The People of the Blue Mountains

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Publishers' Preface

A new school of thought is arising to challenge long-accepted views of life. Its keynote may be said to be "evolutionary creation." It is an exposition of the phenomena that surround us, in terms that are both scientific and idealistic. It offers an explanation of life, of the origin of our fragment of the universe, of hidden and mysterious natural laws, of the nature and destiny of man, that appeals with moving force to the logical mind. This school of thought is at the same time both iconoclastic and constructive, for it is sweeping away old dogmas that are no longer tenable in the light of rapidly developing modern science, while it is building a substantial structure of facts beneath the age-long dream of immortality.

The literature that is growing out of ideas which are so revolutionary in the intellectual realm and yet are so welcome to a world groping through the fogs of materialism, is receiving a warm welcome in other lands and it should be better known here.

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CHAPTER I

Exactly sixty-four years ago toward the end of the year 1818, in the month of September, a discovery was made quite fortuitously, of a most extraordinary character. This took place near the coast of Malabar, only fifty miles from the fiery ground of Dravid, called Madras. The discovery appeared strange to such a degree, incredible even, that nobody believed it at first. Vague rumors altogether fantastical, stories similar to legends, began to spread, first among the people, then higher. When these rumors and stories penetrated into the local newspapers and became transformed into official reality, the fever of expectation changed into a perfect delirium.

In the heads of the Anglo-Madrassians, who are of slow movement and almost atrophied by laziness (due to the canicule), an actual molecular perturbation took place, to use an expression of the famous physiologists. With the exception of the

lymphatic "moudiliars," who unite the temperament of a frog with that of a salamander, everybody was flurried and agitated and started rav-ing wildly about a marvelous paradise in the interior of the "Blue Mountains"*, apparently discovered by two skillful hunters. According to their reports, it was an earthly paradise: perfumed zephyrs and freshness all the year around; a country situated above the eternal fogs of the Kouimbatour** where imposing cascades rush downward with clamor and where an eternal European spring lasts from January to December. Wild roses, over two yards high, and heliotrope are blooming there; lilies as big as a large amphora*** fill the atmosphere with fragrance. Antediluvian buffaloes, to judge by their appearance, walk about freely, and the country is inhabited by the Brobdingnags and the Liliputians of Gul-liver. Every valley, every gorge of the admirable Hindu Switzerland, represents a small corner of an earthly paradise closed off from the rest of the world.

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* Nilguiri is composed of two Sanskrit words, Nilam ("blue") and Guiri ("Mountains" or "hills"). These mountains owe their name to the dazzling light in which they appear to the inhabitants of the valleys of Maissour and Malabar.

**It is supposed that this fog, which is found three to four thousand feet above the sea level, and which spreads over the entire chain of the Kouimbatour Mountains, comes from the intense heat and the vapors that arise from the marshes. It is always blue and of a dazzling color. During the monsoon it changes into rain clouds.

***This is the non-exaggerated description of a flora, which, perhaps, is the most marvelous in the world. Rose bushes of all colorings grow as high as the houses and cover the roofs; heliotrope are as high as twenty feet. But the most beautiful flowers are the white lilies, with a fragrance so strong as to make one's stomach rise. They are as large as an amphora and grow on isolated bushes in the fissures of the naked rocks, as high as one and one-half to over two yards with approximately twelve blossoms at a time. These lilies do not appear on summits less than seven thousand feet high. It is only at a still higher elevation that they are to be found. The higher one ascends the more magnificent they are; on the peak of Toddovet (nearly 9,000 feet) they bloom during ten months of the year.

While listening to these stories, the livers of these "very respectable" fathers of the "East India Company," as much atrophied and somnolent as their brains, came to life again, and the saliva dropped from their lips. In the beginning nobody knew in exactly which region these marvels had been discovered, and nobody could say how and where to search for this freshness, so attractive in the month of September. The "fathers" decided finally that the discovery had to be sanctioned officially, and that, before all else, a recognition had to take place of what had just been discovered. The two hunters were invited to the Central Bureau of the Presidency, and it was then learned that near Kouimbatour the following events had taken place -

But first of all, what is Kouimbatour?

Kouimbatour is the principal city of the region which carries its name, and this region is situated about three hundred miles from Madras, capital of Southern India. Kouimbatour is famous for many reasons. First, it is an ideal country for the tiger and elephant hunters, as well as for smaller game hunting; apart from its other charms, this region remains famous for its swamps and its jungles. With the presentiment of death, the elephants (one does not know why) leave the jungle for the swamps. There they plunge into the depths of the marshes and prepare tranquilly for "Nirvana." Thanks to this curious habit, these marshes abound in tusks, and elephant bones are (or rather were formerly) easily procurable.

I say "were procurable" in the past. Alas, things have since changed completely in unhappy India. Today nothing can be acquired in this country, and nobody obtains anything except the viceroy; the vice-kingdom gives him, indeed, royal honors and furnishes him enormous sums of money, accompanied sometimes by foul eggs, which the Anglo-Hindus offer him in their anger. Between "formerly" and "today" has opened the abyss of the imperial "prestige" over which rises the spectre of Lord Beaconsfield.

Formerly, the "fathers of the Company" procured, bought, discovered and preserved. Today, the Council of the Vice-royalty receives, levies, dispossesses, but preserves nothing. Formerly, the "fathers" were the moving power of India's blood, which now coagulates, and which surely they sucked, but which they also rejuvenated, infusing new blood into these very old veins. Today, the viceroy and his council infuse only gall into it. The viceroy is the central point of an immense empire, which he does not love at all, and with which he has nothing in common. To use the poetical expression of Sir Richard Temple, "The viceroy is the solid pivot on which the wheel of the Empire turns." This may be so, but, for some time, this wheel has been moving with such mad rapidity that it risks being shattered at any moment.

However, as of old, so today, Kouimbatour is known not only for its jungles and swamps. Leprosy, fevers and elephantiasis are endemic there.*

Kouimbatour, or the district which carries this

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*This terrible disease, which is very frequent, is almost incurable and may last for years, leaving the individual organically in good health. One leg begins to swell from the sole to the ankle; then the other leg swells until both are entirely deformed and become so thick that they look like the legs of an elephant.

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name, can be considered only as a gorge. Situated between Malabar and Karnatik, the district of Kouimbatour penetrates, in a sharp angle towards the south, to the Anemal or Elephant Mountains,* then mounts gradually to the heights of Maissour in the north, where it is seemingly crushed by the occidental "Ghats",** with their

thick and almost virgin forests. Here it turns sharply and disappears in the less important jungles inhabited by sylvan tribes.

There is the tropical habitat of the elephant. The country is always verdant, owing to the vapors that arise from the marshes. There the boa constrictor lives, though its race is dying. Seen from Madras this mass of mountains resembles, at a distance, a rectangular triangle hooked to another triangular chain, still larger; with the plains of mountainous Dekkan leaning with its northern extremity towards the Vindya Mountains in the Presidency of Bombay, and with its western and eastern points towards the "hills" of Takhiddri in the Presidency of Madras. These two mountain chains, which the English treat as hills, constitute a link between the Eastern and Western

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*Ane means elephant. These animals abound in these mountains and have abounded here since time immemorial.

**Ghat, mountain, and Guiri, hill.

Ghats of India. The more the elevations of the east approach the Ghats of the west, the more they lose their volcanic character. Uniting themselves at last with the picturesque and undulating summits of western Maissour, and seemingly blending with these, they cease definitely to be considered Ghats, and become just hills.

The two extremities of this apparent triangle, in the Presidency of Madras, stand erect on both sides of the City of Kouimbatour, to the left and to the right, looking like two exclamation points. They resemble two giant sentinels placed there by nature to guard the entrance of the gorge. These two peaks, sharply pointed, are crowned by jagged rocks, covered with verdant forests at their feet, and higher by an eternal belt of clouds and bluish mists. These mountains with their pointed summits are called the "Teperifs" of India, the Nilguiri and the Moukkartebet. The former has an elevation of 8,760 feet, the latter of 8,380 feet above sea level.

For centuries these two peaks were considered by the people as heights inaccessible to ordinary mortals. This reputation has, since a long time, taken the form of local legends and the entire country was considered by the superstitious populace as a holy and, consequently, enchanted region. Trespassing its borders, even involuntarily, was a sacrilege for which death was the punishment. The "To De" was the habitat of the gods and the superior devas. The swarga (paradise) was there, and naraka (hell) of "assuras" and "pisatchis".* Thus under the defense of a religious park the Nilguiri and the Toddabet (Moukkartebet) remained for long centuries entirely unknown by the rest of India. How, then, at a time so distant from the "Right-Honorable East India Company," in the 20's of our XlXth century could the thought get into the mind of an insignificant European to penetrate into the interior region of a mountain closed on all sides? It was not because he believed in the chanting spirits, but on account of the inaccessibility of these

heights; nobody was capable of presuming the existence in these mountains of such beautiful landscapes. Still less could one suppose the presence of living creatures other than wild beasts and serpents. It was rare that an English sportsman or a hunter from Eurasia, when arrived at the foot of one of the enchanted mounts, insisted upon being led by a "chicari" (hunter) some hundred feet higher. The native guides in accord

with the chicaris, very naturally refused to do it, under one pretext or another. Mostly they affirmed to the Saab** that it was impossible to go higher; that there were no woods, no game, and one saw nothing but gulfs, rocks, clouds and caverns inhabited by mischievous Sylvans - the honor guard of the devas. No chicari consented, however considerable the sum offered might be, to mount higher than a line of demarcation known in the mountains.

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*Assuras (spirits) - singers gladdening the ears of the gods with their chants, as the gondarvis diverted them with their music.

**This nickname is given by the natives to the officials, to the English hunters, as well as to tigers. For the innocent Hindu, there exists, indeed, no difference between these two races of beings, except that the musket of the unfortunate native at each national insurrection, missed the English by a fortune which they did not deserve.

Who is the "chicari"? The modern representative of this type remains similar to the one of the fabulous times of King Rama. Each profession becomes hereditary in India, and then changes into a caste. What the father was, that the son will be. Entire generations crystallize and seem to curdle into one and the same form. The chicari is clad in a costume composed of hunting knives, powder flasks made of buffalo horns, of the ancient silex musket, which misses nine shots out of ten, and all this provision is carried on a naked body. He often looks like a decrepit old man, and if a stranger with "a tender heart " encounters him (neither a native nor an Englishman), he will feet induced to offer him Hoffman's drops: so drawn-in remains his stomach and as if wrought with pain. But the reason why the chicari walks with effort, bent, broken in two, is not the foregoing; it is a habit contracted by his calling. As soon as a saab-sportsman sends for him, shows him or gives him some rupees, the chicari will straightway stand up and will bargain for any animal.

After the conclusion of the deal, he will bend again, glide prudently into the woods, covering his body and his feet with odorous herbs in order not to be discovered by the wild beasts and so that these may not scent the "spirit of man."

The chicari will thus remain for several consecutive nights, hidden like a bird of prey, in the thick foliage of a tree, in the midst of "vam-pires" less sanguinary than himself. Without betraying his presence even by a little sigh, the decrepit nimrod prepares to follow cold-bloodedly the agony of an unfortunate roebuck or a young buffalo, tied by him to a tree to allure the tiger. Then, opening his mouth to the

ears, at the sight of the flesh-eater, he will listen, without moving one muscle, to the plaintive bleating, and will incuhale with pleasure the odor of fresh blood mixed with the specific sharp scent of the striped executioner of the forests. Removing the branches, with prudence and without noise, he will watch the animal for a long time, with his piercing look, and, when the satiated beast heavily approaches, with its blood-covered paws on the dried-up ground, licking his lips and yawning, then returning and, like all striped felines, looking back to the remains of his victim - then the chicari will fire with his silex musket and, at first shot, will surely mow down the animal. "The weapon of the chicari never fails when drawn on the tiger" is an ancient saying which has become an axiom among hunters. And if the saab wishes to divert himself by hunting the "bar saab " (the great lord of the forests), then the chicari, with the first sun-rays, keeping in mind the location of the tree where the tiger went to rest, will jump from his retreat, fly to the village, gather a crowd, prepare a battue, run all day, under the torrid and murderous flames of the sun, from one group to the other, shouting, gesticulating, organizing, giving orders, until the moment where the saab No. 1, in security on an elephant's back, will have wounded saab No. 2 and where the chicari will have to intervene just the same in order to finish

the beast with his ancient musket. Then only, and if nothing extraordinary happens, the chicari will direct his steps to the first thicket, and will, at one sitting, breakfast, lunch and dine luxuriously with a handful of bad rice and a drop of water from the swamps.

It thus happened in September, 1818, towards the end of the summer vacations, that, with three of these skillful chicaris, two English land-surveyors, officials of the "Company," who had gone on a hunting trip to Kouimbatour, lost their way, and had reached the dangerous limit of the mountains, the gorge of Gouzlekhout, quite near the famous cascade of Kolakambe.*

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*This waterfall is 680 feet high. Today, the road leading to Outtakamand passes quite near by.

High above their heads, just beneath the clouds, piercing in isolated spots the fine blue mist, the rocky needles of the Nilguiri and Moukkartebet were visible. It was terra incognito, the enchanted world.

Mysterious Mountains,
Habitat of the unknown Devas,
Azure-colored Hills,

(as it is sung in an antique chant, in the tender idiom of Malaialim). "Azure " indeed. View these mountains from any point of the horizon and from any distance, from the summit or at the foot, from the valley or from other peaks, even

when the weather is foggy, until the hour where they cease to be visible, these mountains scintillate, like a precious sapphire, with an internal fire; they seem to breathe softly, and blend, like, waves, their bluish forests, which, in the distance shade into turquoise and gold and startle the beholder by their extraordinary colorings.

The land-surveyors, anxious to try their luck, gave the order to the chicaris to lead them further. But, as was to be expected, the brave chicaris refused point blank. Then, according to the story of the two Englishmen, these old hunters, experienced and courageous, exterminators of tigers and elephants, fled behind the cascade as soon as they were asked to mount higher. Caught again and brought back as far as the waterfall, all three prostrated themselves before the roaring torrent and, according to the naive words of one of the English engineers, Kindersley, "the combined efforts of our two whips could not force them to rise again, before they had finished their loud invocations to the Devas of these mountains, imploring the gods not to chastise nor to destroy them for such a crime, being innocent chicaris. They trembled like aspen-leaves, contorting their bodies on the damp ground of the river as if seized by an epileptic attack. 'Nobody ever trespassed the confines of the cascade of Kolakambe,' they said, 'and those who enter these caverns will never leave them alive.' "

That time, or rather that day, the Englishmen did not even succeed in getting beyond the water-fall. In spite of all, they had to come back to the village which they had left in the morning, after having spent the night there. The Englishmen were afraid to lose their way without a guide or a chicari and, for that reason, yielded. But in their hearts they swore to force the chicaris to go further the next time. Back to the village for a second night, they assembled almost all the inhabitants and held council with the elders. What they heard, further incited their curiosity.

The most extraordinary rumors about the enchanted mountains were spread among the people. Numerous agriculturists referred to the authority of the local planters and to officials of Eurasia, men who "knew the truth" concerning the Holy Places, and they perfectly realized the impossibility of penetrating there.

A touching story is told of a certain indigo planter who possessed all virtues except faith in the gods of India. One day - so said the important Brahmans - Mr. D., who was hunting an animal and who paid no attention to our constant warnings, disappeared behind the cascade; he was never seen again. One week later the authorities were able to express suppositions on the subject of his probable destiny, owing to an old "sacred" monkey of the adjacent pagoda. At the hours which were free of all religious obligation, the revered animal had the habit of visiting the neighboring plantations, where the Koulis, full of pity, fed and regaled it. One day the monkey returned with a boot on his head. The boot arrived alone, deprived of the leg of the planter, and its owner was lost forever: undoubtedly the insolent one had been torn to pieces by the pisatchis. Thus the story was closed. Surely, the "Company" suspected the Brahmans of the pagoda who, for a long time, had had

litigation with the lost man concerning a lot of which he was the proprietor. But the saabs always, and in everything, suspect these holy men, particularly in the South of India.

The conjectures showed no result. The unfortunate planter left decidedly no trace. He passed away entirely and for eternity, into a far-off world, still less studied at that period by the authorities and savants than the Blue Mountains - the world of formless thought. On earth he became a dream, the perpetual memory of which lives unto this day in the form of a boot placed behind the glass door of a closet in the office of the district policeman.

It was told. What else was not told? Well, on this side of the "rainy clouds" the mountains are habitable, naturally, as far as ordinary mortals are concerned, visible to everybody. But beyond the "furious waters" of the cascade - that is to say, on the heights of the sacred peaks of the Toddabet, Moukkartebet and the Rongassuami - there lived a non-terrestrial tribe, a tribe of sorcerers and demi-gods.

In that region reigned an eternal spring-neither rain nor dryness, neither heat nor cold. The magicians of this tribe never marry; they never die and are never born; their children fall from the heavens all made and "just grow" according to the characteristic expression of Topsy in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." No mortal ever succeeded in reaching these summits; nobody will succeed in reaching them except, perhaps, after death. "Then this will be in the limits of the possible, for, as is known by the Brahmans - and who could know better? - out of respect for the God Brahma the inhabitants of the heaven of the Blue Mountains have yielded to him one part of their mountain below the Swarga (paradise)." It is, therefore, to be presumed that at that period this intermediate stretch was still under repair.

This was the verbal tradition which is still conserved in writing in the "Collection of Local Legends and Traditions," translated by missionaries from Tamil into English.

I recommend to the reader the edition of 1807

Stimulated by the tales and still more by the visible difficulties and all the obstacles they encountered on their expedition, our two Englishmen decided to prove once more to the natives that for the "superior" race which governed them, the word "impossibility" did not exist. At all periods of history the British "prestige" had to proclaim aloud its presence, otherwise it might possibly be forgotten.

May my jealous and suspicious Anglo-Indian friends not feel indignant! May they rather remember the pages written on India and the English by Ali-Baba,* one of their wittiest writers who, with every movement of his pen, offered a cruel and profoundly true satire on the actual situation of India. With what strong and vibrant colors has he described this martyr country! Contemplate his panorama of India, meditate on the presence, necessary today, of these legions of

*Alberight Mackay who died two years ago.

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soldiers, in poppy-colored uniforms, and on the gold-embroidered saiss and tchuprassis of the viceroy! The saiss are the grooms and footmen of the officials, the tchuprassis represent the official agents of the Government, wearing the livery of the "Empire," and serving all civil officials high or low. If all the gold on their liveries were sold according to weight, enough money could be realized, one-half of which would suffice to feed hundreds of families during a whole year. Add the expenses of the members, always crimson with drunkenness, of the Council and the various Commissions habitually formed at the end of a widespread famine, and I will have demonstrated how the British "prestige" kills annually more natives, than cholera, tigers and all the serpents, and Hindu spleens* which burst so easily (and always so opportunely).

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*This organ, "the spleen," plays an important role in India. The spleen of the natives is the best friend and defender of the English heads, which, without it, would inevitably be menaced by the cord. This spleen is so delicate and sensitive, in the opinion of the Anglo-Indian judges, that a snap of the finger on the stomach of the aborigines, a delicate touch of a European finger, will suffice for the man to drop down and die! The Hindu press has made much ado of this frailty of the spleen, a fact unknown before the arrival of the British. The spleen of the rajahs is particularly sensitive, which saddens the English considerably. They say it is impossible for an official to touch a rajah without his spleen bursting immediately, and as if on purpose. The tortuous footpaths followed by the English Government in India are full of thorns.

It is true that the losses called forth by this prestige in the ranks of the populace are compensated by the constant growth of the Eurasian Tribe. This rather ugly race of "Creoles" represents one of the most objective and most appropriate symbols of the ethics taught by the civilized to the Hindus, their half-savage slaves. The Eurasians have come into existence through the English, with the assistance of the Dutch, the French, and the Portuguese. They form the crown and imperishable monument of the activity of the placid "fathers" of the "East India Company."

These "fathers" often entered into legitimate or illegitimate relations with the native women (the difference between these legal or illegal unions is very small in India; it is based on the faith of the husband and wife in the degree of the sanctity of cow tails), but this latter link of friendly relationship between the high and the low races broke of itself; today, to the great joy of the Hindus, the English look only with disgust at their wives and daughters. This repulsion, it is true, is only surpassed by the profound aversion of the natives at the sight of the more or less "decollete" English women. Two-thirds of India believe naively in the rumors spread by the Brahmans that the "white" people owe their color to leprosy. But this

is not the question we discuss in the "prestige."

This monster was born after the tragedy of 1857; making, with its reforms, a clean sweep of all traces of Commercial English India. Official Anglo-India created an abyss between herself and the natives, an abyss so profound that millenniums cannot bridge it. In spite of the menacing spectre of the British prestige, this gulf widens every day, and the hour will come when one of the races - either the black or the white - will be engulfed. In the meantime, the "prestige" becomes nothing but an intended measure of self-defense, and now I can come back to the situation of the inhabitants of Kouimbatour in 1818. Placed between two fires; the "prestige" of the earthly masters and the superstitious terror of the masters of Hell and of their vengeance, the unfortunate Dravidians saw themselves crushed by the impact of an atrocious dilemma. One week had passed, when the English saabs, after having left the inhabitants of the village in the sweet hope that the storm had subsided, came back to

Metopolam, at the foot of the Nilguiri, and this time the Englishmen sounded the thundering note of the following declaration: The soldiers of the garrison and other land surveyors were arriving within three days, and the entire detachment would undertake the ascension of the sacred peaks of the Blue Mountains.

After having heard this terrible news, several agriculturists condemned themselves to dharna (death by hunger) before the doors of the saabs, ready to continue this strife until the day when the more comprehending Englishmen would promise to desist from their intention. The "mousifs" of the village, after having torn their garments, a gesture which did not cost them great effort, shaved the heads of their wives and obliged them, as an augury of social disaster and general mourning, to scrape their faces until the blood flowed. Naturally, this sacrifice applied only to the women. The Brahmans read aloud conjurations and mantrams, mentally sending the English with their blasphemous intentions, to the Narak, to be put into Hell.

During three days, Metopolam reverberated with cries and lamentations in vain; things were done as they had been said! After having equipped a troop of braves chosen from among the members of the "Company," the new Christopher Columbuses decided to set out on their journey without guides. The village became as empty as after an earthquake, the terrified natives fled, and the land surveyors who guided the detachment were compelled themselves to search for the road to the Cascade. They went astray and came back. However, the explorers did not become disconcerted. They got hold of two emaciated Malabarites and declared them prisoners. "Lead us, and here is gold; or refuse and you will go just the same, for you will be dragged by force, and instead of gold, there will be prison for you."

And in those blessed days when the good-natured fathers of the "Company" reigned, the term of "prison," at Madras and in other Presidencies, was synonymous with torture. This kind of corporal punishment takes place even today - we have quite recent proofs of it - but at that time, the complaint of the lowest scribe belonging to the superior race was sufficient to condemn the native to torture. The

menace was effective. The unfortunate Malabarites, with heads bent, more dead than alive, guided the Europeans as far as Kolakambe.

The facts which happened then are not void of strangeness, if they are true; however, this verity cannot be called in question, after the official report of the two English land surveyors. Before the English reached the Cascade, a tiger jumped from a slope, and carried away one of the Malabarites, in spite of his extreme and hardly tempting leanness, and that before one of the number had the time to see the beast. The cries of the unfortunate attracted their attention too late." Either the bullets missed their goal or they killed the victim who disappeared with the ravisher as if both had been swallowed by the earth." We read in the report that the second native who had reached the other side of the rapid current, the "prohibited" edge, at about one mile from the Cascade, died suddenly, without apparent cause. It was the same place where the land surveyors had passed the night on that first ascension.

Surely, terror killed him. It is curious to read the opinion of an eye witness on the subject of this terrible coincidence. In the "Courier of Madras" of November 3, 1818, one of the officials, Kindersley, writes:

"After having determined the actual death of the 'nigger' our soldiers, especially the superstitious Irish, were considerably troubled. But

Whish [name of the second land surveyor] and myself realized at once that to go back would have meant to dishonor ourselves for no purpose, to become the perpetual laughing stock of our comrades and to close for centuries to other Englishmen the entrance into the mountains of the Nilguiri, and of its marvels (if they really existed). We decided to continue our way without a guide, all the more as the two dead Malabarites and their living compatriots knew no more than we the road beyond the cascade."

Then came the detailed description of the difficult ascent of the mountains, of the scaling of the entirely perpendicular rocks, until the moment when they found themselves above the clouds, that is to say, beyond the limit of the "eternal fog"; and perceived at their feet its moving blue waves. As I am going to tell later of all that the Englishmen found on the heights, and since D. Sullivan, collector of the district of Kouimbatour, relates the facts in his letters to the Government, who thereafter charged him with a formal investigation, I shall limit myself here, in order to avoid repetition, to a superficial and brief account of the principal adventure of the two land surveyors.

The Englishmen mounted higher, far beyond the frontier of the clouds. Here they ran up against an enormous boa constrictor. One of them, in the semi-darkness, fell suddenly on "something" flabby and slimy. This "something" moved, rose with the noise of rustling leaves and showed what it really was - a fairly disagreeable interlocutor. As a welcome, the boa wound itself around one of the superstitious Irishmen, and before receiving into its widely-open mouth several bullets, succeeded in pressing Patrick so strongly in its cold embrace that the unfortunate man died several minutes later. After having killed this monster, not without difficulty, and having measured its peeled-off skin, the travelers, astonished and

frightened, found that the serpent had a length of 26 feet. Then it was necessary to dig a tomb for the poor Irishman. This work was all the more difficult, as the Englishmen had hardly time to tear away his body from the kites which were flying above him, arriving from all sides. The tomb is shown until this day; it is to be found in a rock, a little higher than Kounnour.

The first British colonists got up a subscription and decorated this place with a befitting monument in memory "of the first pioneer who found his death during the expedition into the mountain."

Nothing perpetuates the memory of the two "niggers" who rightly had been the first "victims" of the ascent, and the first pioneers, although involuntarily.

After having lost two black pawns and one white man the Englishmen continued to climb the heights, and they encountered a herd of elephants who fought against each other in a regular battle. Fortunately, the animals did not notice at all the arrival of the strangers, and they did not touch them. In return, their apparition resulted in the immediate breaking of the ranks of the "terrified" detachment. When the British troop was going to reassemble again, they found themselves only in small groups of two or three men. They were wandering about in the forest all night. The next day, at different hours, seven soldiers came back into the village which all had left the foregoing evening with so much presumption. Three Europeans disappeared without leaving any trace.

For several days Kindersley and Whish, who bad thus been left alone, wandered around the slopes of the mountains, mounting to the peaks or descending again to the gorges. They lived on mushrooms and berries which they found in great number. Every evening the roaring of the tigers and the elephants forced them to seek refuge in high trees, and to pass the night without sleep, keeping watch alternately and awaiting death from minute to minute. The devas and other mysterious inhabitants, guardians of these "enchanted" caverns, thus manifested themselves from the beginning. The unfortunate explorers were more than once ready to redescend to the village; but in spite of all their efforts and though descending straight down, they came across such obstacles that they were compelled to change their direction. And when trying to turn around the heights or rocks, they fell into caverns without outlet. Their instruments and all their arms except the musket and pistols which they themselves carried had remained in the hands of their soldiers. Impossible, consequently, to ascertain where they were, or to find the way of return, all they could do was to mount, always higher. If we remember that from the side of Kouimbatour the Nilguiri rises in a scale of perpendicular rocks as high as 5,000 to 7,000 feet above the Valley of Outtakamand, that the numerous rocks constitute terrible gulfs, and that the land surveyors had chosen precisely this road, one can easily picture all the difficulties which they had to surmount. And while they were climbing the mountain, nature seemed to cut them off every path of return. It often happened that they climbed to the top of a tree to jump from there across a ravine to the next rock.

At last, upon the ninth day of their expedition, and after having lost all hope of

encountering anything but death in these mountains, they decided to attempt the descent a last time, following a straight path, and avoiding as far as possible every detour which might remove them from the direct road. They, therefore, resolved first to reach the summit which was before them, in order to examine the surrounding country and to recognize better the way they were to follow. At that moment, they found themselves in a glade, not far from an elevation which appeared to them a gently sloping hill, the summit of which was covered with rocks. There being apparently no obstacles in the way, it seemed the summit could be reached by an easy walk. To the great astonishment of the land surveyors, the ascent took them two hours, which taxed their strength to the utmost. Covered with a thick growth of herb, known here as "satiny," the ground of the easy slope proved to be so slippery that from the very beginning the two Englishmen had to crawl on all fours, and cling to the shrubs and bushes to keep from falling. Climbing such a hill seemed to them like scaling a glass mountain. At last, after indescribable efforts, they arrived, and dropped down exhausted, awaiting "the worst," as Kindersley writes.

This was the famous "Hill of the Sepulchres," known today in the whole country of Outtakamand, where it is called "Cairn." This druidic name is more appropriate to the character of these monuments which belong to an unknown and very remote antiquity, and which the land surveyors believed to be rocks. Numerous heights of the Nilguiri chain are thus covered with similar graves. It is useless to discuss this subject much; their origin and history, like the origin and history of the entire world which peoples these mysterious mountains, are lost in an impenetrable mist. However, while our heroes rest, let us speak of these monuments - the story will be short.

When, twenty years after these first events, the first excavations were made, the Europeans found in each sepulchre a great quantity of tools made of iron, bronze or clay, figures of extraordinary form and metallic ornaments, of coarse workmanship. These figures - apparently idols - these decorations and instruments, in no way recall analogous objects employed in other parts of India, and by other nations. The objects made of clay are particularly beautiful to look at; one seems to gaze at prototypes of reptiles (described by Berose) that crawled through chaos at the time of the creation of the world. As far as the tombs themselves are concerned, the period at which they were constructed, the laborers who made them and the race whom they served as a last refuge on earth, nothing can be said; it is impossible to presume anything, as all hypotheses can be destroyed immediately by this or that irrefutable argument. What is the meaning of these strange geometrical forms, made of stone, bone or clay? What do these very regular decahedrons, triangles, pentagons, hexagons and octagons indicate? And these clay images with bodies of birds and heads of sheep and donkeys? The sepulchres, that is to say the walls which surround these tombs, are always oval in form, and one and a half to two meters high. They have been made of large unhewn stones and without any cement, each and every tomb being surrounded by a wall 4 to 6 meters deep and covered by a vault constructed of polished stones and

fairly well designed. Centuries having filled them with earth and gravel, it was difficult to distinguish them. However, the forms of the coffins, on the exterior resembling the very ancient sepulchres of other parts of the world, reveal nothing that might enlighten us on the subject of their origin. Similar monuments can be found in Brittany and other parts of France, in the country of Gaul and in England, as well as in the Caucasian Mountains. In their explanations the English savants could of course not do without the Scythians and the Parthians, who evidently possess the gift of ubiquity. However, there is nothing Scythian in the archeological relics which are found there; moreover, so far no skeletons have been discovered, nor objects resembling arms. Nor any inscription, though stone-plates with vague traces have been exhumed - which, in the corners, recall the hieroglyphics of the obelisks of Paleng and other Mexican ruins.

Among all the five tribes of the Nilguiri Mountains and the beings belonging to five races* totally differing one from the other, nobody could furnish any information whatsoever concerning the sepulchres which are entirely unknown. Nor do the Todds - most ancient of the five tribes - know anything about them. "These coffins are not ours, and we do not know to whom they belong. Our fathers and our first generations found them here - nobody constructed them during our epoch." This is invariably the answer given to the archeologists by the Todds. If we evoke the antiquity which the Todds claim we could come to the conclusion that the ancestors of Adam and Eve were buried in these tombs. The rites of the five tribes differ totally from each other. The Todds incinerate their dead, together with their favorite buffaloes; the Moulou Kouroumbs bury them under the water; the Erroulars fasten them to the top of a tree.

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*The description of the five tribes will be given in the third chapter.

Had the straying hunters gained new strength and examined the surrounding country which extended on both sides for many, many miles, they certainly would have preceded me in the description of one of the most marvelous panoramas of India. For, at that moment, they found themselves -without knowing it - on the highest summit of these mountains, excepting the Pic de Toddabet, which the English - I know not why - call Doddabet. It is difficult to imagine, still more difficult to describe, the emotions which then overcame the two sons of Albion whose eyes beheld this imposing view. One might assume that nothing similar to the enthusiasm of an artist or of a member of the "Alpine Club" found room in their exhausted bodies. They were hungry, they were half dead with fatigue, and, in similar circumstances, such a physical condition will always prevail over the spiritual element of our unhappy humanity. If - as it often happens today - sixty years later, with their descendants, they had arrived on this peak on horseback, or riding in a spring wagon, surrounded by a dozen baskets filled with food for a joyous picnic, they would certainly have felt the ecstasy which we all feel in the presence of this new world which seems to appear before the beholder on this

height. A critical moment arrived for the Presidency of Madras, for the two Englishmen, and also for us - for, had the two surveyors perished in the mountains, hundreds of lives would not be saved annually, and our story would not have been written. As this summit is closely connected with the events which follow, I ask permission to give expression to my own sentiment for want of a better description. Anyone who has ever mounted the "Hill of the Sepulchres" will never forget it. And the one who writes these pages has more than once realized this Herculean task - the ascent of the mountain on this slippery road. However, I hasten to express a reservation and a confession: I always accomplished this heroic undertaking seated comfortably in a palanquin that rested on the heads of twelve thirsty coolies, who - in India - are always ready to risk their spleen for a handful of copper money. In English-India we easily accustom ourselves to everything, even to becoming incorrigible murderers of our unfortunate inferior brothers, the emaciated coolies, of the color and thinness of gingerbread. However, in the case of the "Hill of the Sepulchres" we desire and demand mitigating circumstances, for we feel guilty in our conscience. The magic of the whole world, the enchantments of nature which await the traveler on the summit, paralyze all consideration - not only in regard to the spleens of others, but also in regard to one's own spleen.

Try to visualize this picture. Climb this peak, reach 9,000 feet above sea level. Behold this delicately sapphire-colored space extending over an area of forty miles around the summit, with the Malabarian River on the horizon line, and at your feet a vastness with a length and width of two hundred miles. Whether you look to the right or the left, to the north or the south, before you is an undulating shoreless ocean of blue and vermilion heights, rocky peaks, needle-pointed, jagged or rounded-off in capricious and fantastical forms; like an angry sea where sapphire and emerald blend in the intense radiance of the tropical sun during a terrific cyclone, when all the liquid mass is covered with masts of ships that are sinking or have already been drawn into the vortex. Thus the ocean-phantom appears to us as in a dream.

Look to the north. The crest of the Nilguiri chain which rises 3,500 feet above the mountainous plains of Maissur, throws itself into space as a gigantic bridge fifteen miles wide and forty-nine miles long; as if thrown out from the pyramidical Jellamilai of the occidental ghats - flying with head distraught, dazzling gulfs on either side, as far as the round hills of Maissur merged in the velvety azure mist. There, striking the needle-pointed peaks of Paikar, this stupendous bridge falls abruptly, leaving a very narrow mountainous link which connects one chain with the other, breaks into little rocks, and changes into a roaring, howling torrent, whose waves roll furiously as if to catch up with a placid river issuing from the powerful caverns of the mountain.

Then, again - view the southern side of the "Hill of the Sepulchres." Within a space of a hundred miles, comprising the entire southwestern region of the "Blue Mountains," sombre forests sleep majestically in their unapproachable and original beauty, close to the impassable morasses of Kouimbatour, encircled by the brick-red mounts of Kshund. Farther away, at the left, towards the south, the crest of

"Ghat" enrolls itself like a stony serpent, between two ranges of steep volcanic rocks. These immense amphitheatres, crowned with pine forests, dishevelled and curved in all directions by the winds, offer, with their solitary and jagged peaks, a very curious view. It seems as if the volcanic force which cast them up wanted to create some rocky prototype of the future man; for these rocks have a human form. Through the moving transparent mists these grand arenas also seem to move, running one after the other, and an image forms itself of ancient rocks, covered with secular moss, jumping and galloping in space. They mingle, jostle, outrun each other and hasten on like school children who fight for supremacy in order to gain the open spaces and become free.

And all around, very high above, at the very feet of the tourist who finds himself on the "Hill of the Sepulchres," a very different image is conveyed and forms the very foreground; serenity, harmonious nature, divine beatitude.

Truly, this is a spring idyl of Virgil framed by the menacing pictures of Dante's "Inferno." Flower-covered emerald slopes alternate with lofty and silky lawns of the mountain valleys. But instead of snow-white sheep, shepherd boys and girls, a flock of enormous buffaloes, black as tar, and - in the distance, like a motionless statue seemingly made of bronze - the athletic silhouette of a young Todd-Tiralli (priest), with long, curly hair.

Eternal spring reigns on this peak; and even the freezing nights of December and January are powerless and are conquered by the rising sun. All is freshness here, all is verdant, and flowers of every kind exhale their fragrance all the year round. And the "Blue Mountains" on this summit, have all the charm of a youth who, smiling through his tears, is all the more beautiful for it; so indeed, are the "Blue Mountains" during the rainy season.* Everything on these summits seems to be born for the very first time. The furious mountain torrent is here only in its infancy. It breaks forth from its natal stone as a very fine thread and continues as a bubbling brook whose transparent bottom shows those atoms which later form the tremendous rocks of the future. This hard aspect of nature is indeed a full symbol of human life; pure and clear on the summit, like youth; then, lower, severe and tormented like life itself in its fatal struggles. However, in the valley as well as on the mountains the flowers bloom during the entire year, showing all the iridescent colors of India's magic palette. To one who mounts from the depths to the top of the "Blue Mountains" everything seems extraordinary, strange and wild. The emaciated gingerbread-colored coolie, majestically draped in a toga of white linen worn by no one else in India, becomes transmuted into a Todd of high stature and pale countenance, appearing like an apparition from ancient Greece or Rome, of haughty profile, and looking at a Hindu with condescending defiance like a bull who fixes his pensive look on a black toad. Here the striped crow of the low grounds, with its yellow feet, becomes the mighty eagle of the mounts; here the dried out stripes and the scorched burdocks, the cacti of the fields of Madras, develop into gigantic herbs and bamboo forests where the elephants boldly play hide-and-seek without fearing the eye of man. The Russian nightingale sings on these heights, and the cuckoo lays its eggs in the nest of the yellow-beaked "maina"

of the south, instead of laying them in the nest of its northern friend, the silly crow, that metamorphoses itself, in these woods, into a cruel coal-black raven. Contrasts are seen everywhere, anomalies appear wherever the eye turns. During the hours of light, melodious sounds and warbling songs of birds unknown in the valleys of India come forth from the luxuriant foliage of the wild-apple trees, while in the sombre pine forests the cruel roar of the tiger and the "tchitt" and the bellowing of the wild buffalo may be heard. Often the solemn silence which reigns on these summits is interrupted by mysterious and gentle murmurings, by tremblings, and, suddenly, by some hoarse cry - then everything is silent again, obliterated in the fragrant waves of the pure air of the peaks, and for a long time there is an unbroken silence.

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*During the rainy season when torrential rains deluge the plains at the foot of the mountains, only a few drops of rain fall on the heights, and that for a few hours during the day, at intervals.

In these hours of profound quiet, an attentive ear, if it loves Nature, might hear the beatings of her robust and powerful pulse and might intuitively feel the subtlety of this perpetual movement in the silent manifestation of joyous life as expressed by these myriads of visible and invisible forms. It is impossible for one who has dwelt in the Blue Nilguiri ever to forget it. In this marvelous climate Mother Nature gathered all her disseminated forces and concentrated them into an unique power in order to give birth to all the prototypes of her great creations. It seems that she alternates in the production, now choosing the northern, then the southern zones of the terrestrial globe. That is why she, awakening to activity, revives - then falls asleep again, tired and lazy. You see her half somnolent in the radiant beauty of the sun-rays, lulled by the harmonious melodies of all her kingdoms. Then again you see her proud and wild, and you are reminded of her power by the colossal flora of her tropical forests and the roaring of her grand felines. One step in the opposite direction, and Nature sinks down again as if exhausted by an extreme effort and falls into a delightful sleep on the carpet of forget-me-nots, May lilies and the violets of the north. Our great and powerful Mother lies there stretched out, silent and motionless, under the caresses of the zephyrs and the tender wings of butterflies and other lepidoptera, rare and of an enchanting beauty.

Today the foot of this hill is covered with a threefold belt of eucalyptus groves. These groves owe their existence to the first European planters.* Those who do not know the stately "eucalyptus globules" of Australian origin - which grow in three or four years much stronger than another tree in twenty years - ignore the essential charm of a garden. This forest growth, serving as an incomparable means of purifying the air from all miasmas, makes the climate of the Nilguiri more healthful. All natives, as well as foreigners living in the Presidency of Madras, who become enervated by the monotony of the burning Indian sun, have but one

craving - to seek health and rest in the retreat of the Blue Mountains - and never are they disappointed in their expectations. The tired traveler who climbs the Nilguiri - the Blue Mountains - receives the gift of all the treasures which the genius of the mountains, in the name of his Queen, offers him: an immense bouquet in which are thrown together all climates, all flora, and the animal and bird life from the five parts of the world. The "Blue Mountains " represent Nature's visiting card, full of titles and merits, which she - cruel stepmother of the European in India - gives to her slaves as a token of complete reconciliation.

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*Forty years ago General Morgan, having received three pounds of eucalpytus seed, sent from Australia, scattered them broadcast over all the empty tracts and the surrounding valleys of Outtakamand.

At last the hour of this reconciliation arrived for our poor heroes. They had weakened and broken down and could scarcely stand on their legs. Kindersley, the stronger of the two, had suffered less than Whish. After a short rest, he started to make a trip around the summit; whilst trying - through the chaos of woods and rocks - to discover the easiest road for descending, it seemed to him as if he saw smoke in the near distance. Kindersley hastened back to his friend to announce this news. But how great was his surprise! Before him stood his friend Whish, stooped, pale as death, and trembling feverishly. In a convulsive gesture, Whish pointed with out-stretched arm to a place near by. Following the direction of this finger, Kindersley - at a distance of some hundred feet - saw first, a habitation, then some men. This view, which would have been a source of delight at any other time, aroused in them - they did not know why - an un-speakable terror. The house was strange - of a form perfectly unknown to them. It had neither windows nor doors; it was as round as a tower and tapered in a pyramidal roof, rounded at the top. And as far as the humans there were concerned - the two Englishmen hesitated at first to take them for men. Instinctively both hid behind a bush, and pushing aside the branches they stared at the strange silhouettes that moved before them.

Kindersley speaks of a "band of giants, surrounded by several groups of repugnantly ugly dwarfs." Forgetting their former temerity and the way in which they had derided the chicaris, the Englishmen already believed these to be the giants and gnomes of these mountains. But soon they knew that they saw the great Todds, the Baddagues, their vassals and worshipers and the little servants of these vassals - the ugliest sav-ages of the whole world - the Moulou-Kouroumbs.

The Englishmen had no more cartridges, they had lost their muskets, and they were too weak even to resist an attack of the dwarfs. They were ready to flee this hill by rolling, like balls, on the ground, when suddenly they perceived another enemy who surprised them from the side. Some monkeys had crept up to the Englishmen. Sitting in a tree, a little higher than the two travelers, they opened fire with a rather disagreeable projectile-mud. Their chattering and their battle-cry very

soon attracted the attention of a herd of enormous buffaloes passing near by. Now these buffaloes began to bellow, raising their heads towards the summit of the hill. At last the Todds themselves noticed our heroes, for a few minutes later the repulsive dwarfs appeared and, without assistance, seized the two exhausted Englishmen. Kindersley - so he writes himself - "fainted only on account of the vile odor which emanated from these monstrosities." To the great surprise of the two friends, the dwarfs did not devour them; they did not even harm them. "They were jumping around all the time, dancing before us and laughing aloud," says Kindersley. "The giants - that is to say, the Todds, behaved entirely like gentlemen (sic) !" The Todds, after having satisfied their apparently natural curiosity at the sight of the first white men they had ever encountered (as was known later), gave them excellent buffalo milk to drink, served them cheese and mushrooms; then put them to bed in the pyramidal house, "where it was dark, but dry and warm, and where we slept heavily till the next morning."

Later our friends learned that the Todds had passed the whole night in solemn consultation. Several years afterwards the Todds told a Mr. Sullivan all that they had experienced during those memorable hours. (They still call Mr. Sullivan, who gained their confidence and love, their paternal brother," * which term, after that of "father," expresses their highest veneration.) The Todds told him that for a long time they had been awaiting "the men who inhabit the lands of the setting sun. Sullivan asked them how they could foresee this arrival; and all Todds invariably made the same reply: "For a long time the buffaloes have told us so; they always know everything." That night the Todds had decided upon the fate of the Englishmen, and at the same time turned over a new leaf in their own history.

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*For reasons which I shall expound later, the Todds did not recognize any relatives except the father, and that mostly just in a nominal way. The Todd's father is the man who adopts him.

The next morning, when the Todds saw the Englishmen walking with great difficulty, they gave orders to their vassals to make litters on which they were carried by the Baddagues. That very morning the surveyors had seen the dwarfs sent away by the Todds. "Since then, until the day of our return to the Nilguiri, we never saw them again and never encountered them anywhere' - tells Kindersley. As was learned later, especially by the reports of the missionary, Mr. Metz, it was not without reason that the Todds feared for their guests the hostile presence of the Moulou-Kouroumb dwarfs; they had ordered them to return to their caverns in the woods, strictly forbidding them to look at the white travelers. This defense, strange indeed, was explained to the missionary by the fact that "the gaze of the Kouroumb kills the man who fears him and is not accustomed to him." With the arrival of the two hunters whose terror and repulsion at the sight of these dwarfs were noticed by the Todds, the giants immediately forbade the dwarfs to look at the white men. Poor Todds - who were such noble souls! Who knows how much these old men

later regretted not having left these surveyors to the evil eye of the Moulou-Kouroumbs, as the fate of the entire Nilguiri depended upon their return to Madras and their report. But the "buffaloes had decided upon it .....and they knew!"

The Englishmen, surprised and of course happy over their unexpected rescue, where carried slowly and gently on litters by the Baddagues and had an opportunity, this time, to study the road and get a better impression of the surrounding country. They marvelled at the varieties of the flora, comprising tropical species together with those of northern climates. They saw old giant pine trees whose trunks and roots were completely covered with aloes and cacti. Violets grew at the foot of palm trees; quivering aspen and white-barked birch trees reflected their beauty in the sombre and silent waters of a pond on whose surface the lotus, the sacred flower of Egypt and India, bloomed. On their way they encountered the fruit trees of all countries, chestnuts of every kind, bananas, apples and pineapples, strawberries and raspberries. Country of abundance, blessed ground! Apparently the "Blue Mountains" were a region selected by Nature for her world-wide varieties of vegetation.

On their way down the travelers heard the constant bubbling of hundreds of brooklets; crystal-clear and wholesome water broke forth from the fissures of the rocks; vapors rose from mineral springs, and everything exhaled a freshness long forgotten by the two travelers in torrid India.

During the first night of this expedition, our heroes met with a strange experience. The Baddagues, after short deliberation, suddenly seized them, and undressing them completely, in spite of their desperate resistance, plunged them into the lukewarm water of a pool and washed their wounds. Then they held them in the hot steam above the water on their crossed arms, singing a chant which sounded like an incantation. They made such grimaces and uttered such wild cries, as Kindersley writes, that "at one moment we actually believed that we were going to be sacrificed to the gods of the woods."

The surveyors were mistaken! But it was not until the following morning that they could convince themselves of their unjust suspicions. After having rubbed their sore feet with a certain ointment made of soft clay and juicy herbs, the Baddagues wrapped the two hunters into blankets" and literally put them to sleep above the lukewarm vapors of the spring." The next morning, upon awakening, the two Englishmen experienced a wonderful exhilaration throughout their entire bodies and felt an unusual strength in their muscles. All pain in their legs and joints had disappeared as if by magic. Strengthened and in good health, they arose." Really, we were ashamed of ourselves for having suspected these savages so unjustly," Whish states in a letter to a friend.

In the afternoon they had descended to such a low level again that they felt the effects of the heat; then they became aware that they had traversed the region of the mists and that they were in the country of Kouimbatour.

Whish writes how much the following fact surprised them: when ascending the mountain they perceived at every step traces of the presence of wild animals; they

had to be on their guard constantly, taking every possible precaution not to fall into the lairs of tigers, to run up against an elephant or a herd of "tchitts." Whilst returning, the forest seemed dead; "the birds never flew near us, although we could hear their warblings in the distance . . . nor did we see a single red hare running across the road." The Baddagues, following a scarcely visible winding trail, carried them, where seemingly they did not meet with any obstacles.

Just at sunset they left the woods, and soon encountered the people of Kouimbatour coming from the scattered villages at the foot of the mountain. It was not necessary for the surveyors to introduce their guides to them. As soon as the Baddagues noticed the coolies in the distance, coming home in big crowds from their work, they disappeared, jumping from rock to rock like a herd of terrified monkeys. The miraculously saved hunters were alone once more. They found themselves at the edge of the woods; all danger had passed. They questioned the villagers and were informed that they had made the descent with the Baddagues very near to Malabar, at Uindi, a district directly opposite to

Kouimbatour. An entire chain of mountains separated them from the cascade of Kolakambe and from the village which they had left. The Malabarites led them to the main road, and the hospitable head of the town invited the two Englishmen to dinner. The next day, having provided themselves with horses, they finally arrived towards evening in the village which they had left just twelve days before on their expedition into the enchanted mountains.

The news of the safe return of the sacrilegious saabs from the habitat of the gods, spread throughout the village and the surrounding country with lightning rapidity.

The Devas had not punished the insolent men, had not even touched the "ferings" who had so audaciously violated their heaven which had been closed for centuries to the rest of the world. What did it mean? Were they the chosen of the Saddou? These were the sentiments uttered and communicated from one village to the next until they had spread everywhere and become the most extraordinary event of the day. The Brahmans maintained an ominous silence. The old men said: "It has been the will of the blessed Devas; but what does the future hold in store? The gods only know." The excitement extended far beyond the boundaries of the district. Crowds of Dravidians arrived in order to prostrate themselves before the Englishmen and to bow in reverence before the chosen of the gods.

The English surveyors were triumphant. "British Prestige" took a firm foothold and for many years held complete sway at the foot of the "Blue Mountains."

To Chapter 2

CHAPTER II

So far, and in spite of the data which I have taken from the reports made by Kindersley and Whish, my story seems altogether legendary. As I do not wish to be

suspected of the slightest exaggeration I shall base my story on the words of the Governor of Kouimbatour himself, the High Honorable D. Sullivan, by using extracts from his reports to the East India Company that were published that same year. Our "myth" will thus carry the stamp of a purely official report. This work will, therefore, not appear - as seemed to be the case thus far - to be a passage taken from the half-fantastical history of two starving and almost dying hunters, seized by fever and delirium as a result of their privations and hardships, or as a simple reference to the story invented by the superstitious Dravidians. My book will be a true interpretation of the report of an English official and the outline of his statistical work concerning the " Blue Mountains." Mr. D. Sullivan resided in Nilguiri and governed the five tribes over a long period of time. The memory of this just and good man will live for a long time to come; it still lives in the hills* immortalized by Outta-Kamand, build by him with its blooming gardens and its beautiful lake. And his books, accessible to all, serve as a proof and confirmation of all that I have written. Our story can only gain in interest by adhering to the authentic declarations of the former collector of Kouimbatour

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*His son is known throughout Madras; for several years he has been serving as one of the four members of the Council of the government of Madras. He lives nearly always in the mountains of the Nilguiri.

During my sojourn in the Nilguiri I personally examined the verified statements made by the numerous officials and missionaries concerning the Todds and Kourombs; I compared their accounts and theories with the data contained in the books of Mr. Sullivan and with the authentic words of General Morgan and his wife - and I guarantee the absolute authenticity of all these reports.

I continue my story from the time when the surveyors returned to Madras after their miraculous escape.

The rumors concerning the newly-discovered country and its inhabitants, their hospitality and especially the assistance given by the Todds to the English heroes, grew to such proportions that the "fathers" awoke to the fact that it was their duty to consider the matter seriously.

A courier was sent from Madras to Kouimbatour. Today this journey is made in twelve hours; at that time it took twelve days. In the name of the highest authorities the following order was sent to the "Governor" of the district: "Mr. John Sullivan, collector, is herewith commissioned to investigate the origin of the fabulous tales that are circulated concerning the 'Blue Mountains,' to verify their authenticity and to send a report to the authorities."

The collector organized an expedition at once; not like the surveyors who hurriedly got together a handful of men that could easily be disbanded, but having at his disposal an entire contingent, which he equipped as if departing for the polar seas.

A whole army of Sepoys followed him, with several dozen war elephants, hundreds of sporting-tchitts,* dogs and ponies. the rear guard was made up of two dozen English huntsmen. They carried gifts with them; for the Todds,

arms - which they had never seen before - for the Kotiroumbs, turbans for the holidays, a head-dress with which they were not familiar. Everything was just as it should be. They carried with them tents and instruments; physicians accompanied them with a complete pharmaceutical outfit. Bulls to be slaughtered were not forgotten, and prisoners were taken along to blaze the trail where lives would be endangered by the blasting of rocks and the cutting of roads. The native guides were lacking, however; because all men of this calling had fled from the villages. The fate that befell the two Malabarites, during the first expedition, was still fresh in the memory of all. "Perhaps the natives will be held to answer," said the frightened Brahmans, to which the terrified Dravidians added, "and perhaps even the English with their prestige will be made responsible, though the action of the Baarsaabs remained unpunished thus far."

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*Tchitts are domestic animals kept for hunting the wild boar, the wild goat and the bear. All hunters in India use them.

Three "great rajahs" sent envoys from Maissour, Vadian, and Malabar with instructions to implore the leader of the expedition to spare the district and its numerous population. They said the wrath of God may be delayed, but when it breaks out it will be terrible. This violation of the sacred heights of the Toddabet and the Moukkartebet might be followed by frightful disasters for the whole country. Seven centuries ago the kings of Tcholli and of Pandie, desiring to take possession of the mountains, departed at the head of two armies in order to fight the devas; but they had hardly passed beyond the borders of the mist when their troops and baggage were crushed by heavy rocks falling down upon them. There was so much blood shed on that day that for many miles the rocks were of a deep red hue and the ground itself was red. *

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*In certain parts of the district, especially in Outtakamand, the rocks and the ground itself are really blood-red, but this is due to the presence of iron and other minerals. When it rains the streets of the towns and villages are orange-red.

Nothing moved the firmness of Mr. Sullivan. It is always difficult to make an Englishman yield. The British do not believe in the power of the gods; yet, on the other hand, everything the possession of which might be open to a controversy, belongs to them - by divine right.

Thus, the caravan of Mr. Sullivan started out in January, 1819, and began the ascent of the mountain from the side of Denaigoukot, making a detour to avoid the

cascade, "the carrier of death."

The following is a summary and an excerpt from the reports published by the collector, which the astonished readers of the "Courier of Madras" read on January 30 and February 23:

"I beg to inform the Most Honorable East India Company and their Excellencies the Directors that, in accordance with instructions given me . . . (date, etc.) I left (all details known) . . . for the mountains. It has been impossible for me to get guides, the aborigines declaring that these heights were the domain of their gods and that they preferred prison and death to a journey beyond the 'mists.' I therefore equipped a detachment of Europeans and Sepoys and on January 2, 1819, we began the ascent from the village of Denaigoukot, situated two miles above the foot of the Nilguiri. In order to give a description of the climate of these mountains I beg to enclose comparative tables from the first to the last day of our ascent."

These tables revealed the following fact: Whilst from January 2 to January 15 the thermometer indicated in the entire Presidency of Madras 85 degrees to 106 degrees Fahrenheit daily, the mercury remained at a temperature of 50 degrees above zero as soon as we had reached 1,000 feet above sea-level, this temperature lowering in proportion to our approach to the summit, and, at a height of 8,076 feet showing no less than 32 degrees (-0 degrees Reaumur) during the coldest hours of the night.

Now that years have gone since the first expeditions and the heights of the Nilguiri are covered with European settlements, while the City of Outtakamand has a permanent population of 12,000 inhabitants, all things being orderly and well-known, the climate of this admirable country still constitutes a miraculous phenomenon: at a distance of 300 miles from Madras at eleven degrees from the Equator, from January to December, the temperature, in spite of the Southwestern and Northeastern monsoons, ranges constantly between 15 to 18 degrees during the coldest and the hottest months of the year, from sunrise to sunset, in January as well as in July, at a height of a thousand feet as well as 8,000 feet. I am giving herewith the irrefutable proofs of the first observations of Mr. Sullivan:

> The thermometer (Fahrenheit), on January 2nd, at a height of 1,000 feet marks as follows:
>
> At 6 a.m., 57 degrees; at 8, 61 degrees; at 11, 62 degrees; at 2 p. m., 68 degrees; at 8 p.m., 44 degrees.
>
> At a height of 8,700 feet, the same thermometer (Fahrenheit) indicates on January 15th:
>
> At 6 p.m., 45 degrees; from noon to 2 p.m., 48 degrees; at 8 p.m., 30 degrees; at 2 a.m., the water was slightly frozen.
>
> And that in January, approximately 9,000 feet above the sea-level.
>
> In the valley, the thermometer marked on January 23rd at 8 a.m., 83 degrees above zero; at 8 p.m., 97 degrees; at 2 a.m., 98 degrees.
>
> In order not to tire the reader I shall conclude this statement on the climate of the Nilguiri with the following table, comparing the

temperature (Fahrenheit) of Outtakamand, present capital of the "Blue Mountains," with London, Bombay and Madras:

London ..... 50 degrees
Outtakamand (7,300 feet) ..... 57 degrees
Bombay ..... 81 degrees
Madras ..... 85 degrees

Nearly every sick person fleeing the boiling heat of Madras, in order to retreat into these beneficent mountains, was cured. During the first years that followed the founding of Outtakamand, i.e., from 1827 to 1829, only two dead

were counted among the 3,000 inhabitants already settled in this town and its 1,313 passing guests. The mortality, in Outtakamand, never exceeded 1/4% ; and we read in the observations of the sanitary committee: "The climate of the Nilguiri is rightly considered today the most healthful climate of India. The pernicious effect of the tropical climate does not persist on these heights unless one of the principal organs of the patient is irretrievably lost."

Mr. Sullivan explains the secular ignorance of this marvelous country on the part of the people living near the Nilguiri, in the following way:

"The Nilguiri Mountains extend between 76 and 77 degrees Eastern longitude and 11 and 12 degrees Northern latitude. They remain inaccessible on the northern slope on account of their almost perpendicular rocks. On the southern side, as far as forty miles from the ocean, they are covered until this day with jungles that have never been explored, because of their being impenetrable; on the western and eastern sides they are surrounded and shut in by rocks with pointed peaks and by the hills of Khounda. It is therefore not surprising that, during centuries, the Nilguiri remained completely unknown to the rest of the world; moreover, the Nilguiri was protected in India against every kind of invasion by its character which is exceptional for many reasons.

"Taken together, these two chains, the Nilguiri and the Khounda, comprise a geographical surface of 268,494 square miles, filled with volcanic rocks, valleys and mountain gorges."

It was for this very reason that, after having reached a level of 1,000 feet, the expedition of Mr. Sullivan was compelled to abandon its elephants and to throw away nearly all its baggage, it being necessary to climb higher and higher, and scale the rocks by means of cords and pulleys. The first day three Englishmen perished; the second day seven natives amongst the prisoners were killed. Kindersley and Whish, who accompanied Sullivan, could be of no help. The road so easily followed by the Baddagues on their descent had entirely vanished; every trace of it seemed to have disappeared as by enchantment; nobody has found it again until this day, in spite of long and careful efforts. The Baddagues pretended not to understand any of their questions; apparently the aborigines had not the intention of revealing all their secrets to the Englishmen.

After having conquered the principal obstacle, the steep rocks surrounding the mountains of the Nilguiri like a Chinese wall, and after having lost two more Sepoys and fifteen prisoners, the expedition began to gather the fruits of their efforts, notwithstanding all the difficulties which were still waiting for them. Climbing step by step to the heights, cutting steps into the rocks, or redescending, by means of cords, hundreds of feet into deep precipices, the Englishmen - at last, upon the sixth day of the journey - reached a plateau. There, in the person of the collector, Great Britain declared the "Blue Mountains" Royal Territory. "The British flag was hoisted on a high rock," wrote Mr. Sullivan in a sprightly way, "and the gods of the Nilguiri became subjects of His Majesty the King of Great Britain."

From now on the Englishmen began to encounter traces of human habitations. They found themselves in a region of "majestic and magic beauty"; but a few hours later "this picture vanished suddenly as by a miracle; we were again enveloped in fog. Imperceptibly a cloud had approached and surrounded us on all sides, though long since - as Kindersley and Whish believed - we had passed the region of the 'eternal mists.'"

At that period the meteorological department of the Observatory of Madras was unable to discover the true nature of this strange phenomenon and attribute it, as is done today, to its real causes.* Mr. Sullivan, therefore, to his great surprise, could do nothing but simply state this phenomenon and describe it just as it was observed to be. He writes: "During a full hour we felt ourselves very tangibly wrapped in a tepid mist, which was as soft as down, and our clothes became drenched from head to foot. We ceased to see each other at a step's distance; indeed, the fog was very thick. Then the men, as a part of the panorama which surrounded us, suddenly came into vision - disappearing again as suddenly - in this azure damp atmosphere. In certain places, owing to the exertion of the slow and difficult ascent, the vapors became so intolerably oppressive and close that certain Europeans almost suffocated."

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* During the monsoon rains, brought especially by the winds coming from the southwest, the atmosphere is always more or less charged with heavy vapors. The fog, forming first on the summits, spreads over all the rocks around the foot of the Nilguiri in proportion to the heat of the day, making room for the damp freshness of the evening. It is at that time that the vapors descend. Moreover, there are the constant evaporations of the swamps in the jungles. Owing to the thick foliage of the trees the ground conserves its humidity and the ponds and swamps do not dry out as in the valleys. It is for this reason that the mountains of the Nilguiri, encircled by a range of rocks, retain - during the greatest part of the year - all these vapors which afterwards transform themselves into mist. Above these mists the atmosphere remains always very pure and transparent; the fog is only visible from below - not from the summit. However, the savants of Madras so far have failed to solve the problem of the very deep blue color of the mists and of the mountains.

Unfortunately the physicists and scientists of the most Honorable Company accompanying Mr. Sullivan, proved to be unable at that time to fathom this phenomenon. One year went by and it was then too late to study it. Since the rocks which surrounded these mountains disappeared one after the other (they were blasted to make room for the construction of the roads of the Nilguiri *), the phenomenon itself ceased to be and left no trace. The blue belt of the Nilguiri vanished. Today the fog is not frequent; it forms only at the periods of the monsoon. On the other hand, the mountains have become still bluer and they are of a more vivid sapphire color if looked at f rom a distance.

*There is no more than one bridle-path today, the Silurian, from Metopolam; all others are dangerous, and only the walking coolies and their little ponies can follow them.

The first reports of the astonished collector praise the natural riches and fecundity of this marvelous country: "Everywhere we passed the territory was good. We learned from the Baddagues that there were two harvests per year of barley, wheat, opium, peas, mustard, garlic and other kinds of herbs. In spite of the frosty nights in January we saw blooming corn-poppies. Evidently the frost in this climate does not impede the expansion of the flora. We found delicious water in every valley and mountain-gorge. Every quarter of a mile we found a stream which it was necessary to cross at the risk of one's life; a great number of these streams contain iron, and their temperature is considerably beyond that of the atmosphere. . . . The chickens and domestic birds found with the sedentary Baddagues are twice as big as their biggest relatives in England. And our hunters noticed that the game of the Nilguiri-pheasants, partridges, and hare, all of them of a distinctly red color - was also much bigger than in Europe. The wolves and jackals were to be found in great number. We saw tigers and elephants that have never seen the musket of man. They looked at us and turned away indifferently, without hurry, in their complete ignorance of possible danger. . . . The south-ern slope of the mountains, at a height of 5,000 feet, covered with tropical and entirely virgin forests, abounds in elephants of a peculiar color, almost black, and these elephants are bigger than those of Ceylon. The serpents are numerous and very beautiful; in the regions above 3,000 feet they remain inoffensive (which has been proved today). There are also innumerable monkeys to be found on every part of these heights."

I must tell here that the Englishmen slaughtered them without any mercy. * Poor unfortunate "first fathers of the human race." And which are the monkeys that are lacking on the Nilguiri: the big black ones with downy hoods, the "langurs " - Presbytis jubatus, and the "lion-monkeys," Inuus eilenus. The langurs live on the peaks of the highest rocks, in deep crevices, and they form isolated families as the real "primitive men of the caverns." The beauty of their fur serves as a pretext for the European in his pitiless extermination of this very gentle and remarkably

intelligent animal. The "lion-monkeys" are found only on the edge of the woods covering the southern slope of the "Blue Mountains," coming out at times to warm themselves in the sun. At the sight of a human being these creatures flee into the dense forests of the Malabarian Mountains. They are called lion-monkeys on account of the close resemblance of the head to that of a lion, with a yellow and white mane and the tufted end of the tail.

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*The native chicari, unless he is a Mohammedan, will never kill a monkey. This animal is sacred all over India.

In describing the flora and fauna of the " Blue Mountains " I do not follow the investigations and reports of Mr. Sullivan alone during his first ascent. At that time he knew very little about this district, and he described only what he saw on his way. I am completing his writing by adding, thereto the most recent discoveries that have been made.

At last the Englishmen came again upon the footprints of the real inhabitants and masters of the Nilguiri Mountains: The Todds and the Kouroumbs. In order to avoid repetition, I shall only say this: The Englishmen gradually found out that the Baddagues had been living together with the Todds for almost seven hundred years. At times they were seen in the fields of Kouimbatour, where they went to see some of their relatives who were also Baddagues, descending by trails known only to themselves. The Todds and the Kouroumbs, however, remained entirely unknown to the natives; today regular communications being established between Outtakamand and Madras, they never leave their heights. For a long time it was impossible to explain the unnatural silence of the Baddagues as to the existence of these two races who lived together. At the present time the problem seems to be fairly well solved. It is due wholly to superstition - the origin and cause of which is still unknown to the European - but is well understood by the natives. The Baddagues did not speak of the Todds, because the Todds were nonterrestrial beings for them, and gods whom they revered. To pronounce the name of the household gods, * whom they chose one day, is considered the greatest insult to these gods - a blasphemy which no native will utter, not even when threatened with death. As regards the Kouroumbs, the Baddagues dislike them as much as they worship the Todds. The simple word of "Kouroumb," though it be spoken in a low voice, brings ill luck to the one who pronounces it.

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* Every Hindu family, though belonging to the same sect or caste, chooses from among the 33 million gods of the national Pantheon, a particular deity, called the household god.

After having reached, at a height of 7,000 feet, a large prairie of peculiar shape,

the members of the expedition discovered a group of buildings at the foot of a rock, which Kindersley and Whish recognized at once as being dwellings of the Todds. These habitations made of stone, with no doors and windows, and with their pyramidal roofs, were impressed too strongly upon the minds of the two hunters to allow the slightest doubt. With one glance at the only opening in these houses serving both as door and window, the Englishmen saw that the houses were empty, though apparently inhabited. In the distance two miles from this first "village," they beheld a picture worthy of the brush of an artist and "which surprised us beyond expression," reports the collector. The native Sepoys who accompanied us, betrayed an intense and superstitious terror. A scene of the life of the ancient patriarchs unfolded before our eyes. In various sections of this large valley enclosed by high rocks, several herds of gigantic buffaloes were grazing, their horns decorated with bells and silver tambourines. Farther on they saw a group of venerable old men, long haired, with white beards and clad in white mantles.

As they found out later, they were the elders of the Todds who awaited them. The buffaloes were the sacred animals of the To-ouel (domain of the Temple) of this tribe. Around them, either half reclining, sitting, walking, or standing motionless, they saw about seventy or eighty men whose pose was exceedingly picturesque. All had their heads uncovered. At first sight of these magnificently formed giants the thought came to our esteemed and patriotic Englishmen that it might be possible to form a special regiment of these heroes after they had been sent to London as a gift to his Majesty the King. Later they realized the impossibility of putting this idea into practice. During the first few days the travelers were surprised and fascinated by the remarkable beauty of the Todds, who were not of the Hindu type. Their wives were seated at a short distance from them, with long hair well combed and hanging down on their backs; they also wore white mantles. Sullivan counted about fifteen; near by about six children were playing, entirely naked, in spite of the cold January weather.

In another description of the "Blue Mountains " * a companion of Sullivan, Col. Khennessy, writes ten pages on the difference between the Todds and other Hindus, for whom they had been mistaken for a long time, as their language and customs were unknown.

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*"The Tribes of the Nilgherry Hills."

> "The Todds differ as distinctly in every way from the other natives as the Englishman differs from a Chinaman," writes the Colonel. "Now that I know them better, I understand why the Baddagues, whose relatives we encountered in the cities of Maissour before the discovery of the Nilguiri, consider these beings as belonging to a superior race, and almost divine. In fact, the Todds resemble the gods of mythology, as they were pictured by the ancient Greeks. Amongst the several hundred 'fine men' of these tribes, I have not yet seen one who would be under 6

1/4 feet in height. They are beautifully formed and their cast of face is of classic purity. . . . Their hair is thick, black, and shining; it covers the forehead, but is cut in the shape of an arc above the eyebrows and hangs down in the back in heavy locks. One can imagine how beautiful they are. Their moustache and beard, which are never cut, are of the same color as their hair. Their large eyes, brown, dark-grey or even blue, look at one with a deep, tender, almost womanly expression. . . . Their smile is gentle, happy and youthful. Even the extremely old men have strong white teeth, which are often very beautiful. Their complexion is clearer than that of the Caraneze of the North. All are clad alike. Their garb is something like a Roman toga, made of white linen, one end of which is drawn under the right arm and then thrown backward over the left shoulder. In their hand they carry a stick with fantastic ornaments. . . . When I became aware of the mystic significance and the faith in magic power of those who possess it, this little bamboo cane two and a half feet long, worried me more than once. . . . I do not dare, I have not the right, to deny the truth of their belief and the accuracy of their statements after the many manifestations that I have seen. Though in the eyes of every Christian the belief in magic is always condemned as a sin, I do not feel I have the right to refute or to deride the facts which I know to be true, in spite of the aversion they arouse in me."

But do not let us anticipate. These lines were written many years ago. Sullivan and Khennessy then saw the Todds for the first time and spoke of them officially. Notwithstanding the fact that this was the report of an official, it betrayed the same doubt and caused the same consternation and awakened the curiosity of everybody with regard to this mysterious tribe.

"Who are they?" Sullivan asks in his writings. "It was for the second time that they saw white men, but I was perplexed by their majestically calm attitude; it resembled so little the slavish manners of the natives in India whom we were accustomed to see. The Todds seemed to await our arrival. A very tall old man left one of the groups and came to meet us. He was fol-lowed by two others who carried in their hands cups made of bark and filled with milk. Stopping a few steps away from us they spoke to us in a language which was entirely unknown. Seeing that we had not understood one word of what they said they chose the idiom of 'Small-Ialimais,' then the Canarezian, which was spoken by the Baddagues - after which we came to a better understanding.

"To these strange aborigines we were apparently beings belonging to another planet. 'You do not belong to our Mountains. Our sun is not yours and our buffaloes are unknown to you,' said the old men to me. 'You come into the world in the same way as the Baddagues - we are born differently,' said another to me, and his words surprised me greatly. All that the Todds said to us led us to believe that, for them, we were inhabitants of a world of which they had heard a little but which they had never seen and whose inhabitants they had never met. They consider

themselves as belonging to an entirely different race."

When all the Englishmen sat down on the thick grass near the old men - the other Todds remained further away, behind - they learned that they had been expected for several days. The Baddagues, who so far had served as their only link of communication with the rest of the world, i.e., India, had already informed them; the two hunters who had been saved by the Baddagues from the "places inhabited by the Buffaloes" would be followed by white rajahs who would come into their mountains. The Todds also told Mr. Sullivan that for many generations a prophecy had existed among them; men would come from beyond the seas and would settle near them, as the Baddagues had done; part of the grounds would have to be granted to them, and they would have to "live with them as brothers in a family." "Such is their will," added one of the old men, pointing towards the buffaloes; "they know better what is good or bad for their children."

And Mr. Sullivan adds: "At that time we did not understand this enigmatical phrase concerning the buffaloes and it was only later that we comprehended its significance. The meaning, though strange in itself, is not unknown to us, in India, where the cow is considered sacred and taboo."

Notwithstanding racial traditions, obstinately observed by the Todds, the English ethnologists liked to consider them as the "survival of a proud tribe whose name and other characteristics, however, remained perfectly unknown to them." On such a firm basis they constructed their hypothesis which consisted in the following: this "haughty" tribe most probably inhabited in days of old (the period remains unknown) the low territories of the Dekkan, near the river; and their herds of sacred buffaloes (which, by the way, were never considered sacred in India) were grazing there long before their future rival, the cow, monopolized the people's veneration. It is also supposed that this same "haughty" tribe drove back with cruelty and arrested the uninterrupted descent of the Aryans, or the Brahmans of Max Miiller, from the "Oxus" who came from the mountains of the North (or the Himalayas).

This friendly hypothesis, which most probably had been made at first sight, was reduced to nothingness before the following fact: The Todds, though indeed a "haughty tribe," carry absolutely no arms and have no recollection of any instruments of that kind. They do not even have a dagger to defend themselves against the wild animals, nor do they keep a watch-dog for the night. It is evident that the Todds conquer their enemies by means differing altogether from anything that might recall "armed force."

According to Mr. Sullivan, the Todds legitimately maintain their rights over the "Blue Mountains" as their secular property. They affirm - (and the secular neighbors confirm their words) - that this right dates back into antiquity; all are unanimous in declaring that the Todds were masters of these mountains, when the first detachments of other tribes, the " Moulou-Kouroumbs," arrived. Then came the Baddagues, and last the Chotts and the Errotilars. All these tribes asked and received permission from the Todds who lived alone on these heights, to inhabit the

mountains. For this authorization, all the tribes paid a contribution to the Todds - not in money, as money was unknown on these heights before the arrival of the Englishmen, but in kind; several handfuls of seed belonging to the fields of the Baddagues; several objects made of iron by the Chotts, which were necessary for the construction of the houses and for the domestic life; roots and berries and several kinds of fruit from the Kourournbs - and other gifts.

All the five races were entirely distinct from one another, as we shall see very soon. Their language, their religion and their customs, as well as their types, have nothing in common. In all probability these tribes represent the last survivors of prehistoric races who were the aborigines of southern India. Though it was possible to obtain certain knowledge concerning the Baddagues, the Chotts, the Kouroumbs and the Erroulars, history, as far as the Todds are concerned, has left no traces in the sands of time. Judging from the sepulchres and certain ruins of temples and pagodas found on the "Hill," it is probable that not only the odds but also the Kouroumbs must have attained this degree of civilization in prehistoric times. The Todds use signs which resemble the cuneiform inscriptions of the ancient Persians.

But what have we to be concerned with in the distant past of the Todds? Today they are a patriarchal tribe whose entire life is centered on the sacred buffaloes. It is for this reason that many authors, when speaking of the Todds, come to the conclusion that they adore the buffaloes as gods, thus practicing zoolatry. This is not true. Their religion has, as far as we know, a far more elevated character than that of a simple and vulgar adoration of animals.

The second report and the following written by Mr. Sullivan is still more interesting. However, as I do not quote the words of the respectable English official unless they serve to confirm my own observations and studies, I shall not repeat them here. I shall only make here some complementary statistical statements made by Mr. Sullivan and other officials concerning the five tribes of the Nilguiri.

The following is a concise summary of the pages written by Col. Tornton:

(1) "The Erroulars were the first we encountered behind the cascade, on the slope of the mountains. They inhabit caves made of earth and feed on roots. Since the arrival of the English they are less savage. They live in groups of three or four families and number approximately one thousand in all.

(2) "The Kouroumbs live above them. They are divided into two branches: (a) The simple Kouroumbs who live in huts constituting villages; and (b) the Moulou-Kouroumbs of repugnant appearance, extraordinarily small, who live in real nests on the trees and resemble monkeys rather than human beings."*

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*Note: Though in other districts of India there are tribes showing the same general features and having the same names as the Erroulars and Kouroumbs, they differ very greatly from these two, especially from the Kouroumbs who are real scarecrows and evil spirits avoided by the other tribes, with the exception of the

Todds, the kings and masters of the "Blue Mountains." As you know, "Kouroumbou" is a Tamil word meaning "dwarf." And whilst the Kouroumbs who live in the valleys are just aborigines of small size, the Kouroumbs of the Nilguiri are often not higher than three feet. These two tribes have no conception whatsoever of the most elementary necessities of life and have not evolved beyond the lowest stage of the savage, preserving all the characteristics of the most primitive human race. Their language resembles more the warbling of birds and the guttural sounds of the monkeys than a human language, though sometimes you hear words belonging to many ancient dialects of Dravidian India. The Kouroumbs as well as the Erroulars do not count more than one thousand.

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(3) "The 'Kochtars.' This race is even more strange. They have no conception of the distinction of castes and they differ as much from the other tribes of the mountains as they differ from the natives of India. Though just as savage and primitive as the Kouroumbs and the Erroulars, living on trees and in mounds like moles, they have at the same time a remarkable mastery in the art of working gold and silver, as blacksmiths and as potters. They have the secret of the preparation of steel and iron, their knives as well as all their other arms, surpassing by their flexibility and their sharpness and their extraordinary durability, all that are made in Asia or Europe. The Kochtar uses only one weapon, which is as long as a spear and very sharp on both sides. He uses it against the boar, the tiger and the elephant - and he is always victorious over the animal.* The Kochtar never betrays his secret for any sum of money. None of the tribes of the mountain work professionally. How the Kochtars came to know their secret still remains an enigma to be solved by the ethnologists. Their religion has nothing in common with the religion of the other aborigines. The Kochtars have no idea of the gods of the Brahmans and worship fantastical divinities which do not take any material form with them. The Kochtars, as far as we are able to count them, do not number more than 2,500.

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*Today, where it has been known for a long time that the Kochtars possess this secret, they receive orders for knives and for the sharpening of arms. For a very ordinary instrument with a clumsy blade, but made by a Kochtar is paid several times as much as is the price of the best knife from Sheffield.

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(4) "The Baddagues or 'Burghers.' The most numerous, the richest and the most civilized of all the five tribes of the Nilguiri. As 'Brahmanists' they divide themselves into several clans. They number about 10,000 and are occupied with agriculture. The Baddagues adore - one does not know why - the Todds and give them godlike honors. To the Baddagues the Todds are superior to their god Siva.

(5) The Todds are also called Toddouvars. They are divided into two big classes. The first is the class of the priests known under the name of Terrali; the

Todds who belong to this class devote themselves to the service of the buffaloes, are under the oath (the French text says 'are condemned to') of celibacy, and are practicing an incomprehensible cult which they hide most carefully from the Europeans and even from the natives who do not belong to their tribes. The second class is that of the Koutti, or ordinary mortals. The first, as far as we know, constitute the aristocracy of the tribe. In this little prolific tribe we have counted seven hundred men and - according to the statements of the Todds - their number never exceeds this figure."

In order to show how much this subject was considered to be of interest, let us add to the reports of Mr. Sullivan the opinion of the authors of a book published in 1853 by order of the East India Company, "The States in India," an article on the Nilguiri. It is here that the following is said about the Todds:

"This very small tribe has of late attracted the serious and enthusiastic attention not only of the tourists of the Nilguiri, but also of the ethnologists of London. The interest evoked by the Todds is very remarkable. They have deserved in no ordinary degree the friendly feeling of the authorities of Madras. These savages are depicted as an athletic race of giants admirably well formed, who were discovered quite accidentally in the interior of the Ghat. Their demeanor is full of grace and dignity, and their appearance can be described in the following way.

Here follows the portrait of the Todds which we already know. The chapter on the Todds is concluded by the description of a fact on which I lay much stress owing to its profound significance and its direct relation to the events which we ourselves witnessed, and which we repeat, feeling that we are completely ignorant of the history and the origin of the Todds.

"The Todds use no weapons; they only carry a little bamboo cane which never leaves their right hand. All efforts to penetrate the secret of their past, their language and their religion, bring absolutely no result. It is the most mysterious tribe amongst all the population of India."

Mr. Sullivan found himself ver quickly conquered by the "Adonises of the Nilguiri," as they were called by the most ancient colonists and planters of the "Blue Mountains." The collector of Kouimbatour was the first, and perhaps a unique example in Anglo-India, of an English official, a baar-saab, who fraternized so openly and entered into such intimate and friendly relationship with the aborigines, his subjects. As a compensation for the gift to the Company, of a new piece of land in India, Mr. Sullivan was immediately raised to the position of "General Administrator" of the "Blue Mountains." And Mr. Sullivan lived thirty years in these mountains; he died there.

What was it that attracted him in these beings? What really could there be in common between a civilized European and men as primitive as the Todds? To this question, as well as to many others, nobody as yet has been able to answer. Was it the unknown, the mysterious, that attracts us like the void, and, causing a vertigo, drags us forward into the abyss? From a practical point of view, the Todds are, of course, nothing but savages who are completely ignorant of the most elementary

manifestations of civilization. In spite of their physical beauty, they are rather dirty. But we are not concerned with their exterior envelope; the problem lies in the inner world, in the spiritual aspect of this people.

First of all, the Todds absolutely do not know what lying is. There is no word in their language to express "lie" or "false." Theft, or the slightest appropriation of something that does not belong to them, is absolutely unknown to them. It might suffice if we read what Captain Garkness has to say on this subject in a book published by him. He calls them "a strange tribe of aborigines," and in order to convince himself of the fact that such qualities are not only the product of our civilization, the famous traveler says, as follows: "Having lived in Outtakamand for twelve years, I declare categorically never to have met in civilized countries such religious respect for the right of meum et tuum (mine and thine) as amongst the primitive race of the Todds. This sentiment is inculcated in their children from early childhood. We (the English) have not found a single thief among them! . . . To deceive, to lie, seems absolutely impossible for them - they don't know what it is. As with the natives of the valleys of Southern India, lying - to them - is the vilest and most unpardonable sin. The most tangible proof of this most profound sentiment is manifested on the heights of the Peak of Dodabet, under the form of their unique temple; it is consecrated to the dethroned goddess 'Truth.' While the inhabitants of the valleys often forget this goddess and her symbol, the Todds adore both, keeping, in theory and in practice, the sentiment of the sincerest and unalterable respect for the idea as well as for its symbol.

This moral purity of the Todds and the rare qualities of their soul attracted not only Mr. Sullivan but also many missionaries. One must understand the value of these eulogies expressed by men who are not much in the habit of praising beings on whom they themselves made no impression.* And it is perfectly true that from the day of the arrival of the missionaries and of the Englishmen in general, until the very last day of their sojourn they made no greater impression on the Todds than on simple statues of stone. We have known some missionaries and even a bishop who, when preaching publicly on Sundays to their crop of "well-born people," were not afraid of pointing to the Todds as an example of morality.

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*Until this day, i.e., in 1883, in spite of all the efforts of the missions, no Todd has been converted to Christianity.

But there is something still more captivating in the Todds - if not in the masses, in general, and to the statisticians, in particular, at least to those who have dedicated themselves heart and soul to the study of the more abstract sides of human nature, it is the mystery which they feel when in contact with the Todds, and their psychic power, of which I spoke before. We shall have much to say of these two profound aspects of their soul.

The collector spent ten days in the mountains, returned to Kouimbatour, then

went on to Madras in order to submit his complete report on his expedition into the "Blue Mountains" to the Central Office of the Company. After having thus performed his duty, Sullivan returned to the Mountains which he already loved, and to the Todds who interested him tremendously. He was the first to construct a European house there, each stone of which was brought to him by the Todds. "Where did they take those beautiful stones which were so marvelously cut? This still remains a mystery," writes General Morgan.

From the first day the collector became the friend, the protector and the defender of the Todds, and for thirty years he incessantly stood up for them and protected them and their interests against the cupidity and the usurpations of the East India Company. He never called them otherwise than the "legal lords of the soil," and he compelled the "respectable fathers" to reckon with the Todds. For many years the Company paid a rental to the Todds for the forests and the fields which they yielded to them. As long as Mr. Sullivan lived he allowed nobody to offend the Todds and take possession of those grounds which the Todds looked upon as being their sacred pastures, which fact was specified in the contracts.

The effect produced by Mr. Sullivan's report in Madras was electrifying. All those who suffered from diseased livers, from the climate, from fever and from all other diseases which the tropics bestow so prodigiously upon the Europeans - if they had the necessary means for traveling - rushed towards Kouimbatour. Formerly a poor village, Kouimbatour developed in a few years to a district town. Regular communications between Metopolam, at the foot of the Nilguiri, and Outtakamand,* a small town founded in 1822 at a height of 7,500 feet, were soon established. The entire bureaucracy of Madras soon made their quarters there from March to November. Town after town, house after house, rose on the blooming slopes of the mountains, like mushrooms after April showers. After Sullivan's death, the planters seized almost the entire territory situated between Kotchohiri and Outti. Profiting by the fact that the "masters of the mountains" had reserved for themselves the highest peaks of the Nilguiri for the pastures of the "sacred buffalo," the English usurped nine-tenths of the "Blue Mountains." The missionaries, who would not let the opportunity slip by, mocked at the natives and their faith in the gods and the spirits of the mountains; their efforts remained useless. The Baddagues were not shaken in their faith in the Todds, though the Todds had soon to content themselves with the bare peaks of the rocks which they now share with the Langurs. Although the "fathers" of the Company - and after them the governmental bureaucrats - continued, on paper, to bestow upon the Todds the title of "legal proprietors of the ground," they as always, acted like "lords toward barons."

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*It is, in general, simply called "Outti," and we also shall use this name from now on when mentioning this town.

At that time nobody paid attention to the Kouroumbs. Since the arrival of the

English the Kouroumbs seemed to be swallowed up by the earth, as if they really were what they appeared to be, gnomes of repugnant appearance. Nobody mentioned them, nobody saw them during the first years. Then they began to show themselves little by little, and began to settle at the edge of the swamps and under the humid rocks. Their presence, however, was soon noticeable. How? We shall tell this in the following chapter. Let us first turn our attention to the Todds and the Baddagues.

When the newly recognized "order of things" was organized and research work was begun for establishing statistics concerning the discovered tribes, our respectable ethnologists encountered unsuspected difficulties. It was impossible for them to surmount the obstacles which came in their way when trying to solve the problem of the origin of the Todds; after twenty years of strenuous effort they had to admit that it was impossible to learn anything certain on this subject and all they could do was to add the Todds to the other tribes of India. "It is easier to reach the North Pole than to penetrate the soul of a Todd" writes the missionary, Mr. Metz. And Col. Khennessy adds: "The only information which it was possible for us to obtain after so many years is the following: the Todds affirm that they have inhabited these mountains since the day when the 'King of the Orient' presented them to them; they have never left them; never did they descend from their heights. But at what historical period did this unknown 'king' of the Orient live? We are told that 197 generations of Todds have inhabited the 'Blue Mountains.' If we count three generations for one hundred years (though we see that the Todds live to a very old age), it seems - if we believe their affirmations - that they settled on these mountains about 7,000 years ago. They insist on the fact that their ancestors landed on the Isle of Lanka (no error in this name as well as in the others), coming from the East, 'the horizon of the rising sun.' These grandfathers served the 'ancestors of King Ravon,' mythical monarch-demon, conquered by the not less legendary Rama, about twenty-five generations ago - i.e., by adding a thousand years to the first figure, which would constitute a genealogical tree the roots of which touch a past of 8,000 years.* All we can do is accept this legend, or confess frankly that no other facts exist which could throw light on their mysterious past.

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* For the name of Lanka, the monarch conquered by Rama, and the number of years mentioned above, see "La Mission des Juifs" by Saint-Yves d'Alveydre. Note by Mr. Semenoff.

Who, after all, are these beings?

The problem is evidently very difficult; its solution has not advanced a single step since 1822. All efforts on the part of the philologists, ethnologists, anthropologists and all other "ologists" and "apologists," who came at different periods from London and Paris, have been without success. On the contrary, the more the savants tried to penetrate the mystery of the Todds the less the information

obtained seemed to agree with scientific facts. All indications could be summarized in one statement: the Todds did not belong to ordinary humanity.

Such statements, however, could find no place in the "history of the peoples of India." Finding that the surest information obtainable was inadequate, the savants found consolation in inventing certain hypotheses of which we are going to cite these that are most interesting:

The first of the theorists was the scientist, Mr. Lechenault de la Tour, botanist of the King of France. This respectable savant, in his letters* expressed his conviction - one does not know why - that the Todds were a cross-breed of Bretons and Normans thrown by shipwreck on the Malabarian coast. Cross-breeds had been found in the Caucasus; why should they not be found in the Malabarian Mountains? This hypothesis found the approval of many savants.

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* Part of these letters appeared from June 17, 1820, to December 15, 1821, in the "Journal of Madras."

Unfortunately, this poetical supposition was soon destroyed by a fact; neither the language nor the mode of thinking of the Todds contained the following words: God, cross, prayer, religion, sin. The Todds ignore every expression recalling monotheism or deism - useless to mention Christianity. Nor can the Todds be considered as pagans, as they adore nobody and nothing except their own buffaloes - I insist on the word "Own," as they do not honor any other buffaloes, of other tribes. Milk, some berries and certain other fruit of their woods are their only nourishment. They never touch the milk, cheese or butter of other buffaloes that could not be their Sacred nurses. The Todds never eat meat; they do not sow, nor do they reap. They consider every occupation inferior except taking care of the buffaloes and tending their herds.

This kind of existence proves sufficiently that there is little in common between the cross-breeds of the Middle Ages and the Todds. Moreover, it is necessary to recall that the Todds never use weapons and never shed blood, which causes them a kind of sacred terror. All mountaineers of the Caucasus, northeast of Tiflis, have preserved arms and instruments of the Middle Ages in great number; their customs carry the imprint of the Christian faiths.* The Todds have no knives of any kind - neither old-fashioned nor modern. The theory of Lechenault de la Tour is wholly improbable.

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* These mountaineers betray their German origin by the way they eat their sausages and brew their beer. Their militia, armed for war, is clad in coats of mail and helmets with visors. They carry a cross on the right shoulder.

Then came the old Celto-Scythian theory, remodeled many a time but always in

favor, and which, in this case, as in many others, freed the savants from embarrassment. When a Todd dies he is incinerated together with his favorite buffalo, on which occasion very curious rites are performed; if the deceased was a "priest" seven to seventeen of these animals are sacrificed.

But buffaloes are not horses; and the type of the Todds is very European, reminding one of the natives of the south of Italy or of France - a physiognomy very different from the one of the Scythians, as far as we know.

Lechenault de la Tour fought a long time for his ideas, but when he saw them derided he abandoned his theory. The hypothesis of the Scythians is still taken seriously, in spite of its improba-bility.

The next on the scene was the eternally rejected but always resuscitated theory of the "lost tribes of Israel." The German missionary, Mr. Metz, assisted by certain of his British colleagues who like himself - were gifted with flaming imagination, went with enthusiasm into the study of this theory. However, to refute all these fantastical affirmations, it might be sufficient to repeat that the Todds never worshiped any god, still less the God of Israel.

The unfortunate German, full of holy piety, lived with the Todds and tried to understand them, for thirty-three years. He lived their daily life, following them from place to place;* he washed himself only once a year, lived only on dairy products, and finally became so fat that he began to suffer from dropsy. Metz became attached to the Todds with all the power of his honest and loving heart, and though he had not converted any of them to the Christian religion, he boasted of having learned their language and of having spoken of the Christ to three generations of Todds. However, when other Europeans attempted to verify the sayings of the German, they found that all his allegations were untrue.

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*Though the Todds are not Nomads and have house, they change their residence quite frequently in order to find better pastures for their buffaloes.

They first learned that Metz did not know half a word of their language. The Todds had taught him the Kanaresian dialect which they use when talking to the Baddagues and the women of their tribe. Metz knew nothing of their secret language which the Elders spoke when holding council, or when executing their unknown religious ceremonies, in the tirieri - a sacred habitation which is severely guarded, and which sometimes is subterranean, situated behind the stable of the buffaloes. This temple is consecrated to a cult which nobody knows, except the Todds. The wives of the Todds themselves are ignorant of this secret language - or perhaps are they forbidden to speak it? As far as the illumination of the Todds through Christianity is concerned, poor Mr. Metz, when transported to Outti, sick and almost dying, frankly confessed that during these thirty-three years of common life he had not succeeded in baptizing a single Todd, either man or child. However, he hoped "to have sown the seed of future education."

But even there disappointment waited for him; the Jesuit fathers, coming from the occidental side of Malabar, had arrived on the Nilguiri; they, in their turn, tried to recognize in the Todds a colony of ancient Syrians converted to Christianity, or being at least Manichean.* They made researches for a long time. Using their skill and habitual shrewdness, the Jesuits succeeded in establishing relations with the Todds. They did not succeed in obtaining their confidence but established good friendship with these ordinarily silent savages, and - to their great joy - for they detest the Protestants still more than the pagans - they learned that Metz might have lived with them for centuries in the most intimate friendship without making the slightest impression upon them.

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*The Jesuit fathers tried to prove, one day, that the Todds, like the ancient Manicheans, worship the "light" of the sun, of the moon, and even that of an ordinary lamp. Such demonstration would certainly not demonstrate Manicheism. Moreover, the Jesuits lied when affirming it. The Todds laughed very much at this idea when they spoke to Mrs. Morgan and myself about it. They have, on the contrary, a profound aversion to the light of the moon.

"The white man's language resembles the chattering of the maina [a kind of talking bird] or the gabbling of monkeys," said the old Todds to the Jesuits who, in their self-sufficiency, did not go into the meaning of this ambiguous compliment. "We listen, and we laugh..... What need have we of your gods while we have our great buffaloes?" they added. And they told how Metz proposed to replace their faith in the buffaloes by the religion of those who stole their pastures and daily humiliated them.*

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*Books and works by the missionary Jesuit Fathers on the Coast of Malabar.

Though the Todds maintained the same attitude towards the disciples of Loyola as they did towards Metz, the Jesuits ridiculed the honest German and spread anecdotes about him in the whole of Southern India. We know and could name Jesuits who, with all their power, tried to confirm the natives in their faith in the Might of Satan rather than permit their conversion to Protestant Christianity.

These events took place about ten years ago. Since then, the missionaries of these two religions have abandoned their efforts to convert the Todds. They finally realized that their endeavors would mean nothing but a loss of time. And yet, in spite of the absence of all religious sentiment, all writers and all the inhabitants of Outti unanimously admit that nobody in India is as honest, moral and charitable as the Todds. This handful of patriarchal savages, without family, without history, without the slightest manifestation (at least visibly) of faith in sacred principles, except their adoration of the dirty buffaloes, have conquered all Europeans by their

childlike ingenuity. At the same time the Todds are very far from being a barbarian people, as is demonstrated by their astounding capacity in speaking several languages, and their power in maintaining secrecy as far as their own sacred language is concerned.

Sullivan tells, in his Memoirs, how he held conversation with the Todds for hours and that he finally remained speechless and listened with profound astonishment to their judgment of the English. "Spontaneously and very justly the Todds understood our national character and our faults."

So far I have shown to the reader the general traits of the Todds; I have told all or nearly all that is known of them in India. And I can now begin the story of my personal adventures and the observations I have made amidst this tribe which is so little known and so mysterious.

To Chapter 3

CHAPTER III

I Become Acquainted With the Todds

"The Truth which I uphold is imprinted on all the monuments of the past. To understand history, it is necessary to study the ancient symbols, the sacred signs of the priesthood, and the art of healing in primitive times, an art which is now forgotten . . . . " Baron du Potet.

The event takes place in Madras, in the first half of July, 1883. The West wind blows, beginning at seven o'clock in the morning, i.e., at sunrise, and blows incessantly till five o'clock in the afternoon. This wind has been blowing for six weeks, and will last until the end of August. The thermometer marks 128 degrees in the shade. As it is little known in Russia what the West wind in the South of India means, I shall try to depict this merciless enemy of the European. All doors and windows which happen to be in the direction of this little wind which is equable, continuous and velvety, are covered with thick "tattis," which means mats of kousi (fragrant herb); all chinks are stopped up. The smallest opening is stopped with cotton-wool, a material which is believed to be the best protector against this West wind. But nothing prevents this wind from penetrating everything - even those objects which are sufficiently impermeable to water. This wind infiltrates into the walls and the following extraordinary phenomenon takes place as a result of its equal and tranquil blowing: books, papers, and manuscripts, all papers move as if they were alive. Leaf after leaf rises as if taken by an invisible hand, then - under the pressure of this intolerably hot and burning wind - every leaf rolls itself up into a tiny tube, after which the paper only continues to tremble under the caresses of the new zephyrs. Dust, at first hardly perceptible, then becoming very thick, settles on furniture and other objects. If some cloth is covered with it, no brush can ever

take it off again. And if sofas and chairs are not beaten every hour of the day, the layer of dust which will have settled by evening, will be three-fourths of an inch thick.

There is only one salvation, the "punka:" to open wide one's mouth, turning towards the East and to remain motionless, either sitting or out-stretched, and breathing an artificially created freshness by the movement of a giant fan spread across the room. When the sun has gone down it is possible to breathe a pure though overheated air.

It is for this reason that, in March, the European society people of Madras follow the local government and depart, until November, for the "Blue Mountains." I also decided to leave, but not in the spring: it was already the middle of July and the West-wind had had time enough to dry me to the marrow of my bones. I accepted the invitation of my good friends - the family of General Morgan. On July 17th, half dead with heat, I rapidly packed my trunks and at six o'clock in the evening I found myself in the compartment of a train. The next forenoon I was at Metopolam, at the foot of the Nilguiri.

It was there that I came in direct contact with the Anglo-India exploitation, which we call civilization, and where I also met Mr. Sullivan, member of the Council and son of the deceased collector of Kouimbatour. The "exploitation" presented itself under the aspect of an abominable box on two wheels covered with a linen roof. I had already paid for it at Madras where it was offered under the pseudonym of a "closed carriage with springs, and very comfortable." As far as Mr. Sullivan was concerned, I must say that he appeared to me as the guardian angel of these mountains. He certainly had a very great influence on these heights which rose before us to the sky, but he was as powerless as myself against the exploitation of the private British speculators who had settled at the foot of the Nilguiri. All he could do was to try to console me by setting an example. After having introduced himself he told me that he was on his way to the authorities who had sent for him (he had left his plantation, situated I don't know where). Then he sat down without protesting and we continued our way in this horrible box on two wheels. The great ones of the "superior" race, who are so proud with the Brahmans, become quite small and tremble before the inferiors of their own people in India. I have noticed it more than once. It may be that they are afraid of their disclosures, but perhaps they are even more afraid of their poisonous tongues and their almighty slander.

Thus the member of the Council was afraid of saying one word to the dirty employe," the agent in charge of the transportation of travelers and luggage from Madras to the Nilguiri." When this agent declared with insolence that owing to the rain in the mountains he was not going to run the risk of spoiling the color and varnish of the "closed cars" and that, therefore, the travelers were to depart in open cabs, neither Mr. Sullivan nor the other English travelers had one of those Anglo-Hindu gestures which reduce the natives of highest rank to nothingness.

There was nothing to be done. I sat in a stooped position in this box on two wheels in comparison with which the Russian Tonga on the road to Simla is like a royal compartment against a kennel where the dogs are kept during a voyage. It was thus that we began the ascent of the mountain. Two miserable worn-out nags dragged

the cabriolet. We had hardly made half a mile when one of these phantoms reared on his hind legs and fell down, throwing over the cab which was rolling with me to an abyss - fortunately not very deep - and into which, moreover, I did not roll. I had a lucky escape, having only a disagreeable surprise and a torn dress. One of the Englishmen very kindly rushed to my assistance (his cab had got stuck in the red clay), then vented his anger on the driver who was neither the owner of the two-wheeled box nor of the nag which died on the road. The driver was a native, and we knew that it would be useless to try to pacify the Englishman. I was compelled to await the arrival of another cab and two other jades that were expected to come from the depot. I was not sorry for losing this time. Already I had made the acquaintance of one of the members of the council - acquaintance made under the constraint of a common exploitation. Then I also started a conversation with another Englishman. An hour of waiting had gone but during this time I was able to learn many new details on the discovery of the Nilguiri, the father of Mr. Sullivan, and the Todds. Later, at Outti, I often had opportunity to see these two "dignitaries" again.

We finally continued our way, but my misfortune had not ended. Another hour had gone by when it began to rain. My cab was soon transformed into a bathtub with shower. Moreover, the temperature fell in proportion to our ascent. At last we arrived at Chotaguiri. I was freezing in my fur coat. There was one more hour of traveling. There I was in the "Blue Mountain " at the height of the rainy season. A stream of thick water, reddened by the soaked ground, was rushing down toward us and the beautiful panorama on both sides of the road was almost hidden by fog. Yet even under these unpleasant conditions I enjoyed the journey. The brisk air was delicious after the heavy atmosphere of Madras. Though filled with humidity, it was impregnated with the perfume of violets and the fragrance of pine trees. What were the mysteries these forests - covering the slopes of the "Blue Mountains" - had witnessed in the long course of their existence? What had they seen, these century-old trunks jealously hiding scenes like those in "Macbeth"? Legends, in our days, are no longer in style - they are called stories, which is natural. "Legend is a flower unfolding only on the groundwork of faith." Faith, however, has long since vanished in the hearts of the civilized Occident. It is for that reason that these flowers perish under the murderous breath of modern materialism and general incredulity.

This rapid transformation of climate, of the atmosphere and all nature appeared miraculous to me. I forgot the cold, the rain, the horrible box in which I was sitting on my trunks and suit-cases, which were half broken and soiled with mud; I had only one desire: to breathe, to drink this pure and beautiful air which I had not inhaled for years.

We arrived at Outti at six o'clock in the evening. It was a Sunday and we soon encountered a crowd returning from their evening service. The majority of these people were Eurasians - Europeans in whose veins flows the "black"
blood - ambulant passports with "particular marks" which they carry from the cradle to the grave in their finger nails, profile, hair and complexion. I know nothing more ridiculous than an Eurasian dressed in a stylish jacket, his low

forehead covered with a round hat. Perhaps more ridiculous still is an Eurasian woman in her hat adorned with feathers. She resembles a horse with a headdress of ostrich feathers put before a hearse. No Englishman is capable of feeling and especially of manifesting such hatred against the Hindus as the Eurasians. The depth of their hatred against the aborigines grows with the quantity of blood that they assimilate from the natives. The Hindus pay them back, and with usury. The "gentle" heathen transforms himself into a cruel tiger when only the word "Eurasian" is uttered in his presence.

However, I did not look at the creoles who sank up to their knees in the heavy mud of Outtakamand, with which all the streets of this little city were covered, as with blood. I did not look at the newly shaven missionaries who preached in the wide open spaces under their open umbrellas, gesticulating pathetically with their arms, whilst the water was running from the trees. No, no. Those whom I was looking for were not there. The Todds do not walk in those streets - they rarely ever approach the city. My curiosity - this I learned soon - could only be satisfied several days later.

The evening before, in the train, I was almost dying - suffocating with intolerable heat. Now, not being used to this climate, I trembled with cold under my blankets and had to have a fire during the whole night.

For three months, until the end of October, I worked in order to acquire new information about the Todds and the Kouroumbs. I went as a Nomad to the former and made the acquaintance of almost all the elders of these two extraordinary tribes. Mrs. Morgan and her daughters, who were all born on these mountains and spoke the language of the Baddagues, as well as Tamil,

were of great help to me, and assisted me in enriching every day my collection of facts. I have put together here all that I could learn from them personally and otherwise, and all that I could extract from manuscripts which were entrusted to me. I hand these facts over to the reader for his study.

There is indeed no tribe in the world resembling the Todds. The discovery of the "Blue Mountains" was for Madras what the discovery of America was to Europe. During these last fifty years numerous books have been published on the Nilguiri and the Todds, and every one invariably puts the question: "But who are the Todds?" Indeed, where have they come from? From which country have they arrived - these giants - real "Brobdingnags" of the land of Gulliver? From which branch of humanity, dried up - dead since a long time - reduced to dust, did this strange, unknown fruit fall on the "Blue Mountains"?

Now that the English have lived side by side with the Todds for more than forty years, and have learned about them all which is possible - that is to say, something like zero - the authorities of Madras have calmed down a little and have changed their tactics. "No mystery is attached to the Todds and it is for this reason that nobody can penetrate it," say the officials. "There is and was nothing enigmatical in them. . . . These men are like other men. Even their influence on the Baddagues and the Kouroumbs, which is incomprehensible at first, can easily be explained: it is the superstitious terror of ignorant aborigines and of ugly dwarfs at the sight of physical beauty, great height and moral power with which this other tribe is

endowed. In other words, the Todds are beautiful, though dirty, savages, irreligious and without a conscious past. They represent simply a tribe that has forgotten its origin, and is partly bestial, like all the other tribes of India."
However, all the officials, agriculturists, planters and all those who have settled and lived for a long time at Outtakamand, Kottaguiri and other little towns and villages on the slopes of the Nilguiri, look differently at the problem. The sedentary inhabitants of the "Sanitariums",* which grew like mushrooms during thirty years on the "Blue Mountains," know things which the newly arrived English officials will not see even in their dreams - and about which silence is kept. Who wishes to become the object of ridicule for others? However, there are others who are not afraid of speaking openly and with emphasis of that which they have recognized to be true.

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*This name is given by the English to such towns as Simla, Darjeeling, Mussoorie, and other towns in the mountains of India, where officers and soldiers are sent for recovery.

To these latter belongs the family who had invited me and who had not left Outtakamand during forty years. This family consisted of General Rhodes Morgan, his amiable and cultivated wife and their eight daughters and married sons. They all have clear and firm opinions established concerning the Todds and the Kouroumbs - especially in regard to the latter. "My wife and myself have grown old on these mountains" - this was an often-repeated saying of the honorable old English general." My wife, myself, and our children speak the language of the Baddagues and we understand the dialects of the other local tribes. The Baddagues and the Kouroumbs work on our plantations by the hundreds. They are used to us and like us and consider us as members of their families, as their friends and faithful protectors. If, therefore, there is anybody at all who knows them well, their domestic life, their customs, their rites, their faith - it is only we: my wife, myself and my eldest son who serves here as collector. It is thus that we come in continual contact with them, and - fortified by facts which more than once have been proven in the courts - I do not hesitate to declare openly that the Todds and Kouroumbs really and unquestionably are possessed of certain powers of which our savants have no conception. . . .
If I were superstitious* I could solve this problem very simply. I would speak, for instance, like our missionaries: 'the Moulou-Kouroumbs are an infernal progeny; they are the direct offspring of the devil. The Todds, though heathens, serve as an antidote to the Kouroumbs; they represent the instrument of God to weaken the power of the Kouroumbs and thwart their plans.' However, as I do not believe in the devil, I have arrived, a long time ago, at another conviction; we cannot deny that in man and in nature there are forces which we do not understand. If our haughty science refuses to admit their reality it is due to lack of wisdom and because science rejects what it cannot understand or classify.**

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*The honorable general is a "free-thinker" and very appreciative of the scientific agnosticism of Herbert Spencer and other philosophers of the same school.
**It is interesting to compare the opinions emitted by the English skeptic with those of the priest Beliousine who has published many articles in the magazines of our capital on the superstitions of the Russian people in regard to sorcerers and witchcraft. We shall find later that the attitude of mind of the English general approaches the attitude taken by the Russian priest.

"Too often have I witnessed occurrences that were unquestionable proofs of the existence of this unknown force, so that I cannot but reject the skepticism of the scientists in this respect."*

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*This is an extract of a report of the Major-General Morgan addressed to the Committee which was organized by the General Council of the Theosophical Society for the study of religions, customs, cults and superstitions of the Dravidian Mountain tribes. This report, composed by one of the principal members of the Council, and president of the Theosophical Society of the Toddebet at Outtakamand, was read at a public meeting before 3,000 persons on the day of the annual assembly of the members, on December 27th, 1883, at Adyar (Madras). The family of General Morgan is well known all over South-India. They enjoy the esteem of the authorities and of the entire European society. It is with their express consent that I reveal their names and take them to witness. The skeptics of Russia are invited to address themselves for more complete information to the General himself if they wish to know the opinion of an English savant on the sorcery and witchcraft of the Moulou-Kouroumbs.

All that my honorable friend and host had seen and heard from the Todds and the Kouroumbs would fill volumes. I shall relate a fact, the authenticity of which has been certified by the General, his wife and his children. This story will prove how much these cultivated people believed in the witchcraft and devilish power of the Moulou-Kouroumbs.
"Having lived for many years, in the Nilguiri," writes Mrs. Morgan* in her book, "Witchcraft on the Nilguiri," "I have been in a position to study the lives and customs of hundreds of natives belonging to different tribes working on our plantations. I know that they often have recourse to demonology and witchcraft, especially the Kouroumbs. This latter tribe is divided into three branches; first, the ordinary Kouroumbs consisting of sedentary inhabitants of the forests who often work as laborers; the second branch are the Teni-Kouroumbs (derived from the word 'tein,' honey) who live upon honey and roots; the third branch are the Moulou-Kouroumbs. These latter are more frequently to be seen in the civilized parts of the

mountains, i.e., in the European villages, than the Teni-Kouroutnbs. They live in great numbers in the woods near Viniade. They use bow and arrow and like to hunt the elephant and the tiger. There exists a belief in the people - and the facts often prove its justification - that the Moulou-Kouroumbs (like the Todds) have power over all the wild animals, especially over elephants and tigers. In certain cases they are even capable of assuming their forms. Under cover of this lycanthropy the Moulou-Kouroumbs commit many crimes without being punished; they are very vindictive and evil. The other Kouroumbs always address themselves to them if they need help..... If a native desires to take veneance on any enemy he calls on a Kouroumb.

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*Wife of the General and daughter of the Governor-General of Travankor, at Trivandroum, where she was born.

"Amongst the laborers working on a plantation of Outtakamand there was a whole company of Baddagues, thirty young and strong men who all - without exception - had grown up on our territory where their fathers and mothers had served before them. Suddenly, without apparent cause, their number diminished. I noticed nearly every day the absence of one laborer, then of another. Inquiries which were made revealed that the absent man had suddenly fallen ill and shortly after had died.
"One market-day I met a monegar (elder) of the village to which my Baddague-laborers belonged. He saw me, stopped, then approached me, greeting me with great deference.
"'Mother,' said he, 'I am sad, for a great misfortune has come over me' - after which he sobbed desperately.
"'What is it? Speak quickly.....'
"'All my boys die one after the other and I am incapable to render them assistance, powerless to stop the evil.... The Kouroumbs
kill them.'
"I understood, and asked for the motive which induced the Kouroumbs to commit these murders.
"'They always want more and more money. . . . We already give them nearly all that we earn, but they remain dissatisfied. Last winter I told them that we had no more money, that we could not give them more." All right . ... do as you please..... but we shall have what we want. . . ." If they answer in this fashion one knows in advance what it means. Such words predict the inevitable death of several members of our company..... At night when everything is asleep around us, we are suddenly awakened and see a Kouroutnb in our midst. Our entire company sleeps in a large bunkhouse. . . .'
"'Why don't you close your doors properly? Why don't you lock them?' I questioned the elder.
"'We lock them, but of what avail! You may close everything - the Kouroumb will penetrate any object. No stone walls will be an obstacle to him. . . . After having

been awakened one looks at him in fear, he is there - in the midst of us he gazes at us, at one after the other - then lifts his finger and points to one, then to the other. . . . Madou, Kourirou, Djogui (the names of the three last victims), he does not open his mouth - he is silent - only points out, then vanishes suddenly without leaving any trace! Several days later those toward whom he had pointed with his finger fall ill; fever seizes them, their stomach swells - and the third, often the thirteenth day, they die. It is thus that during these last months eighteen young men out of thirty are dead among us. We are now only a handful of men.....' And the monegar shed hot tears.

"'But why don't you lodge a complaint with the Government?' I asked.

"'Are the saabs going to believe us? And who could catch a Moulou-Kouroumb?'

"'Then give to these horrible dwarfs what they demand, two hundred rupees, and have them promise to leave the others at peace. ....'

"'Yes, it will be necessary to do so,' sighed the Baddague. Then, after another bow, he went away."

This story is one of the many happenings related to me by Mrs. Morgan who is an intelligent and serious-minded woman, and is a proof of how much the English people share the belief of the "superstitious natives" in the magical occult power.

"I have lived amongst these tribes for over forty years," said the General's wife many a time. "I have watched them for a long, long time, and very closely. There was a time when I did not believe in this 'power' and treated all things relating to it as absurdities. However, persuaded by facts, I cannot help believing as many others do. . .."

" Do you know that people laugh at your belief in 'witchcraft'?" I said one day.

"I know it. But the opinion of the masses who judge superficially cannot change my conviction which is founded on facts."

"Last night at dinner, Mr. Betten told me laughingly that two months ago he had encountered the Kouroumbs, and that in spite of their threats he was still alive...."

"What did he tell you exactly?" asked Mrs. Morgan vividly, taking off her eye-glasses and putting her work aside.

"While hunting, he had wounded an elephant, but the animal disappeared in the thick forest. However, the elephant was magnificent, and Mr. Betten did not wish to lose it. Eight Burgher-Baddagues were with him; he ordered them to follow and find the wounded elephant. But the animal forced them to go very far, and still farther. Then, suddenly, when the Baddagues had declared that they were not going any farther, as they were afraid of encountering the Kouroumbs, they saw the lifeless body of the elephant. The Englishman, when approaching the animal, found himself face to face with several Kouroumbs. They declared that the elephant belonged to them, that they had just killed him, which they proved by twelve arrows stuck into the body of the corpse. However, Betten searched for the wound created by his bullet. According to him the Kouroumbs had only put a finishing hand on the animal which had been seriously wounded by him. The dwarfs, however, insisted on their rights . Then - according to Mr. Betten's story - in spite of their maledictions, he chased them away and returned home after having cut off the paws and tusks of the elephant. 'I am still safe and sound,' said he laughingly to me,

'while the Hindus in my office had already buried me when they heard of my encounter with the Kouroumbs.'"
Mrs. Morgan listened patiently to my story, then asked me:
"Is that all he told you?"
"Yes."
After dinner there was a general discussion on the subject.
"Now I shall tell you what Betten omitted to mention; after which I shall call a witness, the only one who survived this dreadful encounter. . . . Did Betten repeat to you the words which the Kouroumbs uttered when he first tried to take the tusks of the animal? 'The one who touches our elephant will see us at the hour of his death.' This is the habitual formula of their menace. If Betten's Baddagues had been of this country here they would rather have allowed their master to kill them on the spot than to disregard the threat of the Kouroumbs. But he had taken them from Maissour. Betten wounded the animal, but he is too sensitive - he admits it himself - to cut the corpse of an animal to pieces. He is only half a hunter - a 'cockney' of London," Mrs. Morgan added with contempt. "These chicaris of Maissour cut off the paws and the tusks of the animal and then carried them away on their poles. They were eight, and do you wish to know how many of them are still alive?"
The General's wife clapped her hands. It was thus that she called her servant. She sent him to fetch Pourna.
Pourna was an old chicari of very poor health. With his little dark bilious looking eyes he looked apprehensively at his mistress, and at me. He certainly did not understand why he had been called into the drawing room of the Saabs.
Mrs. Morgan, in a decided tone, said: "When hunting the elephant two months ago with Betten-Saab, how many chicaris were you in all?"
"Eight men, Madam-Saab; Djotti, a child, was the ninth," answered the old man, with a hoarse voice.
"And how many are you today?"
"I alone remain, Madam-Saab," sighed the old man.
"What!" I exclaimed with undisguised terror. "All others, even the child, are dead?"
"Mourche, they are dead - all!" moaned the old hunter.
"Tell Madam-Saab how and why they died," bade Mrs. Morgan.
"The Moulou-Kouroumbs killed them; their stomachs swelled, and they died, one after the other; the last man died five weeks ago...."
"But how was this man saved?"
"I sent him right away to the Todds so that they might cure him," explained Mrs. Morgan. "The Todds did not receive the others. They never take it upon themselves to cure those who drink, they send them back - that is why my good laborers died one after the other, as many as twenty men," she added with a sigh. "There you are - this old man is being cured - besides, he did not touch the elephant - he only carried a gun. Betten had told me, and others confirmed it afterwards, that he threatened the chicaris to compel them to spend the whole night in the forest with the Kouroumbs if they would not carry with them the remains of the elephant. Terrified, they quickly cut off its paws and tusks and carried them away. Pourna, who for a long time had been in my son's service at Maissour, rushed to my house. I

sent him and his comrades at once to the Todds. But they received nobody except Pourna who never drinks. The others fell ill the same day. They were walking among us like phantoms, green, shrunken, but their stomachs heavily swollen. Before a month had gone they were all dead with 'fever,' according to the diagnosis of the military doctor."
"But a poor little child could not as yet be a drunkard?" I asked. "Why did the Todds not save it?"
"Even our five-year-old children drink Mrs. Morgan replied, with an expression of disgust." Before our arrival on the mountains of the Nilguiri there was no smell of liquor; it is the gift of grace bestowed by our civilization. And now...."
"Now? . . .
"Today alcohol kills as many men as are killed by the Kouroumbs. It is their best ally. Otherwise, the Kouroumbs would remain powerless owing to the proximity of the Todds."
Our conversation stopped at these words. Mrs. Morgan gave orders to have two oxen yoked before a big carriage. She invited me to go and see her village "behind the herbs." We left.
She spoke to me about the Todds and the Kouroumbs throughout the ride.
Mrs. Morgan loves these mountains and is proud of them. She considers herself as their child, and the Todds and even the Baddague laborers are to her part of her family. The General's wife cannot forgive her government for not recognizing sorcery and its disastrous consequences.
"Our Government is just stupid," said Mrs. Morgan, getting quite excited. "They refuse to constitute a committee for research, and to believe in the facts admitted by the natives of all castes, while a number of them make use of these horrible means for the purpose of committing crimes that cannot be punished. These crimes are committed far more often than is known. The terror of this occult power is so great among our people that they prefer to kill a dozen innocent animals by means of an entirely different kind of sorcery, rather than let a patient die whom they believe to be the victim of the evil eye of a Kouroumb - being convinced that in this way they can save him. One day I was riding in the country. Suddenly my horse shied, reared, and bouncing sidewise in an entirely unexpected manner, almost threw me out of my saddle. I looked upon the road and saw something very strange. There was a big flat basket on which was placed the cut-off head of a sheep, gazing at the passers-by with its dull eyes; there were also a cocoanut on that plate, ten silver rupees, some rice and flowers. This basket was placed on top of three stakes arranged in the form of a triangle, and was attached to this triangle by three very fine threads. The whole arrangement was made in such a way that any person, coming from one side of the road or the other, inevitably hit against these threads, tore them and thus received a violent blow from the deadly 'Sounnioum,' as this kind of sorcery is called here. This is the most ordinary means used by the natives to which they very often have recourse in cases of illness, where death alone seems to be the solution. Then they prepare the 'Sounniourn.' Whosoever touches it, were it only one thread, catches the disease, while the sick person gets cured. The 'Sounnioum' which I nearly hit that evening had been placed on the road leading

to the club and where people always pass at a late hour. My horse saved me, but I lost it; it died two days later. How is it possible after such an experience not to believe in the 'Sounnioum' and in all this sorcery! . . " And she continued: "It exasperates me that the physicians attribute death, caused by sorcery, to a certain unknown fever. Strange fever - which knows how to select its victims so unerringly and so intelligently. It will never hit those who do not come in conflict with the Kouroumbs. It is always the result of a disagreeable encounter, of a fight with them and the result of their anger against their victim. There is not, there never has been, any kind of fever in Nilguiri. It is the most healthful place in the world. My children, from the day of their birth, have never been ill for a single hour. Look at Edith and Claire, at their strength and their clear complexion, Mrs. Morgan added, pointing to her children.

She did not listen to my compliments. She continued to rage against the doctors. Then, suddenly, she interrupted her invectives and exclaimed: "Look, there is one of the most beautiful mourrti of the villages of the Todds. Their saint Kapiloll, the oldest, lives there."

The Todds, as I have told before, are partly nomadic. The entire crest of the mountain chain from Rongassouam to Toddabet is covered with their villages, if a group of three or four pyramidal habitations can be called a village.

Such houses are erected one not far from the other, and between them, distinguished by its grandeur and more careful construction, shines a "Tiriri," sacred stable for the buffaloes. Behind the first "chamber" serving as nocturnal refuge for the buffaloes and especially their females, and which is a room of very large dimensions, is always a second "chamber." An eternal obscurity reigns in this latter hall; it has neither doors nor windows and its only entrance consists of a hole not larger than one square archine.* This room must be the temple of the Todds, their Sanctum Sanctorum, where the mysterious ceremonies take place, known to no one. The entrance hole is placed in the darkest part of the building. No woman or married Todd is allowed to enter there; in other words; no Kout, i.e., person belonging to the laic class. Only the "Terallis," the officiating priests, have free access to the interior tiriri.

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*One archine - .712 meters.

The entire building is always surrounded by a rather high stone wall, and the court inside, or the Tou-el, is also considered as sacred. At a distance the houses around the tiriri by their form recall the tents of the Korghiz. But they are entirely made of stone and coated with very solid cement. They are twelve to fifteen feet long, eight to ten feet wide and not higher than ten feet, measured from the ground to the pyramidal point.

The Todds do not stay in their habitations during the day; they spend only the night there. Without regard to the weather - during the most violent monsoons, during the torrential rains - one can see them sitting in groups on the ground or walking by

twos. As soon as the sun goes down they disappear into the small openings of their miniature pyramids. One large silhouette after the other vanishes into the building. Then, by means of a thick wooden shutter, they close this opening and only reappear the next morning. After sunset no one can see them nor make them leave their retreat.

The Todds are divided into seven clans or tribes. Every clan is composed of one hundred men and twenty-four women. According to the statements of the Todds this number does not vary and "cannot change"; since their arrival in the mountains it has always remained the same. The statistics have indeed proven this for the last fifty years. The English explain this regularity in the number of births and deaths, which limits the Todds to the number of 700 men, by their existing polyandry; the Todds have only one wife for all brothers of one family, even if there are twelve of them.

The notable minority in the birth of female children was at first attributed to the killing of the newly-born, a custom which is quite prevalent in India. But this has never been proven. In spite of all efforts and ceaseless spying, and not-withstanding all promised compensations for denouncing those who could be caught in the very act of delinquency (the English were burning with desire to catch them, one does not know why) it has been impossible to find even the smallest trace of child-murder. The Todds have only a smile of contempt for all these suspicions.

"Why kill these little mothers?" they said. "If we had not need of them, they would not exist. We know the number of men and the number of mothers we need; we shall not have more."

This strange argument induced the geographer and statistician, Mr. Torn, to write angrily in his book on the Nilguiri: "They are savages, idiots, and they mock at us."

Those, however, who have known the Todds for a long time and have watched them for years, think that the Todds speak with gravity and believe in their affirmations. They even go further and frankly express the opinion that the Todds, like many other tribes living close to Nature, have penetrated into many of her mysteries, and, as a result, are far better instructed in practical physiology than our most learned doctors. The friends of the Todds are absolutely convinced that the Todds have no need of recourse to infanticide, as they can increase or decrease the number of their "mothers" as they please; they, therefore, speak the truth, though their modus operandi in this obscure physiological problem remains for all an impenetrable mystery.

The words "woman," "girl," and "virgin" do not exist in the language of the Todds. The conception of the feminine sex is, with them, indissolubly connected with maternity, nor do they recognize any special term for the feminine sex, in whatever idiom they may express themselves. Whether they speak of an old woman or of a one-year-old child, they always say "mother," and if precision is necessary, they use the adjectives "old," "young" and "little." The Todds often declare: "Our buffaloes have fixed our number once for all; also the number of the mothers."

The Todds never remain in a mourtti for a very long time, but move from one to the other as they require new pasturage for their buffaloes. Owing to the fecundity of the flora in these mountains these pastures have not their equal elsewhere in India.

It is, perhaps, for this reason that the buffaloes of the Todds surpass in height and strength all other animals belonging to that family, not only in this country but all over the world. But there is another impenetrable mystery: the Baddagues and the planters also have buffaloes that live on the same fodder. Why are their animals smaller and weaker than the "sacred herds" of the Todds? The gigantic stature of the sacred buffaloes leads one to believe that they are the last survivors of antediluvian animals. The animals of the planters can never compare in strength with those of the Todds, and the Todds refuse categorically to lend their buffaloes for a crossing of races.

Every clan of Todds - there are seven - is divided into several big families. Every family, according to the number of its members, possesses one, two or three houses in the mourrti which are situated in several pastures. Thus every family always has its habitation ready, wherever they may settle for the time, and their domain often extends over several villages which belong to them alone, with the inevitable tiriri, temple-stable for the buffaloes. Before the arrival of the English and their spreading like a parasitic vegetation on the slopes of the Nilguiri, the Todds, when leaving one mourrti for another, left the tiriri empty, as well as the other structures. But noticing the curiosity and indiscretion of the new arrivals from the first day of their invasion, when they attempted to penetrate into their sacred edifices, the Todds became very careful. They are distrustful now, have lost their former confidence, and when moving to new pastures leave behind them, in the tiriri a "Teralli"* priest, known today under the name of Pollola,** his assistant Kapillol and two female buffaloes.

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*Ascetic, hermit.

*Pollola, guardian; and Kapillol, under-guardian.

"For one hundred and ninety-seven generations we have been living quietly on these mountains," said the Todds in their complaint to the Government, "and none of us, except the Terallis, have ever crossed the thrice-sacred threshold of the Tiriri. The buffaloes roar with anger. . . . We ask you to prohibit the white brothers from approaching the Tou-el [sacred barrier], otherwise a disaster will happen, a terrible disaster....."

And the authorities were wise enough to forbid the inhabitants of the valleys, especially the English and the curious and insolent missionaries, to enter or even approach the Tou-el. But the English only gave in completely when two of their countrymen had been killed at different times; the buffaloes had lifted them tip on their enormous horns and had crushed them under their heavy hoofs. Even the tiger, which is scorned by the buffalo of the Todds, does not dare to try his strength against this animal.

Thus no one has been able to uncover the mystery which is hidden in the room behind the stable of the buffaloes. Even the missionary Metz, who lived with the Todds for thirty years, did not succeed in solving this enigma. The description and

all the information given on this subject by Major Frezer* and other ethnologists and writers, is purely imaginary. The Major had "penetrated" into the room behind the stable of the buffaloes and all he discovered in this temple in which the whole world was interested, was a dirty and entirely empty room. It is true that the Todds had just rented this village to the authorities and had transported their penates to another and much larger pasture. All that had been in the houses and the temple had been carried away; the buildings themselves were to be burned.

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*"The Todds, What is Known of Them."

The Todds do not occupy themselves with the rearing of cattle; they have neither cows, sheep, horses, goats nor birds. They have only their buffaloes. The Todds do not like poultry, as the cocks would disturb the silence of the night and, with their crowing, would wake the "tired buffaloes," one of the old men explained to me. I have already told that the Todds have no dogs, but the Baddagues keep them. The dog is indeed very useful and even necessary in the caverns of the forests. The Todds have never performed labor of any kind - either before or since the arrival of the English; they neither sow nor do they reap. However, they have all they need, have no regard for money, and none of them understand anything of material matters, with the exception of some old men. Their women adorn their white drapes - their only garment - with very beautiful embroidery; but the men despise all manual labor. All their love, all their meditations, all their pious sentiments are centered on their magnificent buffaloes. The wives of the Todds are not allowed to approach the animals, only the men take charge of milking the female buffaloes and of looking in every way after these qacred animals.

Several days after my arrival, accompanied only by women and children, I went to visit a mourrti situated about five miles from the city. Several families of Todds were at that time living in the village, also an old Teralli and a number of priests. I had had opportunity to meet several Todds, but had not seen their women nor their "ceremony with the buffaloes." We had gone with the intention of assisting, if possible, at the "ceremony of the buffaloes entering the stable"; I had heard much about it and was very anxious to see it.

It was already five o'clock in the afternoon and the sun was disappearing behind the horizon, when we stopped at the edge of the woods. We had left our carriage and were walking across a large glade. The Todds were busy with their buffaloes and did not notice us, not even when we were quite near them. But the buffaloes began to roar; one of them, undoubtedly the "chief," decorated with silver bells on his enormous coiled-up horns, left the herd and came as far as the edge of the road. He turned his head toward us, glanced at us with flaming eyes, then set up a roar as if to say: "Who are you?"

I had been told that the buffaloes were lazy and stupid and that their eyes were expressionless. I had held the same opinion before knowing the buffaloes of the Todds, especially before knowing this buffalo who came toward us to speak to us in

his animal language. His eyes were burning like two fiery coals, and in the restlessness of his slanting eyes I saw the expression of surprise and distrust.
"Do not approach him," my companions cried. "This is the chief and most sacred animal of the entire herd. He is very dangerous." I had no intention of approaching the buffalo. On the contrary, I withdrew much quicker than I had advanced. At that moment a tall youth, as beautiful as Hermes amongst the oxen of Jupiter, with one leap jumped between the buffalo and ourselves. Crossing his arms and bowing before the "sacred" head of the animal, he began to murmur words into his ear which none of us understood. Then such a strange phenomenon occurred that, had this fact not been confirmed by the others, I would have considered it a simple hallucination aroused by all the stories and anecdotes that had been told me about these sacred animals.
The buffalo, as soon as the young Teralli spoke his first words to him, turned his head toward him as if he really listened and understood. Then he looked at us as if he were examining us more closely, shook his head and began to snort in short jerks, which seemed like an intelligent answer to the respectful observations made by the Teralli. Finally the buffalo threw another indifferent glance at us, turned his back to the road and walked slowly toward his herd.
The scene appeared comical to me, and reminded me so strongly of the popular conversation held by the Russion Moujik with the chained bear "Mikhailo Ivanitich" that I almost burst out laughing. However, seeing the solemn and intimidated faces of my companions, I restrained myself.
"You have seen it - I told you the truth," said a young girl of about fifteen years to me, in a low voice triumphantly and at the same time apprehensively. "The buffalo and the Teralli understand each other and speak to each other like men....."
To my great surprise, the mother did not contradict her daughter; she made no comment. Somewhat bewildered by my questioning, astonished look, she said:
"The Todds are, in all things, a strange tribe. They are born and live in the midst of the buffaloes. They train them for years and one must indeed think that they converse with them.
The wives of the Todds recognized amongst us Mrs. T. and her family; they came out upon the road and surrounded us. They were five; one carried her child which, in spite of the cold wind and the rainy weather, was perfectly naked. Then there were three others, quite young and extraordinarily beautiful, and an old woman, not bad looking, but almost too dirty. This old woman approached me, asking - I suppose in Kanaresian - who I was. I did not understand her question and one of the young girls answered for me. When the question and answer were translated to me the latter appeared to me very original, though it did not quite correspond with the truth.
I was introduced as a "mother" coming from a strange country and a woman "who loved the buffaloes," as my interpreter told me. This declaration evidently pacified and even gladdened the old, dirty woman. Without this recommendation, as I knew later, it would not have been possible for me to assist, later in the evening, at the ceremony with the buffaloes. The old woman ran toward one of the teralli, the eldest, who was surrounded by a group of young priests and stood at some distance

in a picturesque attitude, leaning on the magnificent black back of the "chief" buffalo, already known to us. He came at once toward us and addressed Mrs. S., who spoke their language as well as the natives themselves.
What a beautiful, imposing old man! I could not help comparing this ascetic of the mountains with the other Hindu or Mussulman anchorets. These latter are weak and look like mummies, while a Teralli is of amazing health, bodily strength and vigor, like an ancient oak. His beard was beginning to look silvery, and his hair, falling down in heavy locks, was white. Holding himself as straight as an arrow, he approached us slowly, and it seemed to me as if the living picture of Velisar had left its frame. The sight of this proud and beautiful old man who resembled a king clad in rags, and who was surrounded by six powerful and magnificent Kapilollis aroused in me a burning curiosity and an irresistible desire to know all about this tribe and especially its mysteries.
It was, however, impossible to satisfy my desire at this moment. Like the great majority of Europeans, I did not speak the language of the Todds. So I had to wait patiently and without complaint. All I could do was watch and observe whatever I would be allowed to see. That evening I assisted at the following strange ceremony which the Todds perform daily.
The sun had gone down almost entirely behind the big trees, when the Todds prepared their sacred animals for their return to the stable. The buffaloes, about one hundred in number, were grazing quietly in the field, the "chief," who never leaves his observation post, being in their midst. Each buffalo had little bells fixed on his horns, but while their bells were of copper, their chief was distinguished by bells of pure silver and earrings of gold.
The ceremony commenced in this way: the children of the buffaloes were separated from their mothers and locked up in a special stable near the Tou-el, where they remained until morning. Then the wide doors of a very low wall were opened. This wall was so low that, from the road, we could see all that happened inside the Tou-el. Their bells ringing, the buffaloes entered one after the other and ranged in line. These were the male buffaloes. The females waited their turn. Every buffalo was led to a cistern, or rather a pool; there they were washed and dried with herbs; then, after quenching their thirst, they were locked up in the Tiriri.
Now, wherein lies the interesting part of this ceremony? As the buffaloes approach the doors, the "Laymen and women" (i.e., about 80 men and about two dozen women of different age) stand in line on each side of the doors, the men on the right, and the "mothers" on the left. They salute each buffalo as he passes. Moreover, every Todd of the laic caste performs certain incomprehensible gestures which express profound respect. The same ceremony is repeated for the female buffaloes. Moreover, when saluting the female buffalo, they tender her some herbs and bow to the ground. The "mother" whose offering has been accepted by the "chief" female buffalo, believes herself very fortunate, as this is considered a good omen.
After the male buffaloes have been taken care of and locked up, the men begin to milk the female buffaloes, who will not allow any of the women to approach them. This sacred ceremony lasts for two hours; the vessels, which are made of bark, after

having been filled with milk are carried seven times around the female, and are then deposited in the "dairy," a special building kept very clean. Only the "initiates," i.e., the Kapilolls, are allowed to milk the animals, and they perform this duty under the supervision of the chief Teralli, or first priest.

After the milking of the buffaloes, the doors of the Tou-el are closed and the initiates enter the stable of the buffaloes. Then, according to the statement of the Baddagues, the room next to the stable is illumined with many little lamps which burn until morning. This chamber is the habitation of the initiates only. No one knows what takes place in this secret sanctuary during the night, and there is no hope that it ever will be known.

The Todds despise money; it is impossible to bribe them as they have no need of anything and view with indifference the "not mine," i.e., all that does not belong to them. As has been well said by Captain Garkness and others who have lived with them for a long time and have witnessed their daily actions: The Todds are "disinterested"* in the fullest meaning of this term.

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*H. P. B. uses a Russian word, "bezserebrennik," which means: bez, without; serebro, money, and means also "disinterested."

To Chapter 4

CHAPTER IV

As I am forced in this story to rest upon the testimony of Mrs. Morgan and her family for everything concerning the exceptional powers of the Todds and the Kouroumbs, I feel that, in the eyes of the unbelieving crowd, this support is fragile. Perhaps we shall be told: "Theosophists, spiritists, psychists, you are all the same, you believe in facts that science will not admit and that it will even reject with the contempt they deserve. Your phenomena are only hallucinations experienced by you all and things that no reasonable being will take seriously."

We have for a long time been ready to submit to all these objections. Since the scientific world, and after it the crowds following the paths it has traced, have denied the value of the work of certain great scientists, certainly we do not pretend to convince the public. When the testimony of Professors Hare, Wallis, Crookes and numerous other lights of science has been denied, and when we know how those, pronouncing the day before, with a servile passion, the names of these great inventors, utter them today with a smile of disdainful pity as if they were speaking of men having all at once lost their reason - our suit can be considered as lost.

Where is the man, deeply interested in the psychological problems of the day, who does not remember the long, deep and conscientious studies of the chemist Crookes? He proved by irrefutable experiments made with scientific apparatus, that absolutely unexplainable phenomena are often produced in the presence of people called mediums. And he demonstrated by that very thing, the existence of forces and of faculties in man, still unstudied, of which no one in the Royal Society

had dreamed. As a reward for this discovery, which moved believing and especially unbelieving Europe and America, this Royal Society, blind and deaf to everything psychic and spiritual, and following the example of the French University in regard to Charcot - nearly expelled from its circle the honest Mr. Crookes.*

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*The fact that Crookes belongs to the Theosophical Society will do still more harm to his reputation. Woe, however, to the Royal Society. Its members are beginning, one after the other, to follow the example of the great chemist and to join psychic or theosophical groups. Lord Carnarvon, Balkaren, the Professors Wallis, Sidjouik, Banet, Oliver Lodge, Balfour, Stuart, and others all are either "psychists" or Theosophists, often both. If the Royal Society of England continues her expulsions in the same fashion, she soon will have left for a member only her janitor.

We ask the reader to remember that this account has in no way the propaganda of spiritism for its goal. We are content with proclaiming facts. We are attempting to open the eyes of the mass by showing it the reality of abnormal, strange, still unexplained, but not at all supernatural phenomena. The Theosophists believe in the truth of the mediumistic fact - the true experiment, not the trickery which, unfortunately, takes place in seventy per cent of the cases; but they repudiate the theory of the "spirits." I who write these lines, do not believe in the materialization of the souls of the dead, and I do not admit spiritistic explanations, still less their philosophy. All the phenomena spoken of in this last quarter of a century, are as real and irrefutable as, perhaps, the existence of the mediums. But these phenomena possess as much of what can be called "spirituality" as do these honest cabinet-makers and blacksmiths considered in the South of France and of Germany as apostles in village mysteries, and chosen by the church representatives for their muscular arms and their substantial stature.

This belief in the reality of facts and distrust in regard to all charlatanism is shared by all men called spiritualists and by the members of the Theosophical Society; the Brahmans of India on one side and on the other a few hundreds of scientists very competent in judging spiritism. The chemist Crookes belongs to the latter category, "n'en de'plaise aux spirites," who spread all through their publications the false rumor that he is a convinced spiritist.

The spiritists are greatly mistaken. Formerly when we had not yet made the personal acquaintance of Mr. Crookes, these reports about him perplexed us. But in April, 1884, at his home in London, in the presence of many witnesses, and later when we were alone, we spoke to him plainly about all these rumors. Mr. Crookes answered directly and without hesitation that he believed as firmly as ever in the mediumistic phenomena described by him in his "radiant matter"; he had shown and explained the latter to us - but he had not had any faith for a long time in spirits' manifestation although he had formerly leaned towards such an explanation.

"Then, who was Katie King?" we asked.

"I do not know. Very probably the double of Miss Cook [the medium]," answered the scientist and added that he had the serious hope of seeing biology and physiology soon convinced of the existence in man of this semi-material double.

The following objection can also be raised: the very fact that there are scientists believing in a double and in spiritism does not show the reality of these doubles or of mediumistic phenomena. Moreover, these scientists are in a minority, while those who deny the facts not yet demonstrated by contemporary science constitute an overwhelming majority. I will not discuss this. I shall content myself with making the remark that there is, for the present, only a small percentage of intelligent human beings, not only in the whole of humanity but among the cultivated classes themselves. The majority possesses only an evident superiority over the minority, that of gross, animal force. It disregards the minority and tries to crush it or, at least, to stifle its voice. The fact is observed everywhere. The masses of partisans of public opinion exert a pressure upon those who prefer truth. The Royal Society of England and the University of France persecute the scientists who dare to cross - in the name of disgraced truth - the limits rigorously fixed by them around their narrow materialistic conceptions. The spiritists are trying to defeat and even to suppress the Theosophists. All of that is in the order of things. We are sure that there are also many intelligent men among those who believe in the personal presence of dead people's souls in spiritistic seances, in "spirits" clothing themselves in matter, in their revelations, in the philosophy of Allan Kardeck, and even in the infallibility of professional and public mediums. While we express the respect due to each individual belief, we do not share the convictions of the spiritists. We take the liberty to remain within our personal convictions. Time alone, and the help of science, when it has modified its tactics, will show who is right and who is wrong.

Definitely convinced that the influential institutions - the Royal Society of England and the other learned academies of Europe - will never come to our help (at least now, during our lives), certain that the majority of scientific men has determined to deny for centuries all of these psychological phenomena, knowing that the mass always judges things superficially, deeming as gross superstition anything it does not understand (while many fear to understand); convinced finally that all will agree in calling truth and fact only any conclusion formulated by themselves without great reason, while it is a fact that almost all the scientific theories determined by men have at all times been abandoned one after the other; certain of not being able, in spite of all our efforts, to change the trend of thought of our century, we decided to act alone and to seek the necessary explanations ourselves.

For two years we accumulated all the information possible and studied the "witchcraft" of the Kouroumbs, and for five more years we sought to know the manifestations of this same force in the various tribes of India. A committee was constituted by the Central Council of the Theosophical Society and we took all measures to avoid possible trickeries. Our colleagues, chosen among the worst skeptics, formulated this same conclusion: "All that is said concerning these tribes

is founded on real facts. With the exclusion, of course, of the enormous exaggerations of the superstitious mass of the people, all these facts have been demonstrated more than once. How the Todds, the Kouroumbs, the Jannades, and other tribes, have, by virtue of these faculties, power over men, we do not know and do not take it upon ourselves to explain. We only declare what we have seen."

These are the words of our colleagues, Hindus reared according to contemporary English standards of education, that is to say, materialists,
in the full meaning of the term, and believing neither in personal gods, nor in the spirits of the spiritists. We state the same conclusion, but we suspect - and this suspicion is equivalent to a certainty - that this force of the Nilguirian sorcerers is our old friend "the psychic force" of Doctors Carpentier and Crookes. We made very careful, impartial, serious experiments upon ourselves and upon others. And we think that before Doctors Charcot, Crookes, and Tsellner, as before our eyes, when it was a question of the "sorcerers," the same and only force was acting; the diversity of its manifestations depends above all upon the differences of the human organisms, then on the surroundings, on the ambient sphere in which this force is manifested, much also on climatic conditions, and finally on the intellectual tendencies of the people called "mediums."

Other people have written before me on the Todds and the Kouroumbs. But in the descriptions of the Englishmen, it is impossible to find anything, to understand anything outside of the hypotheses already quoted.

Despairing of ever being able to leave this labyrinth and to again see the celestial light, I wanted to question native pandits who have a reputation for circulating "historical accounts and legends." The pandits referred me to an ascetic Baddague. This anchoret, who never washed himself, was very kind and hospitable. For a few bags of rice he told one of the natives, a member of our Society, legends of his race, for three days and three nights without interruption. It is useless to say that the Anglo-Hindus know nothing of the facts I am about to give the reader.

The word Baddague is Kanaresian and, like the Tamil word "vadougan" means "septentrional": all the Baddagues came from the North. When six hundred years ago they arrived in the "Blue Mountains" they found the Todds and the Kouroumbs already there. The Baddagues are certain that the Todds had already been living on the Nilguiri for centuries.

The dwarfs (Kouroumbs) declare in turn that their ancestors placed themselves in the service, or agreed to become the slaves of the Todds' ancestors still in Lanka (Ceylon), "in order to possess the right to live on their land" with the condition "that their descendants would remain always under the eyes of the Todds."

Otherwise, the Baddagues remark, "these devils would soon have had everybody on the earth dead with the exception of themselves." The Kouroumbs, when they are reproached for their devil-like wickedness, do not contradict this declaration of the Baddagues; on the contrary they are proud of their power. Gnashing their teeth, in their powerless rage against the Todds, they are ready, like scorpions, to sting themselves, to kill themselves with their own poison. General Morgan, who has often seen them in their fits of fury, told me that he, a positivist, "feared to be forced to believe in the devil against his will."

On the other hand, the Baddagues affirm that the close association of their tribe with the Todds is very antique.

"Our ancestors already served them under the King Rama," they affirm. "That is why we also serve them."

"But the Todds do not believe in your fathers' devas?" I asked one day of a Baddague.

"It is not so; the Todds do believe in their existence," was the answer given me. "But they do not render them any honor, because they themselves are devas."

The Baddagues say that the year when the god Rama advanced upon Lanka apart from the great army of monkeys, many people from Central and Southern India wanted to obtain the honor of becoming the allies of the great "avatar." Among these were the Kanarasians, ancestors of the Baddagues, from whom the Baddagues claim they descend. In fact, the Baddagues divide their tribe into eighteen castes, among which are Brahmans of high birth, as for example the "Vodei," a branch of the family reigning today in Maissour. The English have been able to convince themselves of the justice of these claims. In the ancient chronicles of the house of Maissour, documents have been kept to this day, showing: First that the Vodei and the Baddagues make up one and the same tribe, that they are all native of Karnatic; second, that the natives of this country took part in the great holy war of the King Aoude Rama against the Rackchas, giants, and demons of the island of Lanka (Ceylon).

And it is these same Brahmans, proud of their noble and ancient origin, who maintain among the Baddagues this sentiment of veneration - not for themselves, as it is done by all the other Brahmans in the rest of India - but in regard to the Todds who reject their gods. To find the true cause of this exceptional respect is a very difficult thing, and this mystery continues to spur the curiosity of the English. It is almost impossible to solve this problem when one knows the laws of the Brahmans. Indeed, this proud caste which refuses to work for the British for any sum of money; these Brahmans who will not, themselves, carry a package from one house to another, seeing a personal humiliation in this act - are precisely the ones among the Baddagues who are the most zealous partisans of the Todds. Not only do they work for the Todds without any remuneration, but they will not stop at the meanest kind of work, in their estimation, if it must be done upon the desire of the Todds, or more exactly, on the order of these freely-chosen masters. These Brahmans are ready to serve the Todds as masons, servants, cabinet makers and even parias. While these haughty Hindus remain full of pride towards the other people, even the English, while they wear the triple holy insignia of the Brahmans, they alone possess the right to officiate in the ceremonies of sowing and harvesting (although they often yield it with fear to the Kouroumbs), they all prostrate before the Todds.

Yet, they also, these Brahman Baddagues, possess this marvelous "force" in its magical manifestations.

Thus, every year, during the feasts of the last harvest of the year," they must give the irrefutable proof that they are direct descendants of initiate Brahmans, twice born. That is why they walk slowly two and fro, barefoot, and without experiencing

the least harm, over a wide trail of live coals or of iron at white heat. This fiery track passes along the facade of the Temple - that is from 29 to 35 feet - and the Brahmans stand motionless on it or walk upon it as on a floor. Each Baddague - Vodei - must, for the very honor of his caste, cross the whole track at least seven times.

The English affirm that these Brahmans know the secret of a vegetal essence making the skin of the hands and feet invulnerable to fire - to rub the extremities with this liquid would be sufficient. But the missionary Metz affirms that in that, also, there can be only thaumaturgy.

"What can it be that induces this proud caste of Brahmans to humiliate themselves so far as to adore a tribe inferior by its level of culture and its intellectual faculties? - this is for me an undecipherable enigma," writes Captain Harkness. (The Hill Tribes of Nilguerry.) "Certainly the Baddagues are timid by nature; besides, they have become savages after centuries lived in the solitude of the mountains; however, the mystery can be pierced by establishing that they are superstitious people, like all the mountaineers of India. Yet, such a manifestation of the individual is very curious to a psychologist."

It is incontestable. However, the primitive reason for this veneration is still more "curious," although the English - still less the skeptics - are unable to know it. First of all, the Todds are not inferior to the Baddagues in intelligence nor in birth; on the contrary, in that respect also they are infinitely superior to them. Moreover, the true origin of the adoration of the Todds by the Baddagues must be sought not in the present, but in a very remote antiquity, in that age of the history of the Brahmans which our modern scientists not only refuse to study seriously, but in which they refuse to believe. Although this work is difficult, it is not impossible. The disseminated fragments of Baddague legends are documents, the accounts of their Brahmans - in decline since the Mussulman invasion, but who still possess glimmers of the knowledge of the mysteries enjoyed by their ancestors - Brahmans of the epoch of the Rishis and of the thaumaturgical adepts of "white magic" - this remaining "history" permits us to build a logical work, entirely solid. The only thing to do is to begin to work methodically, to gain the confidence of the Baddagues and not to be English or "baar-saab," whom the Baddagues fear still more than the Kouroumbs. Because, with the help of gifts, they can appease the Moulou-Kouroumbs whose evil enchantments and eye will cease to act; while they consider the English as their deadly enemies.

Therefore the Baddagues, like the other Brahmans of India, consider it their sacred duty to leave the English in complete ignorance of the facts concerning their history, past and present, substituting fiction for reality.

The Nilguirian Baddagues alone have kept the memory of this past, a memory lacking in fulness it is true. The Todds are silent on this subject and they have never uttered a word about it. Perhaps, outside of a few elder "priests," they are all ignorant of this "antiquity." The Baddagues
affirm that, before he dies, each teralli must transmit the tradition he knows to one of the young candidates to his functions.

As for the Kouroumbs, although they remember the century of their

enslavement, they know nothing about the Todds. The Erroulars and the Chottes are more animals than half-savage men. From this fact it results that among the five Nilguirian tribes, the Baddagues are the only ones recalling their past and furnishing proofs of it. We can conclude, therefore, that the knowledge they have of the Todds' past is not built on fiction. All their affirmations concerning their own history, their descent from the North, their descendance from Kanaresian colonists who came about a thousand years ago from Karnatik, a country known today under the name of Maissour of the south, and which in the remotest antiquity (historical) was a part of the kingdom of Konkan - were found exact. Why would they not also have kept fragments of the history of the Todds' remote past?

The origin of the strange relations between these three races, entirely different one from the other, remains absolutely indeterminable to this day. The English give the assurance that these relations were established following a long co-residence in these lonely mountains. Isolated from the rest of humanity, the Todds, the Baddagues and the Kouroumbs would gradually have created for themselves a universe of their very own made up of superstitious ideas. But the tribes themselves claim something entirely different. And what they tell, as having taken place in the remotest antiquity and not without direct rapport with the legends and the ancient hagiographies of the Hindus, remains very significant.

The traditions of these three tribes whose destinies were linked throughout the ages are the more interesting that in listening to them and in penetrating them, it seems to us that we are reading a detached page of the "mythic" poem of India, the Ramayana.

When I think of the Ramayana, I confess that I have never understood the motive constraining the historians to place on such different levels this work and the poems of Homer. For, according to me, their character is almost identical. We will be told certainly that everything supernatural is rejected alike from the Iliad, the Odyssey and the Ramayana. But our scientists who accept, almost without hesitation, as historical personages, all such characters as Achilles, Hector, Ulysses, Helen and Paris - why do they relegate to the rank of empty "myths" the figures of Rama, of Lakchmana, of Sita, of Ravana, of Khanoumana, and even of the king of Aoude? Either all these people are simply heroes, or it is a duty to restore them to the "rank" due them. Schliemann has found in the Troiade obvious proofs of the existence of Troy and of its leading characters. The antique Lanka (Ceylon) and other places mentioned in the Ramayana could be found in the same way if the trouble were taken to look for them. And above all, the relations and the legends of the Brahmans and the Pandits should not be rejected with such contempt.

Whoever has read the Ramayana, even once, has been able to convince himself, by rejecting the allegories and the symbols inevitable in an epic poem of a religious character, that it was possible to find in it an evident, irrefutable, historical background.

The supernatural element in a narrative does not exclude historical matter. It is so in the Ramayana. The presence in this poem of the giants and of the demons, of talking monkeys and of wisely speaking feathered animals, does not give us the right to deny the existence, in the remotest antiquity, either of its greatest heroes, or

even of the "monkeys" of the innumerable army. How is it possible to know, with absolute certainty, exactly who the authors of the Ramayana had in view under the allegorical appellations of "monkeys"* and of "giants"? In chapter VI of the Book of Genesis it speaks of the sons of God, who, having fallen in love with the daughters of the Earth, married them. From this union the race of the "giants" was born on Earth. The pride of Nimrod, the Tower of Babel, the "confusion of tongues," are identical to the pride and the actions of Ravana, to the "confusion of the tribes" to the time of the wars in the Mahabharata, to the revolt of the Daaths (giants) against Brahma. But the main problem resides in the real existence of the "giants."

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*In many pages of the Pourana the accounts refer to these same kings, with the same names of kingdoms (identical terms to those employed in the Ramayana). But in these relations the word "monkey" is replaced by that of man.

The events related in a few verses in Genesis - detailed in the book of Enoch - concerning the giants, extend over the whole epic poem of the Ramayana. Without other names and with deep details, we see in it all the fallen angels mentioned in the visions of Enoch. The naghis, the apsaris, the gandarvis, and the rackchasis teach the mortals all that was taught to the daughters of man by the fallen angels of Enoch. Samiaza, the chief of the sons of heaven, calling his two hundred warriors to the oath of alliance on Ardiss (the summit of the Armon mountain), teaching afterwards to human kind the secrets of the sin of witchcraft, has his double in the king of the naghis or of the serpent-gods. Azaziel showing men how to forge weapons, and Amazaraka, sorcerer healer by the mysterious forces of the different herbs and roots, acted in the same way as the apsaris and the azouris acted on the river Richhaba, and the gandarvas "Khacha and Khachou" on the crest of the Gandharnadana. Where are the traditions of a race in which we do not find the gods, teachers of men, giving them the tales of the knowledge of good and evil, the demons, the giants?

The duty of every conscientious historian is to penetrate to the very roots of the profoundly philosophical narrative which the Ramayana of Valmiki is. Not being stopped by the form which may repel western realism, the historian must dig deeper and deeper.

In the book of Enoch it is said of giants whose size is 300 cubits: "They ate all that was edible on the earth, then they began to eat even the men. The Ramayana speaks of the "Rakchis" who are the same giants we learn about in the history of the Greek and Scandinavian people, and that we find again in the legends of North and South America. The Titans, "sons of Bour," are the giants of the Popol-Vuh of the Ikstliksochitlia, the primitive races of humanity.

The problem is to answer the following question: is it possible for such giants to have really lived on our earth? We think that it is; and our opinion is shared by many scientists. The anthropologists have not yet been able to decipher the first

letter of the alphabet giving the key of the mystery of the origin of man on earth. On one side, we find enormous skeletons, gigantic cuirasses, and helmets made for real giants' heads. On the other hand, we see mankind diminish in size and degenerate from epoch to epoch.

The Todds say - and they ordinarily speak little and reluctantly, indicating the cairns of the "Hill of the Sepulchres": "We do not know what these tombs are; we found them already here. But each one of them would easily have contained half a dozen people of our size. Our fathers were twice as big as we are." These words allow us to think that the legend they tell us is not fiction: the Todds could not have invented it, because they know neither the Brahmans nor their religion, and are ignorant of the Vedas and other sacred books of India. And, although they kept it from the Europeans, they told it to the Baddagues, that is to say, to the fathers of the present Baddagues, just as the anchoret Baddague transmitted it to me.

It seems to have been taken from the Ramayana. Moreover, the Todds are not the only ones having retained the memory of it. This tradition is the common heritage of the Todds, the Baddagues and the Kouroumbs.

To clarify the narration, I give herewith, with the traditional relation of the "elder" Nilguirian, extracts of the Ramayana and the true names somewhat corrupted by the Todds, though they remain recognizable. A truth is clearly perceived in this tradition: it concerns Ravana, king of Lanka, monarch of the Rakchis, a people of hero athletes, unrighteous and sinners; his brother, Ravana Bibchekhan, and his four ministers of whom the king speaks in the following terms in the Ramayana, when presenting himself to Rama "Dasaratide, son of the King of Aoude and avatar of the God Vishnu"!

"I am the younger brother of Ravana of the ten heads. I was offended by him because I gave him good counsel: that of returning thee Sita, thy wife, of the lotus eyes. With my four comrades, men whose strength is without measure and who are named: Anala, Khara, Sampati and Prakchacha, I left Lanka, my estates, my friends and have come to thee, whose magnanimity repels no creature. I wish to owe only to thee all that may befall me. I offer myself as an ally to thee, O hero of great wisdom, and I will lead thy armies to the conquest of Lanka and the death of the unrighteous Rachchis."

Let us now compare this quotation with the Todds' tradition:

"It was at the time when the king of the orient, without monkey-men [no doubt the armies of Songriva and of Khanoumon] was about to kill Ravana, the powerful but unrighteous demon, king of Lanka. The population of Lanka was composed entirely of demons (Rachchis), giants and powerful thaumaturges. The Todds were then at their twenty-third generation* on the island of Lanka. The king Ravana was at heart a Kouroumb [that is to say, a wicked sorcerer]: he had made wicked demons out of the major part of his rackchis subjects. Ravana had two brothers: Koumba, giant of the giants, who, after having slept hundreds of years, was killed by the king of the Orient, and Vibia the kind-hearted, loved by all the Rackchis."

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*That is to say, "199 or 200 generations" ago, which represents at least 7,000

years. Aristotle and other Greek sages, speaking of the war of Troy, affirmed that it had taken place 5,000 years before their time. Two thousand years have gone by since, that is to say, 7,000 altogether. History, naturally, rejects this chronology. But what does this denial prove? Is not Universal History before Christ and its chronology made up solely of hypotheses and likelihoods, of suppositions set up as axioms?

See also the "Mission of the Jews" by St. Yves d' Alveydre. - Translator.

Is it not evident that the "Koumba" and "Vibia" of the Todds' tradition are but the Koumbhakarna and Vibkhechane of the Ramayana? Koumbhakarna cursed by Brahma and put to sleep by this malediction until the fall of Lanka, when Rama killed him, after long and intense duelling, with a magical arrow from Brahma, "invincible dart which affrights the gods," and which Indra himself considered as the scepter of death.*

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*The relation of the fight is found in the "Mission of the Jews." - Translator.

The Todds say that Rama is a good rakchi who was obliged to condemn Ravana after his crime against the king of the Orient (Rama),* whose wife he stole. Vibia crossed the sea with his four faithful servants and helped Rama to recover his queen. This is why the king of the Orient named Vibia king of Lanka.

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*He is thus called by the Brahman Baddagues. They say that "the king of the Orient" is Rama.

It is word for word the history of Bibchekhane, the ally of Rama, and of his four ministers, the rakchis.

The Todds reveal afterwards that these ministers were four anchoret terallis and benevolent demons. They did not consent to fight against demon-brothers, even cruel ones. Therefore, after the end of the war, during which they did not cease to pray the gods for the victory of Vibia, they asked to be relieved of their duties. Accompanied by seven other anchorets and one hundred lay rakchis with their wives and children, they left Lanka forever. Wishing to reward them, the king of the Orient (Rama) created, upon a barren land, the "Blue Mountains" and made a present of them to the rakchis and their descendants for eternal enjoyment. Then the seven anchorets, wishing to spend their lives in feeding the toddouvars and in rendering harmless the enchantments of the bad demons, changed themselves into buffaloes. The four ministers of Vibia kept their human forms and are living invisible to all except the initiated terralis in the forests of the Nilguiri and in the secret sanctuaries of the "tiriri." Having occupied the Nilguiri, the thaumaturge-

buffaloes, the demon-anchorets and the chiefs of the lay toddouvars elaborated laws, determined the number of Todds and of future sacred and profane buffaloes. Then, they sent one of their brothers to Lanka with an invitation to some other good demons to come to Nilguiri with their families. There, on the throne of Ravana who had been killed, he found the king Vibia, the master of them all.

Such is the legend of the Todds. That the "King of the Orient" is Rama, although the Todds do not name him - there can be no doubt about it. Rama, it is known, possesses hundreds of names. In the Ramayana he is indifferently called "King of the Four Seas," "King of the Orient," "King of the West, the South, and the North," "Son of Ragon," "Dassaratide," "Tiger of the Kings," etc. For the inhabitants of Lanka or Ceylon, he evidently would be "King of the North." But if the Todds, as we think, came from the West, the appellation "King of the Orient or of India" becomes comprehensible.

But let us get back to the legend and let us see what it can tell us about the Moulou-Kouroumbs. What connection did the dwarf sorcerers have with the Todds in antiquity and what fate brought them to the "Blue Mountains" under the severe orders of the Todds? - we shall know, thanks to the continuation of the account concerning the sending to Lanka of the "demon-brother."

When he arrived in his fatherland, he found it invaded, defeated and everything changed since his departure from the island with all his brothers. The new king of Lanka, devoted friend and ally of the King Rama, was trying then, with all his might, to destroy the evil sorcery of the rakchis in the island, by substituting for it the benevolent science of the anchorets magi. But the gift of Bramavidia "is acquired only through personal qualities, purity of life, love for all that lives, men as well as dumb creatures, and also by rapport with benevolent, invisible magi who, after having left the earth, live in the country under the clouds, where the sun sets.* Vibia knew how to soften the hearts of the old rakchis and they repented. But a new evil arose in Lanka. The greater part of the warriors of the oriental army, the monkey-warriors, the bear-warriors and the tiger-warriors, in their joy at having con-quered the Queen of the Seas and vanquished its demon-inhabitants, became intoxicated to such an extent that it took them many years to regain their equilibrium. In that unsettled, obscured state of mind, they took rakchis for wives, demons of the female sex. From these ill-assorted unions dwarfs were born, the most stupid and most wicked creatures in the world. They were the ancestors of the present Nilguirian Moulou-Kobroumbs. In them were concentrated all the gifts of the dark knowledge of sorcery possessed by their mothers, mixed with the craftiness, the cruelty, the stupidity of their fathers, the monkeys, the tigers and the bears. The king Vibia resolved to kill all these dwarfs and he was ready to execute his plan, when the principal thaumaturge left his buffalo form and asked that the king grant them forgiveness, promising to take them along with him to the "Blue Mountains." He saved the lives of the dwarfs on the following condition: that they and their descendants would eternally serve the Todds, recognizing in the latter their masters and chiefs having over them the right of life and death.

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*The Todds point to the West when they speak of the country where their dead go. Metz calls the Occident "the fantastic paradise of the Todds." Some tourists have concluded from that, that the Todds, like the Parsis, are sun worshipers.

It is thus that Lanka was delivered of a terrible evil by the thaumaturge who, accompanied by about a hundred rakchis, belonging to a foreign tribe, came back to the "Blue Mountains." Allowing Vibia to destroy the most cruel and incorrigible of the dwarf demons, he chose three hundred creatures among the least bad of this new tribe and took them with him to the Nilguiri.

Since that time, the Kouroumbs who made their homes in the most impassable jungles of the mountains, multiplied to such an extent as to become the great tribe known today under the name of Moulou-Kouroumbs. As long as they, with the Todds and the buffaloes, were the only inhabitants of the "Blue Mountains," their bad inclinations and their innate gift of sorcery could harm no one except the animals, which they enchanted for the purpose of eating them afterwards. But the Baddagues arrived fifteen generations afterwards and hostilities began between them and the dwarfs. The ancestors of the Baddagues, that is to say of the antique people of Malabar and of Karnatik, after the war also entered the service of the "good" giants from Lanka. Therefore, when colonies of these men from the North had quarreled with the Brahmans of India, on the "Blue Mountains," the Todds, as honor and the buffaloes commanded, took them under their protection: the Baddagues were the servants of the masters of the Nilguiri, just as their ancestors had served the ancestors of the Todds.

Such is the legend of the aborigines of the "Blue Mountains." We have collected it piece-meal and with the greatest difficulty. Who then among the readers of the Ramayana would not recognize in this legend the events related in this poem? How could the Baddagues - still less the Todds - have invented it? Their Brahmans are only the shadows of the antique Brahmans and have nothing in common with the representatives of this caste in the valleys. Not knowing Sanskrit, they have not read the Ramayana and some among them have not even heard about it.

Perhaps we shall be told that the Mahabharata, like the Ramayana, based upon vague reminiscences of events lived long ago, possesses a fantastic principle prevailing by far over the historical element. Therefore, it is impossible to admit as likely the least fact described in these epopees. Those speaking thus are the very ones who dare to maintain the following: before Pannini, the greatest grammarian in the world, India had no conception of the written word; Pannini himself did not know how to write and had not heard of the sacred writings; and the Ramayana and the Bhagavad-Gita have probably been written after Christ!

Will the day never dawn when the Hindu Aryans - this people fallen very low politically, but still very great by its past and its remarkable virtues - and the sacred literature of the Brahmans will have taken the rank they deserve in history? When will iniquity and partiality founded upon race pride give place to entire uprightness so that the orientalists may at last cease to present the ancestors of the Brahmans to their readers as superstitious ignorants and the Brahmans themselves as lying and

presumptuous people? Can it still be believed that this literature, unique in the world by its grandeur, including all knowledge and the sciences known and unknown, long forgotten (as all of those who have impartially studied its philosophy say), is solely based upon creative imagination and empty metaphysical dreams?

Let the orientalists affirm what they like. We who have studied this literature with the Brahmans, do not stop at the dead letter. We know that the Ramayana is not a fairy tale as is believed in Europe: it possesses a double meaning, religious and purely historical, and the initiate Brahmans alone are able to interpret the complex allegories of this poem. He who reads the holy books of the orient with the key of its secret symbols, recognizes that:

(1) The Cosmogony of all great ancient religions is the same. They are distinguished among themselves by their exterior forms. All these teachings, contradictory in appearance, proceed from the same source - the universal Truth, which has always manifested under the aspect of a Revelation to all primitive races. Later - and in the measure that humanity was developing its intellectual faculties to the detriment of spiritual capacity - the knowledge of the beginning was becoming transformed and was evolving in different directions. All these events took place under the influence of climatic, ethnological and other conditions. Here is a tree whose branches grow under an ever-changing wind; they take the most irregular forms, twisted and ugly - yet they all belong to the same original trunk. This fact is exhibited in the divers religions: they are all born of the same seed: Truth, because Truth is one.

(2) The histories of all the religions are not only based upon geological, anthropological and ethnological facts of remote prehistoric periods; they are also transmitted quite faithfully in their allegorical form. All these purely historical "legends" were lived as events in their time. But to unveil them without the help of the key I spoke of and which can be found only in the "Houpta-Vidia," or "secret science" of the ancient Aryans, Chaldeans and Egyptians, is an absolute impossibility. In spite of this difficulty, many among us remain convinced that the day will come, more or less distant, when all the legends of the Mahabharata will become, thanks to the progress of science, historical reality in the eyes of all people. The mask of allegory will fall and living men will appear; and the events of the past will explain all the enigmas and remove all the difficulties of modern science.

Our scientists deny the antique method of Plato which goes from the general to the particular - they claim it is anti-scientific, forgetting that it is the only possible method in the only positive and infallible science, mathematics. Now, the inductive method of these scientists is insufficient in biology and in psychology. These men of science will certainly pay no attention to our researches concerning the history of the Brahmans in general and ethnology in particular. So much the worse for them. "In doubt, abstain," the golden rule of universal wisdom, was not written for them. They abstain only from the knowledge which might contradict their personal preconceptions. To what end can the orientalists and the students of Sanskrit come so long as they reject the interpretations of antique Brahman books given by the

Brahmans themselves? To errors as evident and as gross as those committed by the learned ethnologists concerning the Todds, and because the ethnographers forget very opportunely that "universal" history upon which they rest to study this original tribe, is founded almost entirely upon unproven hypotheses, and is moreover made up by these very ethnographers, that is to say, by western scientists. And who is ignorant of the fact that all these historians and ethnologists, not fifty years ago, knew nothing concerning the Brahmans and their immense literature? Has not one of the great European authorities in historical matters affirmed recently that facts such as described in the books of the Brahmans were only "inventions of a superstitious and grossly ignorant people"? (History of Sanskrit Literature by Weber.)

The events related by the orientalists almost never concur with the facts of the Brahmans. "Universal History" has no room for the whole of "history." Either the East or the West must give in. And how would not the learned Pandits be constrained to study their own history with the help of the many colored glasses of the Anglo-Saxon students of Sanskrit? It is thus that, thanks to the European scientists, the time when the Mahabharata was written is brought almost in the century of the Musselman invasion,* while the Ramayana and the Bhagavad-Gita become the contemporaries of the catholic Golden Legend!

Let the Europeans affirm what they like! Our conviction remains the same; of our three Nilguirian races, two indisputably descend from primitive prehistorical races about which our Universal History never heard, even in a dream.

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*At the beginning of the VIIIth century of the Christian era.

To Chapter 5

CHAPTER V

As far as we have been able to see, the Todds have no conception of divinity and deny even the devas adored by the Baddagues, their neighbors. That is why there is nothing in this tribe reminding one of religion; therefore it is very difficult to speak of its religion. The example of the Buddhists, who also reject the idea of God, can not be applied to the Todds, for the Buddhists possess a rather complex philosophy, while that of the Todds, even if they have one, is quite unknown.

What is then the origin of their high conception of ethics, rare and almost unknown among more civilized people, of their severe and daily practice of abstract virtues, like the love of truth and justice, the respect of property rights and the absolute respect of their pledged word? Must we seriously admit the hypothesis of a missionary that the Todds represent an antediluvian survival of the family of Enoch?

According to what we were able to learn, the Todds have the strangest ideas concerning life after death. To the following question: what becomes of the Todds

when their bodies are transformed into ashes on the pyre? One of the terallis answered:

"Their bodies will grow as grass on these mountains and will nourish the buffaloes. But the love for the children and the brothers will change into fire, rise to the sun and will burn there eternally with a flame which will give heat to other Todds and to the buffaloes."

Asked to explain himself more clearly, the terrali added:

"The fire of the sun" - he pointed to this heavenly body - "is composed of the fires of love."

"But, could it be that the love of the Todds is the only one burning there?" asked his interlocutor.

"Yes," answered the terrali, "the love of the Todds alone. . . . because each good man, white or black, is a Todd. Wicked men do not love; that is why they cannot go up into the sun."

Once a year, for three days, at Springtime, the clans of the Todds make one after another a series of pilgrimages and climb the peak of Toddabet where are today the ruins of the Temple of Truth. They accomplish in this sanctuary a sort of public penance and of mutual confession. The Todds hold council there and confess reciprocally their voluntary and involuntary sins. It is told that during the first few years of the arrival of the British, sacrifices were performed there: for the dissimulation of truth (the direct term of lie is unknown to the Todds); whoever had sinned gave a small buffalo; for having experienced the sentiment of anger against a brother, the Todd sacrificed a whole buffalo often wet with blood from the right hand of the repenting Todd.*

All these peculiar ceremonies, these rites belonging to a philosophy obviously secret, lead people versed in ancient Chaldean, Egyptian, and even mediaeval magic, to think that the Todds are cognizant, even if not of the whole system, at least of a part of the veiled sciences, or occultism. Only the practice of this system, divided from the remotest times into white and black magic, can furnish a logical explanation of this enviable sentiment of respect regarding truth and this high morality lived by a half-savage tribe, primitive, without religion and having nothing in common with the other people living on earth. According to us - and it is our unshakable conviction - the Todds are the disciples - half unconscious, perhaps, of the antique science of white Magic, while the Moulou-Kouroumbs remain the odious off-spring of black magic or sorcery. How did we form this conviction? In this way:

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*Captain Harkness describes this fact in his book of the year 1837. I was unable to find the ruins of this temple; and Mrs. Morgan thinks that the author confused the Todds with the Baddagues.

It is easy to invoke the testimony of people known in the history of literature from Pythagoras and Plato to Paracelsus and Eliphas Levi who, consecrating

themselves exclusively to the study of this antique science, teach that: white or divine magic cannot be accessible to those who commit sins or even have an inclination toward sin under whatever form sin may manifest itself. Uprightness, purity of life, absence of selfishness, love for one's fellowmen, such are the first necessary virtues of the magi. Only those whose souls are pure "see God," proclaims the axiom of the Rosicrucians. Besides, magic was never a super-natural act.

The Todds possess fully this magic science. Sick people are brought to their terallis - and they are cured. Often they do not even hide their way of restoring health. The patient is laid with his back turned toward the sun: he remains in this position for several hours during which the teralli healer makes passes, outlines incomprehensible figures, with his little cane, over the different parts of the body, especially the place affected, and blows upon it. Then the teralli takes a cup of milk and pronounces magic words; in brief, practices the same ceremonies used by our healers. Finally he blows upon the milk, then gives it to the patient to drink. I know of no example of a Todd having consented to care for some one and not having cured him. But it is only rarely that he consents. He will never touch a drunkard or a debauched person. "We heal through the love flowing from the sun, and this love will have no effect upon a wicked man," the Todds claim.

In order to recognize the wicked among the patients brought to them, the latter are laid down in front of the buffalo-leader; if the patient must be taken care of, the buffalo examines him, smells him; if not, the animal becomes furious and the patient is taken away.

Let us also tell this: "The magi, as well as their pupils, the theurgists, forbade severely the evocation of the souls of the dead: do not trouble her, do not evoke her [the soul], so that on her way back she will not carry away something terrestrial," says Psellius in his Chaldeans Oracles. The Todds believe in a something surviving the body; in fact, from a confession of the Baddagues, they forbid them to have anything to do with the bkhoutis (phantoms) and command that they should avoid them and also the Kouroumbs, who have the reputation of being great necromancers.

Professor Molitor justly remarks (in his Philosophy of History and Traditions) that only "the conscientious study of the traditions of all the peoples and tribes can enable modern science to appreciate antique sciences at their right value. Magic was a part of this knowledge, of these mysteries. The prophet Daniel himself examined it deeply; it was dual: the divine magic and the evil magic or sorcery. Thanks to the first, man strives to come in contact with the spiritual and invisible world; by studying the second form of magic, he tries to acquire domination over the living and the dead. The adept in white magic aspires to the performance of good acts, for the creation of good; the adept of the black science desires only diabolical accomplishments, bestial actions."

Here the Honorable Bishop makes a parallel between the Todds and the Kouroumbs, as between the occultists of all times and the mediums of today who become unconscious sorcerers and necromancers when they are not mystifiers and charlatans.

If to please the materialists the hypothesis of white and black magic is rejected, how can this multitude of manifestations, imperceptible because of their abstraction, but extraordinarily precise and irrefutable in fact, which make up the daily relations between the Todds and the Kouroumbs, be explained? Thus we shall ask why the Todds cure during the day by the light of the sun, and why the Kouroumbs perform their evil works only at night by the moonlight? Why do the former restore health and why do the latter spread illness, and kill? And finally, why does the Kouroumb fear the Todd? When this repugnant dwarf meets one of these beings who would not hurt a dog that had just bitten him (if any animal could bite a Todd), he falls on the ground, a victim of falling sickness. I am not the only one who has noticed it; many skeptics not believing in either white or black magic have seen it. Numerous writers have spoken of it. This is what the missionary Metz says on this subject:

"A certain hostility exists between the Todds and the Kouroumbs, constraining the latter to obey the Todds against their will. When he meets them the dwarf falls on the ground a prey to a fit resembling epilepsy. He twists on the ground like a worm, trembles with fright and manifests all the symptoms of a fear, moral or mental rather than physical. Whatever a Kouroumb is doing - and he is rarely occupied in doing good things - when he sees a Todd approaching, the latter does not even have to touch him but simply to direct towards him his bamboo cane, and the Moulou-Kouroumb* flees as fast as he can. But he sometimes falls down like dead and remains in a kind of dead trance until the Todd has gone, an occurrence which I witnessed more than once." (Reminiscences of Life Among Toddas.)

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*The Kouroumbs are divided into several tribes. They owe their name to their small size. That is why the Nilguirian race is called, in order to distinguish it from the others, "Moulou-Kouroumb" or dwarf bush with bristled thorns (from the words moulou - thorny bush and kouroumba - dwarf). In fact, they habitually live in the thickest, the most impassable forests where thorny bushes grow.

Evans, in his journal entitled: "A Veterinary on the Nilguiri," in speaking about the same subject, completes the picture described by Metz and adds: "After the Kouroumb has recovered his senses, he begins to crawl on the ground like a serpent, tearing herbs from the ground with his mouth, and swallowing them. Then he rubs his face against the earth, a gesture which contributes little towards the increase of his natural charms. The ground there is very rich in iron and ochre and can be removed from the skin only under great difficulties. And our friend, the Kouroumb, staggering like a drunkard, when getting on his feet again after the undesired encounter, looked like a circus clown, soiled with stains and scratches that were blood-red and yellow ....."

And this is what I wish to add: we have already stated that the Todds possess no weapons to protect them against wild animals, nor do they keep dogs to warn them of imminent danger. Nevertheless it is not remembered, even by the oldest

inhabitants of Outti, that a Todd has ever been killed or even hurt by an elephant or a tiger. It very seldom happened that a little buffalo of the Todds was devoured by a tiger, and it never occurred that a full-grown buffalo was killed by the wild animals. Nor had any of the wives or children of the Todds ever become the prey of these beasts. I request the reader to meditate upon this intangible immunity which continues until the present day - the year 1883. On the other hand, the Blue Mountains are crowded with Englishmen and other colonists and no week passes without some of these men becoming the prey of wild beasts, while one-third of their herds is regularly condemned to be carried off by these animals. Coolies, shepherds, children and natives may always expect a cruel death by a bloodthirsty tiger or a wild elephant. Only the Todd can remain at the edge of the woods for many hours and sleep in tranquillity, undisturbed and sure of his complete security.

How then can one explain these facts which are well known and observed? By chance? - an explanation which is always given in Europe to that which is inexplicable. Strange chances, indeed, that have been occurring for more than sixty years in sight of the English! And though these facts could not be examined and still less proven before the arrival of the English, they have since been amply verified. Even the sworn-in statisticians have directed their attention to these facts and have taken note of them, though with a certain amount of naivete.

In the commentaries accompanying the statistics of the year of 1881 we read: "The Todds are hardly ever exposed to the attacks of the wild beasts, undoubtedly owing to a certain specific odor that emanates from them and which repels the animal." Heavens! What simplicity of mind! This "probability of a specific odor" is worth being printed in golden letters. It is evident that this specific nonsense is more pleasant to the sworn-in skeptics than the irrefutable fact which is a thorn in their sides.

In this irrefragable reality - which the European flees like an ostrich with head bent down in the hope that it will not be seen - is contained the entire enigma of the profound veneration by the various tribes of the "Blue Mountains" to which the Todds are subject on the one hand, and the terror which they inspire on the other hand. The Baddagues adore them - the Moulou-Kouroumbs tremble before them. On beholding a Todd - who goes serenely on his way, holding in his hand a simple little cane, which is inoffensive and innocent - the Kouroumb is terror-stricken, while the Baddague, with knees bent, waits in silence for his salutation and his blessing. And the Baddague is very happy, when his Deva, scarcely touching his head with a bare foot, traces an incomprehensible sign in the air and then slowly goes his way "proud and impassible like a Greek God" according to the expression of Captain O'Grady.

How do the English look upon the fanatical veneration of the Todds by the Baddagues and how do they explain it? Very naturally and very simply. The English reject the tradition, according to which this relationship was established by the ancestors of these two races, considering it a stupid fable and interpreting it in their own way, Colonel Marshal writes in his book as follows:

"This sentiment appears all the more strange as, according to statistics, the Baddagues have been far more numerous than the Todds. They number ten

thousand while the Todds are seven hundred. Nothing, however, can remove the superstitious conviction in the Baddagues that the Todds are supernatural beings. The Todds are giants, compared with the Baddagues - though these latter are very strong and muscular. And there we have the secret of the sentiment that the Baddagues have in regard to the Todds."

This is certainly not the entire secret. The Kchots and Erroulars are two tribes which are very small and feeble as compared with the Baddagues. Yet they do not venerate the Todds as much as the Baddagues do, though they respect them and remain in constant touch with them. To solve the enigma, it is necessary to know the history of the Baddagues and to believe them - or at least give credit to their spontaneous reports, if one does not believe every word of their statements. The essence of the problem resides, in our opinion, in the fact that the Baddagues are Brahmans, though at present degenerated, while the Kchots and Erroulars are only pariahs. And the Baddagues (like the Brahmans of India before the arrival of the Mussulmans) possess knowledge of many things of which others are wholly ignorant. What is this knowledge? This will be told in the following chapter. Let us, at present, speak a little of the Baddagues and of their religion. As are all other manifestations in the "Blue Mountains," this religion is distinguished by its originality and its extraordinary character.

On the bare peak of the Rongasouamisk their only and, today, abandoned temple can be found. The religion of the Baddagues consists of many ceremonies which have long since lost their meaning. Two or three times a year they ascend to this temple - their Mecca - to read their conjurations against most of their own Brahmanic gods. According to Colonel Octorby, Administrator-General of the Mountains, "the Baddagues are one of the most timid and superstitious races of India. They live in constant fear of evil spirits which, they imagine, float always around them. And they have that same fear of the Kouroumb. As the Kouroumbs are terror-stricken at the sight of a Todd, so are the Baddagues terrified by the presences of the Kouroumbs."

Let us read in the learned book of the Colonel what he has to say of the unfortunate Baddague's superstition:

"Sickness in their homes, epidemics among their cattle, every trouble, every portentous event in their families, especially bad harvests which mean their ruin, are immediately ascribed to the evil sorcerers - the Kouroumbs. Then they rush to the Todd for help by means of his counteracting power of good. .. . . This ridiculous superstition is so profoundly rooted in all the tribes of the Nilguiri that we were often compelled to sentence Baddagues for a general massacre of Kouroumbs or for setting villages, on fire. . . . Notwithstanding these facts, the Baddagues often have recourse to the aid of the Kouroumbs, especially in cases of dishonest acquisitions. They then address themselves, through the intermediary of these dwarfs, to some imaginary evil spirits at the call of the Kouroumbs." (Statistical records of Nilguerry.)

"Yet it never happened that the English discovered a Todd mixed in these foul intrigues. The Baddagues detest the Kouroumbs, they fear them, and yet call constantly upon their assistance. No sowing or business is done without the aid of

the 'black conjurer.' In the spring, when the seeds are put into the ground, no work is begun without a Kouroumb 'blessing' it by sacrifice in the fields of a roebuck or a cock (always black). He also is the first to throw a handful of seeds while muttering the habitual conjurations. In order to secure a good harvest the Baddagues ask the Kouroumb also at the time of reaping to cut down the first bundle of the crop and to pluck the first fruit."

For the purpose of explaining scientifically this strange superstition, the author continues:

"The Kouroumb is ridiculously small. His sickly and ghostly aspect with his wild mass of untidy hair held together in an enormous bunch or knot on the top of his head, his entire silhouette which inspires disgust, readily explains the stupid terror of the timid Baddague. When a Baddague unexpectedly meets a Kouroumb he flees as if running away from a wild animal.* And if he has not succeeded in avoiding 'the gaze of the viper' which the sorcerer casts upon him, he rushes to his home in the desperate certainty of his being condemned to death, submitting to a fate which, according to him, is inevitable. He performs all kinds of ceremonies, prescribed by the Chastramis, before the arrival of death. If he has any riches, such as silver and estate, he distributes them among his relatives. Then he lies down and awaits death, which (a strange thing when one meditates on it) comes between the third and thirteenth day after the encounter. Such is the power of superstitions imagination" (the author explains naively) "that it almost inevitably kills, at a fixed hour, the unfortunate and stupid creature."

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*The author should have said that the Baddagues only flee from those Kouroumbs who are angry at them; they do not flee from Kouroumbs otherwise. But if the Kouroumb becomes somebody's enemy, then - as we are going to prove - he becomes really dangerous.

If it is only the deadly power of superstitious imagination, how can our honorable author explain the following event which took place quite recently and which all inhabitants of the Blue Mountains recall:

The "Baar-Saabs" (Anglo-Hindus) meet the dirty and savage Kouroumbs only when hunting rests. That is why the second meeting between an English official and the Kouroumbs occurred in the woods, and again on account of an elephant. (The reader will recall the first encounter with Mr. Betten, told me by Mrs. Morgan.)

The hero of this event was a man of high official rank. He was known by all as one of the foremost members of English society, and his family, I think, is still living in Calcutta, where his young widow lives with an elder brother. She was a very good friend of General Morgan's wife, and it is for this reason that I cannot mention her real name. I have promised not to name her, though in the following story it will be easy for all who have been in Madras to recognize her.

Mr. K. and some of his friends went hunting accompanied by chicaris and

numerous servants. An elephant was killed and it was only at that moment that Mr. K. realized that he had forgotten the special knife necessary for cutting the tusks of the elephant. The English decided to leave the elephant under the keeping of four Baddague hunters, so that they might protect it against the wild beasts. Then they went to lunch at a neighboring plantation. K. was to come back two hours later to take the tusks.

This program was apparently easy to accomplish. However, when Mr. K. returned he found himself facing an unforeseen obstacle. About ten Kouroumbs were seated on the elephant, working hard at the removal of the tusks. Disregarding the words of the high dignitary, the Kouroumbs coldly declared that the elephant had been killed on their territory, and that they considered him and his tusks their property. Their huts, indeed, were visible a few feet distant.

The reader will easily imagine the anger which this insolence provoked in the haughty Englishman. He commanded them to get away at once, as otherwise he would order his men to chase them away with whips. The Kouroumbs burst into laughter and continued their work without even looking at the Baar-Saab.

Mr. K. then ordered his servants to disperse the Kouroumbs by force. Twenty armed hunters followed him. Mr. K. himself was a good looking, tall, and well-set man of about thirty-five years of age, known for his excellent health and strength as well as for his irascibility. The Kouroumbs were ten in number, almost naked and without arms. The four Baddagues who had been left with the elephant, fled of course, as soon as the Kouroumbs told them to go. Three hunters would have been sufficient to drive away the poor little dwarfs. However, the shouting of Mr. K. produced no effect; nobody moved - all were deadly pale, bent their heads and trembled with fear. Several men, among whom were the Baddagues who had hid themselves in the thicket, rushed madly away and disappeared.

The Moulou-Kouroumbs sitting on the elephant, looked hard at the Englishman, showed their teeth and took an altogether provocative attitude.

Mr. K. lost all mastery of himself. "Cowards: are you going to chase these bandits away, or not?" he howled.

"Impossible," declared a chicari with a white beard, "impossible. It would mean our certain death. The Kouroumbs are on their own ground."

Mr. K. leaped from his horse. At that moment the chief of the Kouroumbs - as ugly as sin incarnate - brusquely jumped on the head of the elephant and began to bounce on it, making faces and grating his teeth like a jackal. Then shaking his horrible head and brandishing his fists, he sat up and cast a glance at the persons present, saying:

"Whosoever first touches our elephant will soon remember us at the day of his death. He will not see the new moon again . . . ... The threat seemed superfluous. The servants of the official seemingly were transformed into statues.

Mr. K. was furious, and his big whip hit the guilty as well as the innocent, after which he seized the chief of the Kouroumbs by his hair and flung him to the ground some distance away. Then, still using his whip, he unmercifully beat the other Kouroumbs who tried to resist him by holding to the ears and tusks of the animal. He finally put them to flight.

But they all stopped about ten feet from Mr. K. who had begun to cut off the tusks. During the entire operation - according to the testimony of the servants - the Kouroumbs never took their eyes from Mr. K.

Mr. K., having finished his work, banded the tusks to his men with the order to carry them to his house. He was just going to mount his horse when his eyes met those of the chief of the Kouroumbs over whom he had been victorious.

"The eyes of this monster produced on me the same effect as the look of a horrible toad.... I felt nauseated," Mr. K. told his friends who were dining with him that same evening. "I could not hold myself back," he added, with a voice still trembling with disgust. "I hit him again with my whip. The dwarf, lying motionless on the ground where I had thrown him, suddenly jumped up, but did not flee, to my great surprise. He simply went several steps backward and continued to look fixedly at me."

"Perhaps you would have done better to control yourself," somebody remarked. "These creatures are horrible and seldom forgive."

Mr. K. burst out in laughter.

"The chicaris told me the same thing. They returned to their homes like men sentenced to death. . . . They are afraid of the eye! Stupid and superstitious people! They should have been enlightened long ago on the subject of the evil eye. The famous 'look of the serpent' has only increased my appetite."

And Mr. K. continued to mock at the superstitious Hindus.

The next morning, under the pretext of being very tired from the evening before, Mr. K. slept very late and only awoke in the afternoon, while he usually got up very early, like everybody else in India. In the evening he felt a pain in his right arm.

"Old rheumatism," he remarked. "It will pass away in a few days."

But the second day he felt such a weakness that he could hardly walk. The third day he had to stay in bed. His temperature was normal. He only felt an inexplicable weakness in all his limbs and a strange lassitude.

"It seems as if the blood in my veins has been replaced by lead," he said to his friends. His appetite which, according to his statement, had been stimulated by the "look of the viper" suddenly disappeared; he became a victim of insomnia. No narcotic had any effect. Mr. K., who had always been in good health, strong, ruddy and muscular, looked - after four days - like a skeleton. The fifth night after the hunting Mr. K., who had never closed his eyes, awakened his family and the doctor who slept in the room next to him, shouting like one possessed:

"Chase this filthy monster away," he screamed. Who let this beast enter my room?..... What does he want? . . . Why does he look at me like that?" With his last strength he grasped a heavy candlestick and threw it in the direction of some invisible object.

The doctor concluded that his patient was in a state of delirium. Mr. K. did not cease to scream and moan until morning, maintaining that he saw near his bed the Kouroumb whom he had beaten. The vision disappeared in the morning. Mr. K., nevertheless, maintained his statement.

"This was no delirium," he stammered, with difficulty. "The dwarf must have sneaked in - I don't know how - I have seen him in the flesh, and not in

imagination."

The following night, though his condition became worse, he did not see the Kouroumb. The doctors understood nothing and diagnosticated a case of "jungle fever."

The ninth day Mr. K. lost the power of speech; he died the thirteenth day.

If the power of superstitious imagination killed at a fixed date "an unfortunate and stupid creature," what power was it that killed a rich and cultivated gentleman who believed in nothing? "Strange coincidence" - we will be told - "simple chance." All is possible. But then the coincidences are innumerable in the annals of the "Blue Mountains" and they would in themselves present a phenomenon more strange even than the truth.

The English admit that it never happened that a native who had become the prey of the "serpent's look " of an angry Kouroumb, escaped their fate. And the same English declare that the only salvation from it is the following: to betake one's self, during the first three hours after the encounter, to the Todds to ask their help. If the Teralli consents, any Todd can easily remove the poison put in the man by the evil eye. "But woe unto him who, having been poisoned by this look, finds himself at too great a distance from the Todds to be there within the necessary time; and woe unto him who has become subject to this fatality and whom the Todd, after having looked at him, refuses to cure. The patient then is condemned to a certain death."

There occur many phenomena in the world. There are many inexplicable truths, or rather truths which our savants cannot explain. The press often turns away with disgust from these strange facts and flees, like the powers of impurity chased away by incense. However, there are sometimes happenings which the sarcastic press is obliged to take note of and to investigate. This takes place every time that - in consequence of the superstitious terror provoked by acts of sorcery - the inhabitants of a village prepare themselves to burn the author of these misdeeds. Then, in the name of lawfulness, and in order to satisfy the curiosity of the public, the newspapers consider at large "the saddening manifestations of the incomprehensible superstition of the people."

A similar thing happened in Russia, about three or four years ago, when an entire village (sixty men, if I am not mistaken) were tried and acquitted for having burned an old and half-crazy woman who, by her neighbors, the moujiks, had been elevated to the dignity of a sorceress. The press of Madras saw itself recently constrained to broach the same subject under almost identical conditions. Only our humanitarian friends, the British, proved to be less indulgent than the Russian judges; forty men, Kouroumbs and Baddagues, were hanged last year "sans bruit ni trompette " (without noise or trumpets).

All will recall the terrible tragedy that took place not long ago in the Blue Mountains, in the village of Ebonaoud, several miles from Outtakamand. The mayor of the town had a child. The child fell suddenly ill and lingered in a slow agony. As several mysterious deaths had occurred during the preceding month the Baddagues at once attributed this case to the "eye of the viper" of the Kouroumbs. In despair, the father threw himself at the feet of the judge; in other words, he went to lodge a complaint. The Anglo-Hindus did nothing but laugh at him, until after

three days of useless effort the Monegar was brutally driven away. The Baddagues then decided to take justice into their own hands; they decided to burn down an entire village of the Kouroumbs, to the very last man, and for this purpose requested a Todd to go with them; without a Todd no Kouroumb could have been burnt by fire nor drowned by water. Such is the belief of the Baddagues, and nothing can convince them of the contrary. The Todds held council and finally gave their consent. No doubt "the buffaloes had decided that it should be so." Accompanied by a Todd, the Baddagues started out on a dark, stormy night, and in no time had set fire to all the huts of the Kouroumbs. With one exception, no Kouroumb escaped. As soon as one of them left his cabin the Baddagues threw him back into the flames or killed him with an axe. Only an old woman managed to bide herself in the bushes and to escape. She denounced the incendiaries and many of the Baddagues were arrested. There was also a Todd among them. He was the only criminal of his tribe imprisoned by the English since the foundation of Outtakamand. But the English did not succeed in hanging him; the very evening on which he was to undergo capital punishment, he disappeared in an incomprehensible way, while twenty Baddagues, with stomachs swollen, had already died in prison.

This took place only a few months ago. Three years before this event the same drama had occurred at Kataguiri. In vain the lawyers and even the State's attorney had insisted upon considering extenuating circumstances, pleading that the cause was indeed only the profoundly rooted belief of the natives in the sorcery of the Kouroumbs and the evil that they could do without being punished. All advocates demanded - if not pardon - at least the non-application of capital punishment. Their efforts were useless. If the English scientists are capable of believing in the "evil eye" by giving it a more scientific term, the English tribunals will never do so. However, the law, which two hundred years ago annually condemned thousands of male and female sorcerers to torture and death at the stake, is still in force in England. It has not been abrogated. When necessity presents itself under the form of the desire of stupid crowds, the bigots and the atheists, such as Professor Lancaster who induced the punishment of the American medium, Mr. Sleed - this ancient law is withdrawn from the dust of forgetfulness and is applied to a man whose only fault is to be unpopular. In India this law is useless and can even become dangerous, as it might teach the natives that their masters, at a certain time, share their "superstition." But in England public opinion is so strong that even law gives way to it.

Being secretary of a society whose aim it is to study as thoroughly as possible all psychological problems, I would like to prove that there is no "superstition" in the world which has not truth as its origin. Our Theosophical Society should really have called itself - in the name of this Truth - "Society of Those Dissatisfied with Contemporary Materialistic Sciences." We are the
living protest against the gross materialism of our day, as well as against the unreasonable beliefs which are too much limited by the narrow frame of sentimentality; the belief in the "spirits" of the dead and the direct communication between the Beyond and our world. We affirm nothing, and we deny nothing. And

as our society, in its greatest part, comprises the pick of Europe, counting among its members many whose names are well known in the world of science and literature, we dare to dispense with the approval of the official scientific organizations. We prefer to "wait and see," without, however, losing a single opportunity to profit by every fact that escapes the attention of material science, in order to make it an object of meditation to the public. We want to make these facts a living reproach to the inactivity of the masters of natural science who, satisfied with their routine, do not move one finger to elucidate the problem of the mysterious forces of nature. We are not only searching for material and irrefutable proofs of the very essence of those manifestations which have been baptized by the names of "sorcery," the "art of Healing," "evil eye," and which, by cultivated mystics, are called "spiritualistic phenomena," "mesmerism," or simply " magic" - we desire to penetrate to the very causes of these beliefs, to the source of this psychic power which physical science continues to sneer at and to deny with an extraordinary obstinacy. But how explain these beliefs? To what can we attribute this strange fact that the savage tribes of the Blue Mountains, who have never heard of our Russian sorcerers and the belief in "sorcery" which is found in the Russian villages, have the very same belief in all its details, from the conjuration of the healers to their special pharmaceutics, the composition of herbs and other procedure of the same kind? And these same "superstitions," in the letter as well as in spirit, exist with the English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Slav peoples. The Latins unite with the Slavs, the Aryans and Touranians with the Semitics in their common belief in magic, witchcraft, clairvoyance, and manifestation of good and evil spirits. There is "identity" in faith, not in its relative sense, but in the literal acceptance of the term. This is no mere "super-stition," but an international science with its laws, its invariable formulas, and its same applications.

To Chapter 6

CHAPTER VI

It is very dangerous to go out unarmed, in the evening, into certain parts of the Blue Mountains, near the thick forests inhabited by the Kouroumbs.

Near one of these forests, between Kattaguiri and Outti, there lived a well-to-do Eurasian family; the mother, an elderly woman, her two sons and a little nephew, an orphan whom she had taken care of since his childhood, as his mother, a well-beloved sister of hers, had died. The child had been told never to go into the forest. However, he was very fond of birds. So one day, carried away by his passion, the little boy left the house and lost his way in the woods. A swallow hopped before him from branch to branch and be tried to catch it. He thus ran after the bird until the sun went down. At Outti - a town completely surrounded by high mountains and rocks - the transition from day to night takes place almost instantaneously.

Finding himself alone in the woods, the child became frightened and hastened homeward. To his misfortune, he suddenly felt a sharp pain in his foot. He sat down on a stone and took off his shoe. While he was examining his wound and trying to withdraw a thorn which had entered his flesh, a wildcat jumped from a tree and landed beside him. The animal, not less startled than himself, began to attack him, and the terror-stricken child burst out into wild cries. At the same moment two arrows pierced the side of the animal which, mortally wounded, rolled into a crevice. Two dirty and half-naked Kouroumbs appeared and took the animal, after which they spoke to the child, ridiculing his fear.

The little one could answer them, as he knew their language, like all Eurasians who inhabit the Blue Mountains.

Being afraid of returning home all alone he asked the Kouroumbs to accompany him to his house, and promised to give them rice and brandy. The Moulou-Kouroumbs agreed and all three started out. While they were striding along, the child told his companions his adventure with the swallow. The Kouroumbs promised to catch for him all the birds he would like to have, for a very small remuneration. The Kouroumbs are known for their skill in hunting; it is as easy for them to catch an elephant or a tiger as it is to catch a bird. They arranged to meet, all three of them, the next day, in the valley. They would go hunting birds. In short, the child and the Kouroumbs became friends.

It is interesting to tell here how the Kouroumbs catch birds. The dwarf takes a small perch, turns it in his hands as if polishing it, and he drives it into the ground, about two feet deep, in the middle of a bush. Then he lies down on his stomach, very close to the bush so that he can keep on looking at the bird while it is jumping around. Then the Kouroumb waits patiently. Mr. Betlor, who more than once witnessed such a "hunt," writes about it in the following way:

"At this moment the eyes of the Kouroumb take on a very strange expression. I have observed a similar expression in a serpent when, lying in wait for its prey, it glances fixedly at its victim and fascinates it. The black toad of Maissour has also this same fixed, glassy look which seems illumined by a cold inner light and which attracts and repulses at the same time. For several rupees a Kouroumb allowed me to watch him. The carefree, joyous and active bird flies about warbling; suddenly it stops and seems to listen. With its head tilted a little to one side, it remains motionless for several seconds. Then it shakes itself and attempts to fly away, but it rarely succeeds. It seems as if an irresistible power draws it towards the enchanted circle and it begins to fly sideways towards the perch. Its feathers bristle up and it utters some gentle, plaintive cries. However, with nervous little jumps, it approaches closer and closer to the 'enchanted' perch. Finally, with one leap, the bird finds itself on the perch and its fate is sealed. Now it cannot escape and remains caught on the perch. The Kouroumb throws himself on the poor little animal with a rapidity that could make a serpent jealous . . . and if you give the dwarf more money be will swallow the bird alive, claws, wings and all."

It was in this way that the two Kouroumbs caught two yellow swallows and gave them to little Simpson. But that very same day they also cast their spell upon the child. One of the Kouroumbs "bewitched" him as he bewitched the birds. He made

himself master of his will-power and of his thoughts, made of him an unconscious machine - in other words, "hypnotized" him. The only difference between a doctor who hypnotizes and the Kouroumb, consists in the method; the former applies strokes or the scientific method of magnetism; while the latter had only to look at the child during the hunting, and to touch him. A striking change took place in the conduct of the little boy. His health as well as his appetite remained the same; but he seemed to grow old within a few years, and his relatives and all people in the house noticed that he often walked as if in a trance. Soon all silver objects began to disappear from Mrs. Simpson's house; spoons, sugar bowls, and even a silver crucifix. Then the gold objects had their turn. The whole household became very agitated. In spite of all efforts made to discover the thief, in spite of all precautions, the objects continued to disappear from within the well-locked sideboard whose key never left the mistress of the house. The police had tried to catch the culprit but had to declare themselves incapable of doing so. Finally all were suspected, but nobody could be caught. The servant of the house had been with the family for years, and Mrs. Simpson was as sure of this person as she was of herself.

One evening Mrs. Simpson received from Madras a package containing a heavy golden ring. She hid it in her iron safe, put the key under her pillow, and decided to remain awake all night. To be more sure of herself, she refused to drink her habitual glass of beer which made her fall asleep at once. She had noticed that for some time past her limbs - after she had drunk the beer - were benumbed and her slumber very heavy.

The child slept in a little room adjoining her bedroom. Towards two o'clock in the morning the door opened and in the light of the night-lamp Mrs. Simpson saw her nephew entering her room. She almost asked him what he wanted; but she recovered possession of herself and waited - her heart filled with anguish. The child advanced indeed like a somnambulist. His eyes were wide open, and his face had - as she later told in court - a severe, almost cruel expression. He went straight to the bed, gently withdrew the key from under the pillow, so quickly and so skillfully that she saw rather than felt the hand of the little boy glide under her head. Then he opened the safe, rummaged in it, then closed it.

Such was Mrs. Simpson's presence of mind that she never moved. Her beloved nephew, a child, was a thief! But where did he put the stolen objects? She decided to know the truth and to uncover the mystery. She dressed rapidly, without making any noise, then looked into her nephew's room. He was not there, but the door leading to the yard was open. She went out, following the traces which were still quite fresh, when she noticed the silhouette of the little one gliding along the bird-cage. The moon illumined the garden and she noticed the child bending down and putting something into the ground. She decided to wait until morning. "The little boy is a somnambulist," she thought. "I shall certainly find the other objects there. It is useless to wake him up now and frighten him."

Then she went into the house and waited until the child had gone to bed and slept profoundly. His eyes, however, remained as wide open as when she had seen him approaching her. She was surprised and even terrified. However, she was determined to wait until the next morning.

The following day she called her sons and told them what had happened during the night. They went to the bird-cage and saw that the ground had just been shaken up, but they found nothing. Evidently the child had accomplices.

When the little boy came home from school Mrs. S. received him as usual. She thought that she would not learn anything by questioning him, and would only render the solution of the problem more difficult. So she served him his meal and watched him incessantly. When lunch was finished she was going to leave the table in order to wash her hands and she took off her ring which she purposely left on the table. At the sight of this object of gold the eyes of the child began to sparkle. His aunt turned around slightly. Immediately he seized the ring and put it into his pocket. He rose carelessly and prepared to leave the house. But Mrs. Simpson stopped him.

"Where is my ring, Tom? Why have you taken it?" she asked.

"What ring?" he answered with indifference. I did not see your ring."

"It is in your pocket, miserable wretch!" Mrs. Simpson exclaimed, and she slapped his face. She threw herself on the child, withdrew the ring from his pocket and showed it to him. Tom had remained quite calm and offered no resistance.

"What ring are you talking of?" he asked his aunt in an angry tone. "This is a grain of gold; I have taken it for my birds - why do you slap me?"

"And all the silver and gold objects that you have been stealing for two months - were they also grains, you little liar and thief? Where have you put them? Speak, otherwise I shall call the police," Mrs. S. exclaimed, quite beside herself.

"I have stolen nothing from you. I have never taken anything without your permission, except a few grains and a little bread for the birds....."

"Where did you take the grains?"

"From the sideboard. Did you not permit me to do so? These golden grains cannot be found in the market, otherwise I would not have asked you for them."

Mrs. S. realized that she was confronted by an incomprehensible enigma, by a terrible mystery which she could not penetrate. The child - by an attack of insanity or by chronic soninambulism - believed that he was telling the truth, or at least what he thought to be the truth.

She realized that she had made a mistake. She could not thus uncover the secret. The child had accomplices, and she was going to find them. So she pretended to admit that she had been mistaken. She suffered in her heart, but she was going through with this experiment to the very end.

"Tell me, Tom," she asked tenderly, "do you remember the day when I gave you permission to open the safe in order to take the golden grains for your birds?"

"That day I could catch the yellow birds," the child suddenly explained in a severe tone. "Why did you slap me? You yourself told me - 'Take the key from under my pillow as often as you need it; also take the gold grains, they are better for your birds than the silver grains'; well, I took them. Besides, there is almost nothing left," he added sadly, "and my birds will die!...."

"Who has told you so?"

"He - the one who caught the birds for me and helps me to feed them."

"But who is he?"

"I don't know," answered the child with effort, passing his hand over his forehead.

"I don't know . . . you have seen him often..... He came only three days ago, at dinner-time, when I took a silver grain from uncle's plate. . . . Uncle had put it there for me. He told me - 'take it,' and uncle nodded with his head. So I took it."

Mrs. Simpson remembered that that day, indeed, ten silver rupees had disappeared mysteriously from the table; her son had just taken them from his pocket in order to pay a bill. This loss had remained the most inexplicable of all.

"But to whom did you give the grains? Birds are not fed in the evening."

"I gave them to him, behind the door. He left before the dinner was over. But then it was broad daylight and not evening."

"Day? - eight o'clock in the evening you call day?"

"I don't know, . . . but it was light,..... there was no night,..... besides the night disappeared a long time ago."

"Lord!" Mrs. Simpson wept bitterly, raising her arms in terror. "The little one has lost his mind - he has become insane."

But suddenly she had an idea.

"Well, take also this grain of gold," she said, while handing her golden brooch to her nephew. "Take it and give it to the birds while I watch you."

Tom grasped the brooch and ran joyously toward the bird-cage. Then something happened which convinced Mrs. Simpson that the mental faculties of her nephew were deranged. He walked around the cage and threw imaginary grains into it; however, the cage was empty. He rubbed the brooch in his fingers, as if taking grains off it, then he spoke to the birds who were not there, and whistled and laughed with joy.

"And now, auntie, I am going to take the remainder to him so that he may keep it..... He had first told me to hide it in the ground, there, under the window. But this morning he told me to bring it to him - over there. Only don't follow me, otherwise he will not come....."

"Very well, my friend, you shall go alone," she consented.

However, under various pretexts she detained her nephew for half an hour, while secretly having a policeman called for, whom she asked to follow the child wherever he went, promising a large reward.

"Arrest the person to whom he gives the brooch . . . he is the thief." The policeman asked a fellow-policeman to go with him and both followed the child during the day. In the evening they saw him direct his steps toward the woods. Suddenly a very ugly dwarf jumped from the bushes and beckoned to Tom, who at once went towards him like an automaton. When the policemen saw the child "spreading" something into the hands of the Kouroumb they rushed forward and arrested him with the proof of delinquency in his hands - i.e., the golden brooch.

The Kouroumb got away with a few days in prison. No convincing proof could be found against him; he had only the brooch, and the child asserted that he had given it to him of his own free will, but that "he did not know for what reason." The tribunal decided that the statements of little Simpson were confused, that he was just raving, as far as the golden grains were concerned, and that he did not recognize the Kouroumb; moreover, he was not of age. The doctor declared him to be an "incurable idiot." His testimony and the confused statements of Mrs. Simpson, who

was unable to compose a clear report out of her nephew's story, were of no account. The policeman was unable to give evidence; his testimony would have had weight, as he knew the Kouroumb to be the possessor of stolen objects. The very same day when the Kouroumb was arrested the policeman fell ill, and died one week later, several days before the court proceedings. The matter was thus closed.

We have met the unfortunate boy, who - today - is twenty years old. We saw a big Eurasian with hanging cheeks, sitting on a bench near the house-door, and turning cage-bars in his hands. Birds are still his passion. His mind seems to be normal, but becomes clouded as soon as silver or gold, in money or in objects, is mentioned; be always calls them "grains." Since that time, his relatives have sent him to Bombay where he remains under constant supervision, and the mania is beginning to disappear. Only one sentiment remains with him; the irresistible desire to fraternize with the Kouroumbs.

Before closing, I would ask my readers to reread in the Philosophical Dictionary of Voltaire the passage where the philosopher mentions the five conditions necessary for any testimony to be judged valid. These very same conditions have been fulfilled throughout our story on the enchantments and the sorcery of the Moulou-Kouroumbs.

Let us see whether our deposition, confirmed by the declarations of many impartial witnesses, will be accepted by the skeptics. Or, perhaps, the masses with a few exceptions, will prefer, in spite of Voltaire and his philosophy, to remain "plus catholique que le Pape." *

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* "More catholic than the Pope."

We invite all incredulous people to visit India, especially the Blue Mountains, in the Presidency of Madras. If they stay there for several months they will learn to know the "Mysterious Tribes of the Nilguiri," especially the Kouroumbs. And let them then - when back in Europe - deny, if they can, the reality of the witchcraft of the Kouroumbs.

But the Blue Mountains are not only a field of very interesting occult experiences. When the happy hour will strike - if it ever will - when our friends from the misty shores of Albion the perfidious, and consequently always suspicious, will cease to see a political spy in every innocent Russian tourist - then the Russians will begin to travel more in India. The naturalists of our country will then visit the mountainous "Thebaide " which we have described. And I am convinced that by the ethnologist, geographer and philologist, without forgetting the masters in psychology, our "Blue Mountains," the Nilguiri, will be found to be an inexhaustible treasure for the scientific researches of all specialists.