.

Her little ears were pierced by thick links of yellow gold, and a heavy golden collar was about her neck. I had estimated all these things, and more, when my attention was averted by Van Eycke's discordant voice. He was talking to Pho-Xa, who sat staring at him as though he were an oracle of profoundest wisdom. I left off looking at the rich family, and went over to listen to Van Eycke.

"Halloo!" said he, "let me introduce you

to Pho-Xa. Is that it? Isn't he nice? He can speak French. He's a school-teacher, and only eighteen years old. He" —

"All right," I interupted; "since he knows French let him speak for himself."

Pho-Xa looked at me in surprise, wondering how I dared to snub one so wonderful as Van Eycke.

He was indeed a bright fellow, ready of understanding, and graceful of manner, with a knowledge of French which was quite unusual. I am sure that Van Eycke, whose previous life had been passed at Paris, knew nothing whatever of the inherent qualities of French verbs; but here was Pho-Xa talking about the fourth declension! O, a school-teacher indeed!

Van Eycke could not comprehend this at all, for he continued to talk to him in the jargon of common usage.

It was plain that when Van Eycke talked to me poor Pho-Xa was quite bewildered, so very few of Van Eycke's words were in his vocabulary.

Presently something in Pho-Xa's manner puzzled me: in the middle of a sentence he would hesitate and look behind in a startled way as though he were called, or as though to ward off a blow.

"What is the matter, Pho-Xa?" I asked.

"Nothing, oh, nothing, — I fear nothing!" and then after a moment, "Do you know the captain at Than-Ba?"

"You mistake," I replied; "there is no captain at Than-Ba, it is a lieutenant who has the command of that post. Yes, I know him, — why?"

"O, it is because I will teach the native *tin-yow* — the native children — at Than-Ba, and I desire that the master, the head of the post, be contented with me; that is all."

And so I went on talking with Pho-Xa, finding out several things I had long wished to know.

At least when Pho-Xa could not answer my questions he said so in French; and my ears were not vexed by the eternal "*kongo-biet.*" I saw that although Pho-Xa's garments were of rich material, they were much worn, and patched about the elbows.

He was quick to notice my scrutiny of him, and seeing perhaps a look of interest in my face he began to tell me about himself. His family, as he said, had been rich and considerable, and had dwelt at Hong-Hoa; but at the approach of French invasion the natives there had burned their houses and fled.

Pho-Xa was but a young boy then, and had been lost in the excitement and confusion of flight.

Eventually he had fallen into the hands of some French missionaries, and these had taught him more or less, and had baptized him in the Catholic religion.

"Ah," I said, "so you are Catholic?"

He looked at me sharply to see whether the truth would horrify me, but I stared vacantly at him, and then slowly he said: "No, not now; now I say, '*shim shim Buddha*,' like all my people. But my father and brother, they do not know it; they think me still 'Catholica'! My father and brother are with the pirates — they are not friends of France; they suffer much. My brother he wish to kill me; he say so; he say better I dead than Frenchman, than 'Catholica.' And so I come back to Buddha. I run away from the mission — but I find not my brother, and still he think me 'Catholica.' Now I have a word from him — one word he write to me; he write '*Thiet;*' you know: Death.

"He mean he will kill me, for that he think me Frenchman. Well, I like Frenchman too — he kind to me —

"But he not my brother! 'Catholica' not Buddha!" and Pho-Xa lapsed into silence, only to start up and look about in a scared way.

"Why don't you try to find your brother?" I asked.

"I have already sought him at all villages, but he with the pirates in the mountains. No one can tell me more of him than that. Now, I will teach in a school, I will teach the French to the little children. If France must be our mother, then we must know to speak to her — to tell her what we desire — to tell her of our sadness.

"For me it seems good that the France our mother. I read with the missionaries that she a great country, that no land before her in Europe.

"Well, we have also our civilization, our knowledge; but it can be that elsewhere in the world is more knowledge, more wisdom; it can be that French knowledge is also good. It can be that by French wisdom we find sooner Nirvannah! perhaps. The missionaries say — but you 'Catholica;' you know already what they say. Sometimes they see better than Buddha. — But they say Buddha wrong — all wrong!

"I see not that; I see wrong with Frenchman too — but not all wrong. I see."

"Fichtre! Pho-Xa; you are not wise," I said; "you must learn to shut your eyes to all such things. You must see only sunshine and the beautiful world. You must hear only harmony; when the birds sing, when the wind shakes the bamboos, when the river

surges past, to these things you may listen; but when there is a noise in the clouds, when bright fire strikes across the sky, and when the missionaries dispute, then you may stop your ears; such things will make you afraid. It is better for you to learn pleasure than fear. You must begin now to find Nirvannah; but if you listen to discords you cannot reach it. Do you understand?"

"I understand a little; but there is difficulty. Do you find only pleasure and gladness? Do you hear no thunder in the sky?"

For answer I smiled somewhat grimly at Pho-Xa, and he understood.

Van Ecyke had tried to follow our talk, but it seemed as nonsense to him, and he had gone away.

Then it seemed nonsense to me too, so we talked of other things till we came to Son-Tay, where Pho-Xa landed. I saw him no more for a long time, for six months or so; and then as I was sojourning at Than-Ba, Driessen, who was of that post, began to talk about Paul, the school-teacher down in the village; and he asked me to come and see him. In the evening we went down and I was presented.

"But this is not Paul! this is Pho-Xa!" I cried; and as I spoke he recognized me, and

then he shook hands with me instead of with himself as he had started to do.

I glanced around the school-room and saw signs and symbols of Christianity, — crosses and crucifixes, with the Lord's Prayer printed in red.

"What is all this, Pho-Xa?" I cried. "Are you 'Catholica' again?" In a scared and deprecating way he waved his hands towards the walls, and looked at me appealingly.

"You see," he stammered, as he drew me apart from Driessen, "it is the *quan-hai;* it is the lieutenant of the post; he give me not the school; he let me not teach when I not 'Catholica.' He never let me teach *shim shim Buddha!* to *tin-yow*. All same *tin-yow* learn *shim shim Buddha!* at home, and I teach *Pater-Noster* in school. *Tin-yow* soon forget *Pater-Noster*, but not forget *shim shim Buddha!* — Come!"

And bowing with deference to Driessen, he led me back into his private chamber, where he pointed proudly to Buddha's image, where it sat smiling behind sticks of burning incense.

"So, ho!" I said. "'Catholica' in school-room and 'Buddhist' in chamber? Is that right, Paul? Is that right, Pho-Xa? Did you learn that from the missionaries, or from Buddha?"

"No, I learn it from you."

"What! From me? Are you crazy? How did you learn it from me?"

"O, you not remember? On *chaloupe* you say to me that I must find gladness. I must hear no bad things. Well, it is for me a bad thing if I have hunger, if I have no rice to eat. I cannot plant rice like *nyack-way*. I can only teach *tin-yow*. I tell you *quan-hai* send me away when I teach *shim shim Buddha!*"

"Pho-Xa, you did not tell me that the missionaries you were with were Jesuits, but I fear they must have been. I think you have taken this philosophy from them, and not from me. It is true I have told you to seek pleasure and gladness, but you will not find them in a lie. If you will be 'Catholica,' then you must forget Buddha. How can you say *Pater-Noster* and *shim shim Buddha!* at the same time?"

"Ah, but I say not *Pater-Noster* for *me;* I say him for *tin-yow*. Lieutenant say I must teach 'Catholica.' I all same as machine for *quan-hai*, so it not I who teach *Pater-Noster*, it *quan-hai*. You not see that?"

"No," I said. "I see only falsehood; if *quan-hai* know you say *shim shim Buddha* he send you away. You not see that?"

"Yes, but he not know. You not tell him?"

"No, surely I'll not tell him — but" —

But it was useless to argue: Pho-Xa had learned a little worldly wisdom, and he was putting it in practice.

It was easy to blame him, and I did blame him, but perhaps, as he said, it was indirectly my fault that he acted so; perhaps this was partly the result of what I had said to him, and so I said no more about it.

"You will still drink the tea with me?" he asked.

"O, yes; why not? I know you mean to do right, but you should not try to serve two masters. Have you not heard that from the missionaries? How can you be Buddhist and 'Catholica' at the same time?"

"Two masters?" he repeated. "Is it? Are they two masters? Are they not different pictures of the same master?

"I see so much alike in both. I am more used to Buddha's picture, and I like it better; but Christus? He too show the way to Nirvannah? — not?" —

"Pho-Xa," I said, "you must never act outwardly on such interior reasoning. You will be misunderstood, — and you will come to grief."

But Pho-Xa only smiled, and we drank the *nyuk-tay* together.

When I took leave of him I said he had better forget all I had said to him on the *chaloupe*.

And now my word was that he had best change his way of life, else, soon or late, mischief would come of it.

I predicted truer than I intended.

It was from Driessen that I learned the end of Pho-Xa's story.

A month or two after my visit to Than-Ba a pirate had been captured.

As they made ready to execute him, he said that if they would spare his life he would guide the soldiers to the stronghold in the mountains where his comrades were.

He knew that at the first sign of double-dealing on his part he would be shot, so he led the soldiers aright and betrayed his comrades.

Yet these escaped while their fortresses and *canias* were burning.

Then their betrayer was set free and led back to Than-Ba in triumph.

This was Pho-Xa's brother, and a day or two after the return the brothers met.

It seems that Pho-Xa was furious when he learned the truth, and he reviled his brother bitterly — called him a traitor who had sold

his own father for the sake of his own worthless life.

Thereupon the brother began to retaliate, accusing Pho-Xa of apostasy.

By this they had reached the school-room, and there the sight of the Catholic symbols so enraged the brother that he sprang upon Pho-Xa and clove his head in twain with the large axe-like knife which he carried. There, in the morning, the *tin-yow* found their master; and seeking farther, they found the brother in the inner chamber, — dead before the shrine of Buddha.

THE PAGODA

DAY after day we had been marching, and the days counted up made weeks, and the weeks — but we lost the count. We knew, however, that it was early in January, of 1890, when our company started out after pirates, and we said that if we ever returned to our post we would learn the date of our arrival, and begin again the count of times and seasons. Now, it did not matter; one day was just like another day, and every day unspeakably wearisome.

We had been a long time in the mountainous district of north-western Tonquin, in the country of the Muongs. I had a map of the land, and for a time I was able to trace our wanderings. But eventually I lost interest in that, as well as in the course of time, and I went blindly. As much as possible I detached my mind from the present and lived in the past. Often there were rude awakenings, as, for example, when we chanced on a few pirates, or had unusually bad weather,

but by "thinking of something else" I did not feel the fatigue so greatly, and so I lived through it.

A great many had been unable to keep on, and our company was losing many good soldiers. Not all of them died, for at certain points of our march it had been possible to send the sick ones back to post, or on to Hong-Hoa, where they could be cared for.

At length, much to my satisfaction, we left the mountains, where marching was so hard, and where the scenery, like a nightmare, had weighed upon me so heavily, and now we were down in the lowlands again.

On we went, by winding streams, past green rice-fields, and through groves of graceful palm-trees.

Sometimes we came to large villages, all deserted, with the doors agape, and no one to bid us remain or depart. Some villages showed signs of recent occupation, and others had been abandoned for years.

Usually we would halt for the night or for a day's rest at one of these hamlets, so we were seldom without a shelter.

If one can readily adapt himself to circumstances, he will suffer much less than if he stipulate for customary usages. What, then, did these Annamites consider a rice diet to be good? Then why should not I think so

too? And it was good. Did they sleep better with a block of wood for a pillow? Ah, what dreams have I not had with my head thus at ease! Did they prefer sandals to shoes? Good again; when my shoes were worn out, a pair of sandals must serve my purpose. Thus, while many others sickened and died, I retained my health.

Sometimes we came upon the ruins of forgotten cities of unknown civilization; fragments of brick walls nearly level with the ground marked where houses had stood. Who had lived in them? Who had hated and loved and suffered here? It was ages and ages ago, and these people had been born, had grown old and died, and they never knew — never guessed, perhaps — that America existed.

They had died and left no sign except these crumbling walls, and here and there the stone image of an elephant or of some other strange animal.

Descuret, of our company, was an Egyptologist, and he was quite familiar with all that is known of the old Egyptian dynasties; so I thought I had only to appeal to him, in order to find out all I wanted to know about these ruins. But, alas! he knew his own corner of the world, and that was all. His knowledge of hieroglyphic signs was of no

avail to him here; and to my amazement he was quite indifferent about it; nay, he even seemed surprised that any one could feel any interest in anything of the sort — outside of Egypt. He said, finally, that he had heard mention of certain kings called Le, who had lived in these parts, but how, and when, and where were all unknown to him. It was useless to ask the natives. If they understood your questions or not, their answer was ever the same, "*Kongo-biet*" (I don't know), and the exasperation of it all was that no one seemed to care. What does this mean? Why do you do that? For what purpose is such a thing? Alas! no one knows. Signs and symbols of things meet one constantly; the outward form remains, but the thing signified is dead and forgotten. So these vestiges of the past ceased to interest me, and I looked at them as indifferently as did my companions.

We had wandered beyond the Black river, the *Song Bo*, and the name of the last inhabited village we had passed was Quinh-Lam-Bao. We left it early one morning and proceeded westward. A day and part of a night we marched, and came at last to what seemed the outskirts of a village; a few scattered *canias* we found, and in them we spent the rest of the night. In the morning

the coolies and native soldiers who were with us began to sniff around, and they finally concluded that these *canias* had not been very long deserted, and it was plain that Chinamen and not Annamites had been the last occupants. A speedy council was held among the officers, and it was decided to sojourn there that day, and to send out scouting parties to survey the surrounding country. We were well satisfied to have a day's rest, and forthwith we began to cook the dinner; but just then it was arranged for our squad to go over the hill to the left, and furnish two sentinels to watch in that direction.

We left the others with orders to hurry the dinner, and went off to the hill, about half a mile away. We placed one sentinel between us and the camp, and another on the brow of the hill.

The rest of us found a position in the shade, and straightway we lay down to sleep. All at once I awoke and found De Baise looking at me. "Say," he said, "there is a brook down below; let us go and wash our shirts."

"A good idea," I replied; and in a short time our shirts were drying, white and clean, on a bush. From where we sat waiting we could see a large *cania*, and De Baise sug-

gested that we should go and look inside; we might find something.

"All right," I said; "but go and get your rifle first, for we may find more than we wish."

In a few minutes he had fetched it, and cautiously we proceeded to examine the *cania*. We found much rice and paddy in separate bins, and along one wall were hens' nests in a row, containing many fresh eggs.

"Good!" I cried, "we need not care now whether they send us our dinner or not."

While De Baise began to fill a basket I climbed up a ladder into the upper chamber, where I found a series of big black lacquered boxes, all filled with books — Chinese books which no one could read. The place was dark and mouldy, so I pushed open a side of the wall and propped it up like an awning. In doing this I saw the red-tiled roof of a pagoda farther down the hill. It was half hidden by the branches of a banyan-tree, but I saw that the corners of the roof were tilted up, and this assured me that it was a pagoda, and not another *cania*.

I called De Baise up, but all he said was: "Fusty old books! Come on back. I'm going to make an omelet."

"You can make *au rhum*," I said, "or *au tschum-tschum* rather. There is a jar of it in the corner."

He made one spring, and had his nose at the jar directly.

"Hooray!" he shouted, "so it is! You take the eggs, and come along."

"Hold on! you forget your shirt," I cried, for he was making rapid strides up to the squad. In a few minutes we were back, and I was just in time to relieve one of the sentinels; De Baise should have relieved the other, but he wanted to cook the eggs, so he changed places with Descuret.

"Wait a little," he said; "don't you want a drink of *tschum-tschum* before you go?" and he proceeded to pour out for us. It was not the ordinary distillation of rice, but a particular sort, known as *ton-doc*, strong and sweet, with a smack of orange peel.

It was Geniets whom I relieved, and as he went I told him to keep his eye on De Baise.

"He's got a jar of *tschum-tschum*," I said, "and he'll have you all drunk before midday, unless you are prudent." — "*Tschum-tschum?* Where did he get it?" But without waiting to hear he was off for his share of it.

Looking about me in all directions I observed the sprawling limbs of a banyan-tree, and then I remembered the pagoda, the roof of which I had seen from the *cania*. I had not spoken of it to De Baise, because his

excitement over the *tschum-tschum* had put it out of my head.

During the first part of my sentry duty I felt fresh and exhilarated. A clean shirt and a cup of *tschum-tschum* had made a change in my spirits, so that I saw the bright side of everything — even of this interminable march. But soon the sun reached the zenith, and my enthusiasm all trickled away in perspiration. I was sure my two hours were finished long ago, yet no one came to relieve me. Faintly I could hear the murmur of voices up at the squad, and, yes, that was De Baise singing in a weak falsetto :

"N'allez pas chez le marchand de vin, qui fait le coin, coin, coin ! "

"Yes," I thought, "they are all drunk, and the corporal too ; and here I may stand till I drop, — the mean pigs ! "

But by and by Van Eycke came jogging along to take my place (the corporal had not bothered to come with him), and as I saw he was quite well able to stand up, I gave him the watchword, and went back to the squad. De Baise had gone to relieve Descuret, but he had left me a big slab of burned omelet reeking of *tschum-tschum*. However, the soup had come from the camp, so I did not grumble. After an hour's sleep I sat up with my thoughts running on the pagoda.

"Is there any of the *tschum-tschum* left?" asked Descuret, who also was awake.

"I don't know," I said, "look in the jar; it's there by the tree."

There was a little, and we shared it.

"Where did you get it?" he asked.

"Down there in a *cania*. I say, will you come and examine a pagoda that is just beyond? Take your rifle and come."

"Hadn't we better tell the corporal?" he asked.

"You can, if you like; but he's asleep, and he'll not thank you for waking him."

"Come on, then," he said; "where is it?"

"Not far; that banyan-tree down there hides it; we'll be there in a minute."

"If you think we can find any more *tschum-tschum?*" he whispered.

"What? In a pagoda? Are you crazy?"

"No, of course not, but you said there was a *cania*."

"Yes, yes, there's the *cania*, over there, but De Baise and I were all through it, and found only one jar; you can go in and look, if you like, and I'll mount guard. You'll see the roof of the pagoda from the upper chamber. Hurry up!"

In a little while he came out, carrying a dead chicken.

"We'll roast this for our supper," he said.

"But look here; I saw the roof of your pagoda, and I don't want to see any more of it. Come on back." And in a hesitating way he began to pluck at the chicken.

"Why; what's the matter with you now? Why don't you want to go?"

"Because this is Friday — my unlucky day."

"Ho! ho!" I jeered. "This from you! But how in the world do you know it's Friday? Have you found a calendar in the *cania?* Ten to one it's Sunday! Come on, don't be a fool! What would your friend Geniets say if I were to tell him this? How did you make the discovery that to-day is Friday?"

"How do I know that fire will burn me? I know it's Friday because I feel it. I feel there is misfortune in the air. Can't you feel it?"

By this he had the leg of the fowl all plucked bare, and as sober as a sphinx he began at the other.

"See here, Descuret," I snapped out, "you disgust me: you throw scorn at these poor natives on account of their superstitions; they burn sticks and paper, and scatter rice and salt, all to ward off evil influences. Suppose you go back and get a handful of rice and try it; you'll find some in the left-

hand corner, — you and your Fridays! Once for all, are you coming?"

He looked up from his chicken and said: "Yes, since you are so bent upon it."

"Leave your chicken here, then; we'll come back this way — and hurry up!" He placed the half-plucked fowl behind a clump of ferns, and we went on. At the foot of the hill we found "a sudden little river" supplied from a stream higher up. We walked along the bank, but found no place to ford. We could see the high white wall enclosing the pagoda at about a stone's throw from where we stood debating.

"Look!" I said; "there's a bridge farther down." Sure enough; and in a few minutes we were at the walls looking for an entrance. On the south side we found a gate flanked by two plastered pillars, crowned by furious griffins with porcelain eyeballs, glittering fearfully. The gate was of some heavy wood, and it resisted our efforts to push it in."

"Wait a minute," I said; "give me a hand to get over the wall, and I'll open it from the inside and let you in."

A branch of the banyan-tree came within my reach, and by a little effort I pulled myself up and got over. As I dropped into the court-yard a chill shuddered through

me, but not waiting to analyze it, I ran and unbarred the gate, and let Descuret in. The countless trunks of the tree filled the place, and its branches and serpentine roots were like the tentacles of some gigantic polypus with the pagoda in their clutches.

Strange plants grew in the corners of the yard, and parasitic ferns and lichens were everywhere suspended. The whole place was dank and dark, and curiously like a picture out of Dante's "Inferno." I shuddered again as we stood there hesitating.

The walls on the interior were covered with bas-reliefs of elephants, and with colossal storks standing on the backs of enormous turtles; then there were drawings in black and white of birds, of impossible flowers, and of men — Chinamen — in improbable postures. All this was Chinese art — original or copied.

In front of us was the pagoda on a higher level, with broad low steps leading to it. The tiled roof with its great carved rafters was supported by vast wooden pillars, based on large flat stones.

Three monstrous wooden statues of Buddha, sitting in a row, faced the entrance. These were painted and gilded and lacquered, in radiant brightness, as contrasted with the gloom of their surroundings. They were

raised a few feet above the floor, and while the two end ones looked stern and forbidding, the one between them smiled invitingly. On approaching, we found these statues to be of superior workmanship, and not like the ordinary images we were used to.

On a low table before each of them were placed the usual offerings of paper horses, paper shoes, bundles of paper cubes; and what were these? bars of gold and silver? No; they were only little pieces of wood skilfully covered with tinsel. The intention was magnanimous, and Buddha probably winked at the deception.

"Well, have you seen enough?" asked Descuret. "There is nothing new; we may as well go back. It's the same old story that we've seen a hundred times."

"What, you're not afraid, are you? Let us go in, and we may find some pieces of bronze, some small image of Buddha. Ziegledach found one in a pagoda at Daï-Lisch, and sold it to the administrator for ten piasters. Let us look, as long as we are here."

We walked in, past the three images, and found a series of altars with numbers of other smaller images smiling blandly at us from all sides. There were tall, wooden screens standing about, some of them miraculously

carved, and others strangely incrusted with mother-of-pearl.

In looking about I began to feel uneasy in my mind. I had been poking and peering here and there for any portable object of art, with the innocent intention of appropriating it in the face of all the gods, but something checked me, and I plucked at Descuret, and said: "Come, then, if you want to, I've seen enough. As you say, there is nothing new here." But he had been set on fire by what I had said about Ziegledach finding the small bronze Buddha, and was as eager to stay as at first he had been eager to go.

"Hold on," he said; "look up there!" and he pointed to the carved cross-beams of the roof, on which was placed a long coffin-shaped box.

"O, that is nothing," I said; "I know what's in that. It is where they always keep the big paper umbrellas, wooden axes, swords, and spears, *et cetera;* all the old paraphernalia of a religious service. You've seen it all scores of times."

"Well, and what if I should find a small bronze Buddha there too? What would you say to that? Wait. I'm going up."

"Well, make haste," I said, for my feeling of uneasiness was increasing.

Glancing around the enclosure it seemed

as if all the images had fixed me with their gleaming eyes; and I was anxious to get out into the sunlight again, away from the place.

"Hurry up! hurry up! I'm getting the fever," I cried, for I felt cold thrills coursing up and down my spine. I helped him drag over a heavy wooden ladder-like stair, and I watched him as he mounted to the box up on the cross-beams.

A certain feeling of safety while he stood near me had kept back my fear, but now that I stood alone I began to tremble. No, it was not the fever which was in my blood, but fear — actual terror. I wanted to call out to him and bid him to come back, but, as if I were in a nightmare, I could not open my lips.

Letting my glance fall from him, as catlike he was working out on a broad beam towards the box, my eyes met those of an image, not noticed till then. It's face was like a hideous Japanese mask, and it leered at me in a mad, mocking way, ghastly and horrible.

Again I tried to cry out, but my voice died in my throat; and an instant's thought told me it was well it had done so, for how easily might I have startled Descuret and made him fall.

I looked up to him again and saw he had reached the box and had opened it; he was kneeling beside it, poking in it with his right hand.

A strange sweet odor came down and filled the whole pagoda. 'Twas like the souls of all the roses that had ever bloomed.

> "And strew faint sweetness from some old
> Egyptian's fine, worm-eaten shroud
> Which breaks to dust when once unrolled."

Vaguely these lines of Browning's came into my mind, and for the nonce my fear was gone.

But, good God! what was that in Descuret's face? As I stood gazing at him a look of unspeakable terror struck across it, and from his blanched lips an awful cry escaped. Then back — he struggled back — recoiling from the accursed box, and came falling headlong to the floor. My own fear was at its climax, and echoing his scream I darted forward to save him from death. He crushed me down with him, but in an instant he bounded to his feet, and I staggered to mine, and out we ran, as though ten thousand devils were after us. We never stopped till we reached the squad, where the corporal was still asleep, and where De Baise, back from

his two hours' duty, sat nibbling a piece of leather-like omelet.

As we came rushing up with wild fear in our eyes he jumped to his feet and said: "What is it? Pirates? Where are they? Are they coming?"

I shook my head. "No, it's not pirates; I — I don't know what it is — we — I — ask him!" I stammered, pointing to Descuret.

But Descuret threw himself down on the ground and hid his face in his hands; he lay there breathing heavily and trembling in every muscle.

The corporal awoke and said: "He's got the fever; two of you lead him back to the camp, and get him some quinine. Tell the captain." Then he looked at me and asked: "Have you got the fever too?"

"No," I replied; "I'll be all right presently. I'm frightened, that's all."

Geniets came up then, and seeing his friend Descuret lying there shaking, he stooped and asked him what was the matter.

"We were in a pagoda down there," I explained, "and he climbed up to look in a box. I don't know what he saw in it, but he was frightened and fell backwards to the floor. He is bruised, I guess." And then I realized that my own right wrist was sprained

so that I could not bend it: it was all swollen. "See," I cried, "he fell on me. Ask him what he saw." And Geniets, with his voice at Descuret's ear and his hand on his shoulder, whispered: "What is it, old chap? What did you see in the box?"

But Descuret only shuddered and shrunk closer to the ground. Soon he turned over and sat up, and then it was plain that his fear had been great, for part of his hair had turned white.

"IT moved!" he gasped. "IT moved when I touched IT; a long yellow hand, with long finger-nails; IT clutched at my hand as I groped in the box."

"Where? What box?" asked the corporal, who was listening.

But just then an under officer from the camp arrived with the order that we should all return, and get ready to march within the hour. Descuret struggled to his feet and said: "It is time we got away from this damned place! Come on,—but where's my rifle?" At the same instant I realized that my rifle too was missing!

"Good heavens!" I cried. "We left our rifles at the gate of the pagoda, and did not stop for them as we ran out; we'll have to go back for them."

"Never!" screamed Descuret. "I'll not

go back for anything; but Geniets will go with you, — and (with his teeth still chattering) — and get the chicken when you're coming back; it's behind a clump of ferns near the *cania*."

GLOSSARY.

ADOW? . . . . . where?

BA . . . . . three.
BABA . . . . . turban.
BAÏA . . . . . old woman.
BIET? . . . . . do you know?
B'ZOO . . . . . monkey.

CAÏ . . . . . corporal.
CANIA . . . . . house.
CANUFA . . . . . prison.

DI-ADOW? . . . . . where do you go?
DIVAY . . . . . to go.
DOÏ . . . . . sergeant.

EEM! . . . . . silence!

FAI . . . . . yes.
FOO-TYUNG . . . . . civil officer.

HAÏ . . . . . two.

KA-BOOM . . . . . stomach.
KA-DENH . . . . . torch-fire.
KA-LAT . . . . . bamboo-withe.
KA-MAT . . . . . eye.
KA-QUAN . . . . . trowsers.

KAY–OW . . . . . tunic.
KONGO . . . . . no, not.
KONGO–BIET . . . . . don't know.
KONGOI . . . . . woman.

LEM *or* LAM . . . . . very.
LIE–THUNG . . . . . mayor.
LINH *or* LINH–TAP . . . . . soldier.

MOT . . . . . one.
MOW! . . . . . hurry!
MOW–LEM! . . . . . very fast.
MUOÏ . . . . . salt; ten.

NAÏ . . . . . man.
NYAK–WAY . . . . . rice-planter.
NYUK . . . . . water.
NYUK–TAY . . . . . liquid tea.

OO–TIA! . . . . . cry of surprise.
OW . . . . . yes.

QUAN–BA . . . . . captain.
QUAN–BON . . . . . colonel.
QUAN–FOO . . . . . a sup. governor.
QUAN–HAI . . . . . lieutenant.
QUAN–MEAW . . . . . a cat.

TIN–YOW . . . little one; child; childen.
TON–DOC . . . { a superior governor. / also a kind of liquor.
TOT . . . . . good.
TSOU . . . . . bad.

YACK . . . . . pirate.

THIS BOOK HAS BEEN PRINTED DURING OCTOBER 1895 BY ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL OF BOSTON.