

THE FIRST CROSSING

being the Diary of Theophilus Richmond,
ship's surgeon aboard the *Hesperus*, 1837-8

Theophilus Richmond
THE FIRST CROSSING
with an Introduction by David Dabydeen, Jonathan Morley,
Brinsley Samaroo, Amar Wahab & Brigid Wells

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**Series Preface by the President of Guyana,
H.E. Bharrat Jagdeo**

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SERIES PREFACE

Modern Guyana came into being, in the Western imagination, through the travelogue of Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Discoverie of Guiana* (1595). Raleigh was as beguiled by Guiana's landscape ("I never saw a more beautiful country...") as he was by the prospect of plunder ("every stone we stooped to take up promised either gold or silver by his complexion"). Raleigh's contemporaries, too, were doubly inspired, writing, as Thoreau says, of Guiana's "majestic forests", but also of its earth, "resplendent with gold." By the eighteenth century, when the trade in Africans was in full swing, writers cared less for Guiana's beauty than for its mineral wealth. Sugar was the poet's muse, hence the epic work by James Grainger *The Sugar Cane* (1764), a poem which deals with subjects such as how best to manure the sugar cane plant, the most effective diet for the African slaves, worming techniques, etc. As John Singleton confessed (in his *General Description of the West Indies*, 1776), there was no contradiction between the manufacture of odes and that of sugar: "...a fine exuberant plant, which clothes the fields with the richest verdure. There is, I believe, scarcely any cultivation which yields so lucrative a return per acre as under favourable circumstances, than that of the sugar cane. So bountiful a gift of Providence seems not only calculated to call forth the activity and enterprise of the agriculturalist and merchant, but to awaken also feelings of a higher and more refined enthusiasm." The refinement of art and that of sugar were one and the same process.

The nineteenth century saw the introduction of Indian indentureship, but as the sugar industry expanded, literary works contracted. Edward Jenkins' novel *Lutchmee and Dilloo* (1877) was the only substantial fiction on Guiana, and whilst it was broadly sympathetic to the plight of Indian labourers, it was certain of Britain's imperial destiny, and rights over mineral

resources. It was not until the period leading up to Guiana's Independence from Britain (1966) and the subsequent years, that our own writers of Amerindian, African, Asian and European ancestry (A.J. Seymour, Wilson Harris, Jan Carew, Edgar Mittelholzer, Martin Carter, Rajkumari Singh et al.) attempted to purify literature of its commercial taint, restoring to readers a vision of the complexity of the Guyanese character and the beauty of the Guyanese landscape.

The Guyana Classics Library will republish out-of-print poetry, novels and travelogues so as to remind us of our literary heritage, and it will also remind us of our reputation for scholarship in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology and politics, through the reprinting of seminal works in these subjects. The Series builds upon previous Guyanese endeavours, like the institution of CARIFESTA and the Guyana Prize. I am delighted that my government has originated the project and has pledged that every library in the land will be furnished with titles from the Series, so that all Guyanese can appreciate our monumental achievement in moving from Exploitation to Expression. If the Series becomes the foundation and inspiration for future literary and scholarly works, then my government will have moved towards fulfilling one of its primary tasks, which is the educational development of our people.

President Bharrat Jagdeo

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

Richmond's at times idiosyncratic spellings and unusual capitalisations have been retained, but his punctuation is here regularised for readability (particularly both missing and surplus apostrophes, and the hyphens or dashes which he uses interchangeably to indicate a change of idea, presumably to save paper). Comments concerning layout (for example where a poem has been completed in an available blank space, necessitating a signpost to the reader) have been removed. Richmond's frequent literary quotations have, wherever possible, been identified in footnotes.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Sir John Gladstone's scheme to bring Indian labourers to British Guiana, 1837-81¹

After 1807, the Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade put an official end to the capture and export of Africans by British traders. The institution of slavery however remained as the basis of agricultural and domestic labour in British colonies in the West Indies, as well as in the southern United States and in the colonies of other European nations. In 1823, a new anti-slavery pressure group was formed by Thomas Clarkson, William Wilberforce, Thomas Fowell Buxton and Lord Brougham. The goal of the "Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions" was first to improve conditions for the slaves and then to get rid of the system altogether. With support groups throughout the country, the Society's arguments became increasingly persuasive.

As the very existence of slavery was called into question, both the British Government and, reluctantly, the West Indian plantation owners were beginning to "think the unthinkable." In 1823, the House of Commons resolved that "the great object of emancipation" must be accomplished "at the earliest period which shall be compatible with the well being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the Colonies and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property."² That same year, Lord Bathurst (the then Colonial Secretary), tried to persuade the Court of Policy of British Guiana to accept a gradual process towards the inevitable. Under his scheme, the slaves would first become indentured labourers and could then purchase their freedom from their earnings, with some compensation to owners from public funds. Lord Bathurst warned that if the colony rejected such proposals, he saw "no other alternative... than that of my humbly submitting to His Majesty the expediency of enacting them by direct Royal authority."³

In fact, Government coercion was still ten years away; there was still time for rearguard action. John Gladstone MP, (later Sir John), father of William Ewart, was a prominent member of the West India Association of Liverpool, a group of planters and merchants trading mainly in sugar. Gladstone had estates in Jamaica and also in the relatively new colony of British Guiana. His Association was prepared to admit "Slavery to be in itself an evil" but they were in no hurry to get rid of it. Instead, they suggested "rational measures... to meliorate the situation of the Slaves... and to prepare them by degrees for rising into the superior condition of free labourers."⁴ Meanwhile, in British Guiana slaves were not prepared to wait. In 1823 they rebelled, claiming "nothing less than immediate Emancipation" and a hundred were killed as the insurrection was suppressed. Since the slaves "did not even put forward the pretext of oppression or ill-treatment on the part of their Masters"⁵, the plantation owners continued to maintain that slavery was perfectly tolerable and that any encouragement of emancipation would put the European residents in the Colony at risk.

In 1830, John Gladstone wrote to Sir Robert Peel to explain that slavery was endemic in aboriginal societies, that negroes had "peculiar constitutions, and the power of labouring beneath a vertical sun", and that under slavery, "labour is cheerfully performed without injury to their health or comforts." Emancipation would be a disaster; it would be "vain to expect, and impossible to depend upon, the labour of free negroes in the field." Freed slaves might well try to exterminate the much smaller white population.⁶ He reinforced his point with economic arguments. Only one tenth of the sugar consumed in the United Kingdom came from the East Indies and Mauritius; public demand could not possibly be met without a plentiful supply from the West Indies. If an early emancipation were to be enforced, "it is I think impossible to contemplate what would be the *inevitable* consequences, independent of the ruin of the planters and its consequences to their people, to the *public* of the United Kingdom, its revenues, its shipping and its *Tradesmen!!!*" Slavery as an institution would not disappear but would continue to flourish under less principled governments. If the British public could no longer buy West Indian sugar, they would buy it from the slave-owners of Brazil.⁷

By this time, however, a Whig Government was beginning

to find the arguments of the anti-slavery lobby more compelling than Gladstone's. After the Reform Act of 1832, 104 Abolitionist MPs were returned to Parliament and the West India merchants of Liverpool finally realised that their best interest lay in damage limitation. John Gladstone was deputed to come up with a detailed scheme, under which planters would get compensation and the freed slaves would be apprenticed to work for their employers for another 12 years after emancipation.⁸ In return for a share of the £20 million compensation authorised by the Abolition of Slavery Bill and Resolution of 1833, a meeting on 11th July "of Gentlemen interested in British Guiana" was prepared to ask the Colonial authorities "to frame without delay such laws as will safely, immediately and effectually carry the said resolution into effect."⁹ The Act, passed in August, was not, however, as favourable to the planters as they hoped. They would get their compensation, but the obligatory period of indentured labour after 1833 (the "apprenticeship" scheme) was reduced from 12 to only 5 years for domestics and 7 years for field workers. After August 1840, there was no knowing whether any former slaves would choose to stay on the plantations.

By 1835, James Stuart, John Gladstone's attorney in British Guiana, was pessimistic. "I have never before seen so much idleness, insubordination and insolence to those in authority over them, not even excepting the Magistrates." Although the former slaves were supposed to take responsibility for their now free children, the proprietors were still providing food and medical attention. "The parents of these children will never after what has taken place apprentice them and I do not hesitate to say that the Government has been the cause of it."¹⁰ Meanwhile, to appease public opinion in England, some planters were making an effort to improve conditions: each category—children, domestic servants and field labourers—on Gladstone's estates were reported to have at least an hour of schooling every day and "all know their letters now."¹¹

Sir John might have hoped for Government support when his son William, not long a Member of Parliament, was given the post of Under Secretary for the Colonies in 1835. The Prime Minister, in appointing him, had "adverted to my connection with the West Indies as likely to give satisfaction for persons depending on those colonies and thought that others would not be displeased."¹² In fact, William seems to have been a little

uneasy about his position, which he only held for a few months. He felt obliged to support the planters for his father's sake,¹³ but his strong religious convictions inclined him towards emancipation. Once out of office, he was unable to avoid some involvement in the future of the family's sugar plantations.

The crisis was more imminent than expected. On 30th March 1838, the House of Commons proposed to abolish all apprenticeship, and therefore any guaranteed labour force, from 1st August of that year. William, reluctantly upholding the planters' cause in the debate, prayed for divine inspiration: "I hope it was not a blasphemous prayer, for support in pleading the cause of injustice." The vote went against him with the Commons agreeing to end all apprenticeship two years early. "In the morning," wrote William, "my father was greatly overcome and I could hardly speak to him. Now is the time to turn this attack into measures of benefit for the negroes."¹⁴

In fact, faced with the prospect of his estates reverting to wilderness, John Gladstone had already thought of a plan. Planters on Mauritius had long relied on immigrant labour from India; perhaps he could tap the same source. As early as 1836, he had made inquiries from a firm of agents in Calcutta, Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Company, about the possibility of recruiting Indians for British Guiana.¹⁵ Their reply was encouraging. In case the British public had scruples about the morality of such an undertaking, Gillanders assured him that "in inducing these men to leave their country, we firmly believe we are breaking no ties of kindred nor in any way acting a cruel part." The agents would need two months' notice to recruit suitable men and gave helpful advice on contracts (to be registered at the police office), wages, and provision for return passages. They warned, however, that there might be some difficulty about recruiting wives. The planters in Mauritius had always "discouraged the men being so accompanied"; Gillanders were not sure "how far the women might be induced to go."¹⁶

By coincidence, another Liverpool planter, John Moss, was thinking along similar lines. He had also had discouraging reports from his nephew in Demerara, who had "no expectation of the Negroes working well after the Apprenticeship; he thinks if any do, ours will, he cannot get them to apprentice their children on any terms, he is like you ordering new Negro Houses." In a letter of 10th September 1836 he told Gladstone:

"I have long been considering what we ought to do to procure labourers; it will not be prudent to leave the thing much longer, a sugar Estate requires continuous labour, three months cessation of work would ruin any Estate in Demerara, the next question is where are labourers to be had from? I have enquired almost everywhere, some will not go, others are not worth exporting, after mature deliberation I have almost determined to send for 150 people from India [Moss's underlining]." He hoped the arrival of the Indians would act as a spur to the local labour force. "I mean these 150 as a trial; if they work well, I shall direct the managers at Anna Regina [his estate in Demerara] to tell our Black People that we shall import sufficient to supply all their places unless they will *at once* engage on the same terms and for the same time. I think that we may secure Labour cheaper than from anywhere else."¹⁷

Once Moss realised that Gladstone had had the same idea, he asked him to negotiate with Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary in Peel's Government, to allow emigrants to Demerara "on the same footing in regard to their indentures as the Mauritius now is, viz. for five years." Moss was worried that if the export of Indian labourers was not properly authorised under Orders in Council, the ships carrying them might be "detained by some English vessel of war, and a short delay with such a cargo would be ruinous." They must be ready to supply the Government with full details, for example of the numbers of Indians in proportion to the tonnage of the ship, and to be able to confirm that the immigrants had been medically examined and that there was a surgeon on board.¹⁸

Early in 1837, John Gladstone wrote to the President of the Board of Control for India, "inquiring what view the government would take of moving workers, under agreed indentures, from India to the West Indies. He was told there would be no objection to a planned migration.¹⁹ The Colonial Office, however, still had to agree. Anything that suggested forced labour was sure to arouse public suspicion.²⁰ On 29th April, the Colonial Secretary asked Gladstone to send him further details. He wanted a balanced community and asked for "the probable cost of the emigration of one hundred natives of India, men, women and children, assuming the number of males and females to be equal and the number of adults to be equal to the number of children under the age of 16." He also

wanted to know the estimated annual cost of maintaining the Indians and the value of their services compared to the value of current labour in Guiana.²¹ Gladstone replied that day, apologising for the fact that he could not provide accurate information, because “the measure we contemplate is altogether new, such as we have never had experience of...” His best estimate of cost was about £20 per emigrant for the voyage and another £20 each for housing and provisions in the colony. But “this I am certain of, that the labour of our present people has not cost us one half of what we should have to pay for the services of the Hill Coolies...” Knowing from Gillanders’ earlier letter that equal numbers of women and men were unlikely, he skirted around the problem: “Provided the females will consent to work in the field, as done by the female apprentices in Br. Guiana, I propose sending by her not less than 150, nor more than 200 Adults, male and female, in nearly equal numbers, but if not so disposed, a much less proportion of females as has been done to the Mauritius.”²² Moss pointed out that there were already a few spare women in the Colony: “Should Lord Glenelg wish any extra number of women we have 811 people [i.e. on his estates in Guiana]—out of which there are a majority—of between 20 and 30—more females than males.”²³

A few days later, Gladstone was writing anxiously to the Colonial Secretary to ask “if we may consider ourselves now at liberty to forward instructions to Calcutta for making the necessary arrangements there previous to the arrival of the vessels...which it is of Great importance we should do with the least possible delay.”²⁴ Although it was July before Lord Glenelg actually issued the Order in Council authorising the movement of Indian indentured labour to Guiana, Gladstone and his partner John Moss felt sufficiently confident to despatch their first ship at the end of June. The *Hesperus* left Liverpool on 23rd June 1837 to sail round Africa, call at Mauritius, and go on to Calcutta to pick up the pioneer group of Hill Coolies recruited by the agents. The ship would leave Calcutta for Guiana at the end of January 1838. Gladstone had convinced a friend, Andrew Colville, to send a second ship, the *Whitby*, at the same time to collect Coolies for Colville’s and Davidson, Barclay and Company’s estates in Berbice and Demerara. Both ships were due to reach Guiana in May 1838.

Gladstone’s ship, the *Hesperus* (334 tons), was in the charge

of Captain R. E. Baxter. The only passengers on the voyage out were a newly-married couple who disembarked at Mauritius, and Theophilus Pellatt Richmond, MD, the young surgeon whose *Journal* records the voyage. It is not known how Richmond was selected, though a letter from William Gladstone in 1835 shows him making enquiries on someone's behalf about appointments of ship's surgeons on convict ships.²⁵ If it was Richmond who was interested, he would not yet have qualified. The families may have known each other, since both had Liverpool connections.²⁶

In the face of later criticism, the Gladstones emphasised the care taken in preparing the venture. "The Ship was provided with an experienced Captain and other officers, and an able Surgeon, all carefully selected for the voyage, to whom Mr Gladstone engaged for 10/- premium for each Coolie landed at Demerara... The Coolies were accompanied by their Sirdars who acted as interpreters and had the more immediate charge of them, a most abundant stock of rice and other provisions and clothing such as they were accustomed to, with every other necessary for their accommodation and comfort at the same time on board as had been required by Mr Gladstone in his correspondence with his Calcutta friends."²⁷ It was a long and circuitous route to Mauritius, where the ship stayed for four weeks, and on to Calcutta, which the *Hesperus* only reached on 3rd December. While in Calcutta, Richmond was free to make the most of its lively society and to explore the countryside until the time came, at the end of January, for him to carry out the medical examination of the Hill Coolies. The agents had recruited 150 men (with, as predicted, very few women), who had to have the terms of their indentures translated to them and sworn before magistrates. Gladstone had prevailed upon the Government to allow the Coolies to be bound for five years, on the grounds that three years (the normal period for indentures in Guiana) "would be insufficient to secure to those proprietors who might enter into such speculation, an adequate return for the risk outlay which would be incurred."²⁸ After five years, they were entitled to a free passage home.

Captain Baxter seems to have been quite happy with his charge. He wrote to "Messrs. John Gladstone and Co." from "Ship *Hesperus*, Sand Heads, 2 February 1838" at the mouth of the Hoogly. "I left Calcutta on Tuesday January 29th, in tow of

the steamer *Banyan*, for Demerara, with 2530 bags of rice, 150 bags cullies, 9 bales clothing, 150 coolies, 6 women, 11 children and 2 interpreters, which are all well with the exception of two and they have nothing serious the matter with them. We lost one man the day after we left Calcutta, from inflammation in the bowels. The ship sails very well, and in very nice trim. She is drawing 17 feet water. Myself and crew are all quite well."²⁹ He spoke too soon. Four days later, cholera broke out on board. If Richmond had not managed to contain the epidemic, the whole venture could have ended very soon.

Out of touch with the ship, the Gladstones were of course unaware of the danger. William Gladstone had increasing reservations: he was "very sorry to see that the Act lays down no conditions respecting the proportions of men women and children, and also that Gillanders and Co. mean to send 'as few as possible' of the latter."³⁰ Critics of the scheme were already on the warpath.³¹ John Gladstone was disturbed to hear that Lord Brougham was intending to ask Parliament, after less than a year, to cancel the 1837 Order in Council: "the measure, which we consider to be one of the most *vital* importance to the West Indian colonies." To prove that the Indians had been properly treated, he sent the Colonial Secretary a copy of his instructions to the Calcutta agents (28th February, 1838).³² He also wrote in great agitation to the Duke of Wellington: "We lament to observe that the most unjust and unfounded representations are now resorted to by those who are opposed to West India interests, in order to inflame the public mind on this subject." He pointed out that "suitable cottages, with gardens attached" had been built and "all other necessary arrangements made for the comfortable reception and accommodations of these people [the Coolies] on their arrival in British Guiana."³³

Gladstone and Moss had been anxious to get the procedures right and official documentation, both in Calcutta and in Demerara, was surprisingly thorough.³⁴ The increasingly vocal opposition, in and out of Parliament, was to the basic principle of the scheme. The Duke of Wellington, perhaps primed by Gladstone's letter, made a helpful speech in the House of Lords on 6th March 1838. In response to Lord Brougham's call for the cancellation of the 1837 Order in Council, he said that there was certainly a need for strict Government supervision, but that "the exportation of these labourers from Bengal has produced

a great and good effect on the Mauritius." What was now needed was better control, with protection officers appointed to supervise each shipload of emigrants: preparations for the voyage, tonnage and seaworthiness of the ship, indenture agreements, hours of employment, food and wages, and to travel with the Coolies to their destination.³⁵

Rather than cancel the Order, the Government proposed a regulatory Bill. This, however, introduced so many restrictions that it began to look as if the Coolie scheme might be throttled at birth. The vote to end apprenticeship in March increased the planters' sense of urgency. Stuart complained in April that "the enemies of the West Indies are now endeavouring to prevent the introduction of Labourers from India. The Ruin of the Colonies seems to be the object they wish to accomplish."³⁶

In May 1838, John Gladstone sent a long letter to the Colonial Secretary, hoping to persuade him to revise the regulations in the new Bill. Gladstone claimed that he had already put into practice "the spirit, if not the letter of all that is most material" in the safeguards proposed by "the Bill which you have brought into the House of Lords for the protection of natives of India emigrating to our Colonies." The *Hesperus* had been reasonably spacious, with 6 ft between decks; she had "a proper number of officers, an experienced qualified surgeon, an ample Medicine Chest, cooking apparatus for the Emigrants and abundance of Water Casks well seasoned." Accommodation, medical care, "proper clothing and an ample supply of good wholesome food" awaited the Coolies on arrival. He had to admit that there had been a problem over procuring female emigrants. "It is the practice of the Hill Coolies to leave their families at home when they come down to Bengal to seek employment." Only a small number of women had agreed to come, "to be employed in washing and cooking for the men after their arrival in Demerara." He very much hoped that the "equal proportion" clause would be left out of the Bill, because it would cause "insuperable difficulty." However, he was able to assure the Colonial Secretary that the contracts had been properly executed before two magistrates in Calcutta. There was no need for the special protection officers suggested in the Bill; the Captain and First Officer of the ship, together with the surgeon, could take responsibility, and proper supervision could easily be arranged in the Colony. He pointed out that the scheme had barely started,

given that he had been “the first person who thought of carrying Hill Coolies from Calcutta to the West Indies and my being determined to do so induced my friends Mr Colville and Messrs Davidson and Co. to engage in a similar undertaking—last summer we each sent a vessel there, both sailed in January last with emigrants for Demerara where I expect they would arrive and be landed under the Order in Council sometime in this month and these are I believe the only two instances that have as yet taken place for the West Indies.”³⁷

In fact, the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby* had already landed their cargoes: 164 Coolies from the *Whitby* at Berbice on 5th May 1838 and 99 at Demerara between 14th and 16th May, and 156 from Gladstone’s ship, the *Hesperus*, between 8th and 10th May, all at Demerara.³⁸ They were not only the first, but also the last indentured labourers from India ever permitted under the 1837 Order in Council, which was cancelled later that summer. Gladstone, however, had not given up hope of further shipments of Coolies. Writing to the Duke of Wellington on 9th June, he expressed “the conviction I feel that the change, could it be effected, would be a very beneficial one for them.” He had already spent a good deal on the *Hesperus* contingent: £1018 on disbursements for the voyage at Calcutta, £100 on the surgeon’s salary and £84 on premiums to the ships’ officers “for care of the people.” In addition, he had paid the agreed wages in advance (4-5 rupees a month on average), built new cottages on his estates to accommodate them and provided for ongoing medical attention.³⁹

Opposition to the scheme was however forming in Guiana as well as in Britain. Suspicion gathered around the mortality on board: were the thirteen deaths on the *Hesperus* the result of ill treatment? In fact, they were due to cholera (ten Indian victims, including five aged 50 or over, one five-year-old child, and one British sailor) but Richmond had managed to contain the outbreak by segregation, fumigation, and the occasional dose of rum. After 10th February there were no further deaths, apart from two Coolies who were swept or fell overboard. By the time the ship reached Demerara on 5th May, the surviving Indians had had three months of rest and reasonable food, and all but one were pronounced healthy on arrival.⁴⁰

Rumours continued to circulate and the immigrants had a chilly reception. An article in the *British Guiana Gazette* on 5th

May (the day the ship docked) alleged that the two Coolies who fell overboard had committed suicide out of despair. Stung by the implications, Dr Richmond immediately wrote to the editor of the other local newspaper, the *Guiana Chronicle*, on 7th May: "from what source the editor [of the *Gazette*] could have obtained this information, I am altogether at a loss to imagine, as nothing of the kind ever occurred. Both the cases, to which I take it for granted he alludes, were not suicidal, but purely accidental, one of the men falling overboard, the middle of the night, during a severe gale, and the other being washed off the gangway during a second gale, about four weeks afterwards. In both cases every possible effort was made to save them, though unfortunately without success."⁴¹ (It has to be admitted that this account is not strictly true. Richmond's diary reveals that the second man was so depressed at the loss of his father from cholera that he had been put on "suicide watch" until the night "when the attention of all on board were engaged by the violence of the storm... he contrived to gain the gangway and throw himself into the sea ere there was the smallest chance of preventing his design."⁴² However, ill-treatment was not the cause).

The doctor's letter was grudgingly acknowledged by the *Gazette* on 8th May, but it had not dispelled the editor's misgivings. "We should rejoice if our other objections to the recent importation, were capable of being refuted by an appeal to fact, but, under the circumstances of the case, we feel bound... to denounce and protest against the insufficiency of remuneration secured to these unfortunate people, and also against the barbarous and flagitious system of bringing to a strange country, hundreds of men, without an adequate proportion of women. Our enemies charge us with having, under colour of Immigration, effected a renewal of the Slave Trade, and certainly the case of the *Hesperus* goes far to sustain such a charge." The editorial goes on to accuse the importers: they "keep out of view entirely the comfort of the labourers during their sojourn, they concern not themselves with the disarrangements of social ties among the negro population, which must ensue by the introduction of hundreds of males into a population where that sex is already predominant, they look not to the rearing of a progeny from the new Colonists, they make no provision for it; no, they contemplate the grinding of Sugar out of the bones and sinews of these labourers so long as they are

fit for work, and as they wear out, to supply their places by fresh importations." There is a warning for Gladstone and his partners in the next paragraph. "It is in this light that the circumstances attending the importation of Coolies to British Guiana will be viewed at home. One of the most powerful orators, and most influential men in England, Lord BROUGHAM, has already taken this view of the subject, and when he finds his anticipations corroborated by the facts of the first introduction of East India Labourers to British Guiana, what have we to expect but a deprivation for the future, of that source of obtaining labour."⁴³

The *Gazette* was correct in its predictions. From the time the immigrants landed, the Government in England was increasingly on the defensive.⁴⁴ The Governor of British Guiana was told to produce regular reports on the well-being of the Coolies. Inspecting Magistrates were to send in monthly figures of sickness and mortality and investigate any complaints of bad treatment. Full returns of all those landed from both ships, with names, ages, height, religion, to whom articulated, and wages, were sent to Lord Glenelg on 30th August 1838. At that stage some of those in Berbice were suffering "so much from insects, which attack every newcomer, that they expressed a wish to return to their country" but were eventually persuaded to stay. In general, the early Magistrates' reports were quite encouraging: "the Coolies appear satisfied with their position, and have not disappointed their employers."⁴⁵ As late as January 1839, the Governor wrote: "The Coolies on Mr Gladstone's property are a fine healthy body of men. They are beginning to marry or cohabit with the negresses and to take pride in their dress."⁴⁶ (However, W. B. Wolseley, the Acting Government Secretary who visited these two estates the following November, made a revealing comment: "Nothing could have been more injudicious than the omission of a certain proportion of women with these expeditions").⁴⁷

Mortality figures crept up during 1839, especially on the Bellevue estate, which was not one of Gladstone's. The workers suffered badly from infected chigo bites, which could prove fatal if neglected. Emotive reports had appeared in the British press, and on 24th July Sir J. Graham in the House of Commons "wished to ask whether the statement he had seen in the newspaper of the melancholy mortality of the Coolies who had been imported into Demerara was true or not?" At that point, the reply was

relatively reassuring: "no positive information had been received at the Colonial Office... the general condition of these people was not one of disease and mortality",⁴⁸ but the facts were soon public knowledge. William Gladstone, writing to his father on 1st August 1839, was "mortified and surprised to find there has been so considerable a mortality since landing, because surely this does not at all correspond with the reports of the Stipendiary magistrates which Stuart transmitted to you confidentially in the spring."⁴⁹ There were also disturbing reports of cruelty on the plantations. John Scoble of the Anti-Slavery Society, who accompanied the Inspecting Magistrates, had seen evidence of appalling medical neglect on Colville's estates and of unlawful flogging on Gladstone's.⁵⁰ On 3rd August, John Gladstone's son Thomas tried to put the matter in context to the Colonial Secretary. One of the Sirdars, a head man in charge of other workers, "thought proper for some offence to take it upon himself to flog several people, I think three or four. The act was undoubtedly unjustifiable, but it was afterwards proved in Court to have been of a very trifling nature... he pleaded in justification that such was the common practice in Bengal and the Mauritius, where he had been."⁵¹ Appalled that the Gladstones continued to defend their British manager, Scoble published a stinging indictment on his return.⁵²

In their letter to the Colonial Secretary, the Gladstones catalogued everything they had done to ensure the welfare of the Coolies. They enclosed Richmond's report of the cholera deaths and his covering letter of 15th May 1838, stating: "They were all landed in good health, with the exception of 13, 11 of whom died of cholera within a week of leaving Calcutta, and the other two were either washed or fell overboard during the bad weather."⁵³ A letter from Stuart, the attorney in Demerara now back in England, was also enclosed, saying that "From their appearance, I should say that they have been taken great care of during the voyage; there was only one sick man landed. Indeed the state in which they were brought here reflects great credit on the doctor and captain of the ship, to whom the people seem much attached."⁵⁴ This corroborates the statements by Richmond, who had died of yellow fever on 5th July 1838, only two months after arrival.⁵⁵ "The surgeon is unfortunately dead, but the Captain is I believe now at Kendal, and might also be examined."

Governor Light weighed in on 5th September, trying to

convince the Colonial Secretary (and British public opinion) that press reports of wholesale deaths on the voyage were quite untrue.⁵⁶ As evidence, he enclosed the astonishingly thorough Calcutta embarkation returns. Every emigrant was listed by name, with his or her particulars, and could be compared with the returns of those landed in Guiana, forwarded the year before.⁵⁷

But Lord Normanby had already made up his mind: "With regard to the introduction of labourers from India, more than enough has already passed to render Her Majesty's Government decidedly hostile to every such project."⁵⁸ The Order in Council allowing Indian indentured labour would remain cancelled, and the Governor was congratulated on 31st August on the fact that "the resources of the colony have not only not decayed but have undergone a decided improvement since the abolition of slavery and the termination of the apprenticeship system."⁵⁹

This was wishful thinking, as the output of sugar had fallen significantly since 1838. On 17th December 1839, the West India Merchants' Committee Room drew up a memorandum to explain the decline: "the falling off has not been caused by bad seasons, or any want of liberality on the part of the proprietors in regard to wages or allowances... but entirely owing to a want of continuous and regular labour..."⁶⁰ On 23rd December, Governor Light forwarded a petition to the Queen from 880 planters and merchants about the sad state of the Colony and the need for continued immigration.⁶¹

But Lord John Russell, the intellectual Whig who was now Colonial Secretary, showed little sympathy. If the former slaves had chosen to leave the plantations for an easier way of life, good luck to them. The Hill Coolie scheme had attracted too much bad publicity in Britain for the Government to want to repeat the experiment. The anti-slavery lobby had more support than the Colonial sugar producers. He explained his position on the Coolies to the House of Commons on 4th February 1840, saying that "though in some of the estates of Demerara they had not materially suffered, yet on the whole the experiment in that colony had been unsuccessful, and considering the very great length of the voyage, the chance of their being without a knowledge of the country to which they were going, and the difficulty of carrying into execution any provisions for their interests, permission should not be given for their emigration to Demerara or the West Indian islands."⁶² He followed this up with

a despatch to the Governor which must have been uncomfortable reading. "The decline of produce is unquestionable. It is not to be expected, that men who can subsist in comfort without hard labour, will continue to devote themselves to it... the term 'ruin' is used to designate, not the poverty of the people, nor the want of food or raiment, not even the absence of riches or luxury, but simply the decrease of sugar cultivation." The Governor was reminded that "the happiness of the inhabitants of the colony you are appointed to govern is the chief object." It seemed to Russell that there had been a significant change for the better in terms of social engineering. "None of the most inveterate opponents of our recent measures of emancipation allege that the negroes have turned robbers, or plunderers, or blood-thirsty insurgents. What appears from their statement is, that they have become shopkeepers, and hucksters, and small freeholders: a blessed change which Providence has helped us to accomplish."

Russell went on to explain why the import of indentured labourers from India was not to continue. Legislation to prevent their abuse (including the radical proposal that "they should have the means of performing their own heathen rites") had been rejected as too complicated to administer. The solution, in his view, was for the planters to grow sugar somewhere else, wherever a labour force already existed, rather than try to create a workforce in Guiana out of immigrants. "Admitting the mortality of Hill Coolies first sent may have been accidental, I am not prepared to encounter the responsibility of a measure which may lead to a dreadful loss of life on the one hand, and on the other, to a new system of slavery. The plantation will be found for the labourer and not the labourer go to the plantation."⁶³

For the time being, John Gladstone's vision had come to nothing. Andrew Colville, who had sponsored the *Whitby*, accepted the political reality. Writing to Gladstone on 23rd November 1839, he said: "I am afraid there is too much activity at present among the West Indians and wish the question of procuring Labourers may not be progressed further than we are likely to succeed in obtaining the concurrence of 'public opinion' to carry into practice—for these ministers will do nothing that will put a single vote to risk."⁶⁴ The Gladstones had gained a few labourers, but their reputation had been blackened. An article in the *Sheffield Independent* of 15th May 1841 described Gladstone as "one of the most greedy and remorseless

of West Indian slave owners, whose estate in Demerara was made notorious by the number of negroes worked to death. The Gladstones, too, were the originators of the Hill Coolie emigration—a new and ill-disguised slave trade.”⁶⁵

The end of the scheme did not of course mean that no more Indians went to British Guiana. The system of indentured labour continued to operate, as it had before, for workers of any race who accepted their obligations after arrival in the colony. Indians were popular and were still coming in five years later, according to *Emery’s Journal*, Georgetown, on 3rd July 1846: “The great point is to throw a veil over the imperfections of the system of immigration from India, lest it be put a stop to.” “The word has been passed to make more of the Coolies than of the labourers of African origin.”⁶⁶ (An estate manager had said of them in May 1839: “They do not do quite as much as the negroes but they do it better.”)⁶⁷ By the 1840s, Indians were moving from the plantations to the towns and beginning to make themselves felt in the community as a whole.⁶⁸ John Gladstone may not have achieved his aim of saving the sugar industry, but he did at least introduce to British Guiana the first group of people in a vital element of today’s population.

2. The author of the Diary: Theophilus Pellatt Richmond, 1815-38

On 7th July 1838, the following announcement appeared in the ‘Deaths’ column of the *Royal Gazette of British Guiana*: “On Thursday the 5th inst., at the residence of W. B. Wolseley, Esquire, sincerely regretted by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintances and to whom his amiable and cheerful disposition had so deservedly endeared him—THEOPHILUS P. RICHMOND, Esquire, M.D., aged 23 years, youngest son of that eminent Christian, the late Revd. Legh Richmond, A.M., of Trinity College, Cambridge, Rector of Tervey [sic] Bedfordshire, and Chaplain to his Royal Highness the late Duke of Kent—*Guiana Chronicle*, July 6.”⁶⁹ T. P. Richmond, as he signs himself, had only arrived in Demerara two months before, as the young surgeon aboard the *Hesperus*. He had clearly made some good friends in a short space of time. The Colony’s senior official, the Acting Government Secretary W. B. Wolseley, had taken him into his home and probably wrote the moving obituary.

Richmond had been qualified for one year when he joined the *Hesperus* at Liverpool. His first duty, after a long voyage via

Mauritius and a pleasant stay in Calcutta, was to examine the Coolies before leaving India. A week later, he was faced with an outbreak of cholera on board. He seems to have done his utmost, within the limits of medical knowledge at the time. Most of those initially affected were beyond help, but he managed to contain the epidemic with relatively few deaths. The stoicism and strong family affection of his Indian patients impressed him greatly; in return, he did his best for them. Apart from one with dysentery, all the surviving Hill Coolies were landed in good condition at Demerara.⁷⁰ The green leather-bound journal, which he had meticulously kept for his mother from the day he set sail from Liverpool, ends with a careful map of the Caribbean area and a heading, 'Scenes in Demerara', followed by a blank page. Either he was too busy, or too soon taken ill, to give an account of this new port of call. Before he could return to England, he was struck down by yellow fever. The diary somehow found its way back, to be preserved within the family.⁷¹

Although the records provide very little detail about Legh Richmond's tenth child, his own diaries give a vivid idea of his character. He was born at Turvey Rectory, Bedfordshire, on 26th April 1815, the tenth child and youngest surviving son of the Rector, the Reverend Legh Richmond, and his wife Mary. Until his father's death in 1827 he was educated at home, but in 1829 he was sent away to a small school run by another clergyman. His first brief journal,⁷² kept for two months when he was 14, shows a cheerful, sociable boy who was interested in new experiences, enjoyed games and practical jokes, and, although fond of his family, was quite able to manage without them. The first entry, on 20th July 1829, says "Returned to school", so he had presumably been there before. Along with a few other boys, he boarded with the Reverend and Mrs Langley at Pilton Rectory in Northamptonshire. The regime seems to have been quite relaxed; there are more accounts of walks, meals out and picnics than of lessons, though he does mention the Odes of Horace and some French fables, and several visits to church. The boys were allowed a glass of wine in honour of the Langley baby's christening. There were plenty of amusements: cricket, bows and arrows, practical jokes and "a famous scramble after dinner for apples pears and biscuits" [sic]. Two boys caught scarlatina, but one at least recovered enough to rejoin the rest. They could buy treats from the "cake woman" when she visited and also

had a cake on a birthday. Theophilus received a parcel from home, as well as letters from his mother and “dear Catherine” [an older sister]. The diary ends on 16th September, after several days where the entry reads “Nothing particular” or simply “Nothing”. He may well have stayed at Pilton for another year or two, but nothing is known of his further education apart from the fact that he entered Edinburgh University to study medicine in 1831, and graduated MD in 1836, the year before joining the *Hesperus*.

The second and much longer *Journal of a Voyage* shows that at 22, T. P. Richmond still enjoyed company and diversions. He was equally at ease with men friends and with attractive women, but he could also spend a reflective day by himself, playing the flute or composing poetry. The power and beauty of natural phenomena affected him deeply, and he was fascinated by the unfamiliar creatures and customs he met. Just as at school, he could not resist playing jokes. He was never so overcome by homesickness that he regretted leaving home, but he often thought about his family and was clearly fond of his youngest sister Charlotte, whose health he drank on her birthday.⁷³ His relationship with his mother must have been exceptionally close and relaxed, as he shares anecdotes of a broad and at times bawdy humour. Although loyal to his Rectory background — on one occasion at sea, he tries to time his prayers to coincide with the family’s Evensong at home — he wears his religion lightly. Although in many ways the *Journal* shows him to be the product of his parents’ very particular philosophy of child-rearing, he has clearly discarded some of its more powerfully inhibiting influences. A series of tragic events during his childhood seem to have left him resilient rather than depressed.

It is not known why John Gladstone should have employed such a young doctor (who was later described in a defensive letter to the Colonial Secretary as “able and experienced”).⁷⁴ There may have been some social connection, as Richmonds had worked in and around Liverpool for several generations.⁷⁵ The *Journal* proves that Theophilus was a willing volunteer. Experience had already taught him that life was short and to be grasped while it lasted. His education had given him unusually wide interests and an appetite for more, while his parents’ concern had been focused throughout his childhood on the maritime adventures of their eldest son Nugent, the sailor

brother he never knew. Perhaps, in setting out for India, he was somehow hoping to retrace Nugent's voyage to the East and bring it to a happier conclusion.

If there is little specific information about Theophilus, the family background is surprisingly well documented. Outside his Bedfordshire parish, his father Legh Richmond was a popular evangelical preacher, attracting congregations of several thousand on his annual tours of Scotland and the north of England. Having heard him preach, the Duke of Kent, Queen Victoria's father, invited him to be his Chaplain and they corresponded until the Duke's death. Legh Richmond was also known for a best-selling collection of tracts, based on stories of his parishioners in his former parish of Brading, Isle of Wight ('The Dairyman's Daughter', 'The Negro Servant' and other stories, published from 1814 under the title *Annals of the Poor*). Although they were translated into numerous languages and sold several million copies, the author did not become rich, as a good proportion of the revenue went to the Religious Tract Society. Legh Richmond had no business instinct; his voluminous major work, *The Fathers of the English Church*, barely sold. In the summer of 1814 he was £2,000 in debt to the publishers, his sixteen-year-old eldest son had sailed away over the horizon and his wife was expecting her tenth baby.⁷⁶

By the time Theophilus was born on 26th April 1815, the financial crisis had been averted thanks to some good friends, but there were still seven children at home to feed: three older sisters, then aged 15, 14 and 11, two boys of 8 and 7, and two younger children, Catherine, 4, and Legh, 2. (Another Legh, born in 1809, had died as a baby). The eldest brother, Nugent (16), who had left home the year before, had become such a difficult adolescent, as well as an embarrassment in the parish, that in 1814 Legh Richmond decided against all his instincts to send him to sea for a year or two. "It was a disappointment of the keenest kind."⁷⁷ A sailor's life was the last thing that the Rector had had in mind for his precious first-born son, originally destined for the Church. Nine months later, Theophilus' birth nearly resulted in actual tragedy: his mother Mary, who had apparently recovered from her confinement, suddenly became very ill: "occasioned, as was supposed, by an imprudent exposure to the air." She developed a high fever and the doctors gave up hope of her survival. Grimshawe, who visited her at

the time, said that had never been into such a joyful death-chamber.⁷⁸ "Her manner of taking leave of me and our eight children around her bed," wrote her husband to Thomas Pellatt, a London friend, "was more striking than you can conceive, or I can describe." In the same letter, he informed Pellatt that "Amongst other (as it then appeared) dying requests, she desired that one of the little boy's names (the child whose birth has occasioned so much danger) should be a memorial of that disinterested, affectionate and highly-valued kindness which a friend indeed once showed her and her's in a time of need: that name will be Pellatt."⁷⁹ It is not known what service Thomas Pellatt had given to Mary and her children, but whatever it was, she remembered it with gratitude on what she believed was her deathbed.

Desperate at the thought of losing his wife, it is not surprising that Legh Richmond seemed to hold the baby responsible. The shock may have affected his feelings for this particular child; certainly there is no correspondence addressed personally to Theophilus among the numerous letters to his older brothers and sisters printed after his father's death, and only one letter contains a couple of mentions of him.⁸⁰ More likely, perhaps, is that during the years after 1815 his father had other things to worry about. Nugent, who had been given into the care of the Captain of a ship called the *Arniston*, was due to come home the following year after a round trip to Ceylon. In October 1815, however, when Theophilus was six months old, his mother took up a newspaper to find that the *Arniston* had been lost off the coast of Africa with only six survivors. Nugent's name was not among them. "It was a trying hour, and we all melted."⁸¹ The family went into mourning, rendered all the more bitter because nothing was known about Nugent's state of mind and soul when he perished. To their relief, a letter arrived from Nugent in 1816 to explain that he had (against his father's wishes) left the *Arniston* at Colombo and was still alive and well, though not yet reconciled to shipboard life. There was great rejoicing at the Rectory, but no end to the prayers and concern for his wellbeing.

It was not long before events began to take a genuinely tragic turn. The death of the children's devoted grandmother was the first in a series of bereavements: she died in 1819, still worrying about her eldest grandson. "What news from India?" was her frequent inquiry.⁸² Legh Richmond felt his mother's loss keenly.

Meanwhile, after the safe arrival of Charlotte (1817), Mary had her twelfth and last baby, Edward Atherton, in October 1820, when Theophilus was 5. Edward only lived for six months. Again his father was overcome by grief: "Our dear, delicate baby has taken his flight to a happier world!... Of all my twelve babes I never clung to one like this—perhaps, because I never expected his life."⁸³

In the same year (1821), Legh Richmond had to resign himself to the imminent departure on marriage of his eldest daughter Mary. The tight family circle had started to crumble. All his hopes were now centred on his second son Wilberforce, a serious, intelligent boy who, unlike Nugent, seemed to have potential for the priesthood. No sooner had Mary left home, however, than Wilberforce began to show signs of sickness. In 1823, father and son, with Frances, then 22, went on a long visit to Scotland, where a new medical regime seemed at first to do Wilberforce good. On their return, however, his health declined. After a long physical and spiritual struggle, he died of tuberculosis at the age of 18, in January 1825, with his brothers and sisters around him. Their father was devastated, but in August came a second blow: Nugent, on his voyage home at last, had been found dead of a fever in his cabin. The news had taken nearly a year to arrive. Theophilus was 10 when the impact of this double bereavement struck the family, and now another sister (Henrietta, 22) planned to marry. Her father found it hard to contemplate: "I feel parting with my daughter the more, from the removal of my loved, my much-loved Wilberforce... The subject is wound up with my heart's experience, in a way I can never describe."⁸⁴ He did however give his permission; Henrietta married happily and had two children but died after the second baby's birth in 1828, the year after her father. Meanwhile, most reluctantly, Legh Richmond had allowed his wife to send Catherine (12) away to a "governess" in 1823. That left only one grown-up daughter, Frances, at home with him, the three younger boys (Henry, Legh and Theophilus) and Charlotte. He never entirely recovered from this shrinking of his much-loved family: his spirits drooped and he developed a persistent cough, with extreme fatigue. Still grieving for Wilberforce, he transferred his anxieties to the eldest surviving son. Henry, at 17, had had no option but to accept his dying brother's charge: "From a child," said Wilberforce, "it has been

my delight to think of being a clergyman in the Church of England; but it is God's will to pass me by, and take you, dear H—, and honor you thus. I resign my place to you; fill it faithfully."⁸⁵ Shortly before his death, the Reverend Legh had accordingly arranged for Henry to go to Cambridge to study for the ministry, but the prospect tormented him. "I have seen the ruin of so many promising youths by a college life, and those apparently as amiable and pious as my own dear child... That dear boy, and his approaching trials, are never out of my thought; I think of him by day, and dream of him by night."⁸⁶ The last notes found in his study were written for Henry, on how to avoid temptation as an undergraduate. Legh Richmond died at 55 on 8th May 1827, only two years after Wilberforce.

Their father's death hit the family hard. "He was the sun of our little system," wrote Frances, "and from him seemed to be derived the light and glow of domestic happiness... When he himself departed, all seemed gone. There was no one to collect us; and we were scattered in wild sorrow, with a feeling of desolation which was quite unutterable."⁸⁷ The children still at home had not been spared any of the final scenes; they saw their father reduced to skin and bone, becoming so light that Henry could carry him from his study, and they had been present at his deathbed. A child whose parents had lost a beloved baby and who had then watched first his brother and then his father die might have been expected to become fearful and insecure. In fact, this early experience of the reality of life and death seems to have had the opposite effect; it left Theophilus philosophical and self-reliant.

Legh's widow, Mary, decided to send Theophilus to school,⁸⁸ the first twelve formative years of his life, however, had been spent under the sole influence of his father's educational system. This was considered sufficiently unusual at the time to form the subject of a book published by a former colleague and friend, the Rev. T. Fry, in 1833: to give it its full title, *Domestic Portraiture, or the successful application of religious Principle in the education of a family, exemplified by the Memoirs of Three of the Deceased Children of the Rev. Legh Richmond*. The aim was "to exhibit the unwearied efforts of a Christian father in the education of his children." As the admiring author admits, "Mr R. had his peculiarities, and men must judge for themselves as to their imitation of them," but he included in his book, as proof of Legh Richmond's

success, memoirs of three of his children who met early deaths with faith and fortitude: Nugent, Wilberforce and Henrietta.

In the children's educational programme, their sensible and energetic mother, Mary, was clearly a great support. In 1815, Wilberforce and Henry had a tutor for three hours a day, but for another four hours daily they were taught by their mother, who also helped the younger ones (Catherine and Legh) to read. Presumably she later taught Theophilus and Charlotte in their turn. The education of the girls seems to have been left entirely to her.

After Legh Richmond's experience with his eldest son, school was not an option, either for boys or girls. Born in 1798, Nugent was first taught at home by his mother and a tutor, in the hope that he would grow up like his father to be "a minister of the Lord and a servant of the sanctuary."⁸⁹ Until he was 8, he had no company but three younger sisters, and much less in the way of visual aids and resources than his father later arranged for his stay-at-home children. There was a constant emphasis on his potential for leading his siblings astray. When he was 6, his father wrote: "My Nugent, you are the eldest; if you are a good child, they may follow your example, and if you are a bad boy, it will teach them to be sinful; and that will make God very angry, and me very unhappy... I hope he will bless you, and then you will go to Heaven when you die; but without a blessing from Christ you never can go there."⁹⁰ Even Legh Richmond's admirer, Fry, doubted "how far it was wise to confine a boy to his own resources for amusement". When Nugent was finally allowed to go to school, it proved a disaster. He "attached himself to a companion of bad principles and incorrect conduct, who in the end succeeded in perverting the victim of his confidence."⁹¹ According to Nugent himself in a letter from abroad in 1815, he ran away from school and "spent my time in dissipation with the young farmers of the neighbourhood: which gave my poor father great uneasiness and many a miserable hour; and finding me unwilling to settle to any useful employment, he sent me to sea as a last resource..."⁹² To Theophilus and Charlotte, who never had the chance to meet this eldest brother, he must have seemed a daring and romantic figure.

For their father, Nugent's was an example which the younger children must on no account be allowed to follow. Legh Richmond had four main aims: to keep his children safe from corrupting outside influences, to teach them to think by

cultivating their curiosity about the natural world, to develop their talents in art and music (within certain limits), and, above all, "to see God in everything."⁹³ He longed for them to share his overwhelming sense of the need for salvation through Christ. "He did not talk much to us about religion; but the books, studies and even amusements to which he directed us, shewed that God was in all his thoughts, and that his great aim was to prepare his children for heaven."⁹⁴ Because this was so important to him, he could not bear the uncertainty of not knowing whether his little ones truly believed. He invited them to unburden their inmost thoughts; he would get up at 6am to study with them individually and leave little notes in their rooms with texts to consider. The older children regularly received letters like this one to Catherine, just before she was fifteen, asking if she knew what she must do to be saved: "I wish my child to be deeply in earnest; life flies apace, the period of the tomb advances."⁹⁵ Although it must at times have seemed stifling, he did not mean to bully the family into goodness, but to bind it tightly together with love; "his first object was to make home the happiest place to his children; to render them independent of foreign alliances in their pursuits and friendships; and so to interest them in domestic enjoyments, as to preclude the feeling, too common in young people, of restlessness and longing to leave their own fire-sides..."⁹⁶ According to the *Journal*, Theophilus certainly continued to think of his home with affection, but he does not seem to have been inclined to stay there.

Legh Richmond had hoped to keep his children always under his wing. "It has ever been my heart's desire and prayer to give them a useful, happy, exemplary home," he wrote to an older daughter; "were I to fail here, life would indeed become a blank to me."⁹⁷ He took great pains to make their birthdays special with an affectionate letter, a present and entertainments in which he was "the main-spring of our joys, and the contriver of every amusement."⁹⁸ But the celebrations would be strictly confined to the family. The children did not go to parties. "I have ever had strong, very strong objections to allow my children to visit any where without one of their parents," he wrote to his wife, warning her against "the mischief of association with other families."⁹⁹ As a result, the others were never allowed to play unsupervised with other children, apart from one local lad who took lessons with Wilberforce and Henry and who was regarded

as one of themselves. Theophilus was lucky to be given the chance to mix with other schoolboys after his father's death.

To make up for the lack of outside companionship, the children, apart from Nugent, had the advantage of a great many more resources than most schools of the period. Their father "fitted up his museum, his auctarium, and his library, with specimens of mineralogy, instruments for experimental philosophy, and interesting curiosities from every part of the world: he had his magic lantern to exhibit phantasmagoria, and to teach natural history; to display picturesque beauty, and scenes and objects far-famed in distant countries: his various microscopes for examining the minutiae of plants and animals; his telescope for tracing planetary revolutions and appearances; his air-pump and other machines for illustrating and explaining the principles of pneumatics and electricity; authors of every country who treated on the improvements connected with modern science;— whatever, in short, could store the mind with ideas, or interest and improve the heart."¹⁰⁰ Seeing the stars of the southern ocean on his outward voyage to India, Theophilus remembered with affection a lesson on astronomy from his father on the balcony at the Rectory.¹⁰¹ This encouragement of scientific enquiry at home, as well as his observation of illness at close quarters, may well have influenced him to study medicine later on.

Although the only future envisaged for the girls was a domestic life, they were particularly encouraged to draw. Theophilus was also able to sketch and produce a neat map; there are several examples in his *Journal*. Like his brothers and sisters, he was taught to sing and to play a musical instrument; the entry of 8th July 1837, says what a comfort his flute will be to him on the voyage. His father had been exceptionally musical— as a student at Cambridge, Legh Richmond was considered "eminently skilled. He always had a piano-forte in his room, and played on the organ also."¹⁰² After he took Orders, however, he was no longer prepared to see music as entertainment, for, he claimed, "The fascinations of the ball-room, the corruptions of the theatre and opera-house, too often creep into the quiet pianoforte corner of young people." Even instrumental music could be injurious, "with its appendages of waltzes, dances and love-sick airs", while in his view, vocal music was often sacrificed "to vice and folly, to levity and wantonness, to fascination and delusion."¹⁰³ Only sacred songs were acceptable, and then only

if sung in a spirit of devotion; he refused to go, or let his family go, to performances of oratorios like the Messiah, because they were not occasions of worship. Theophilus, however, loved music of all kinds and seems to have overcome any inhibitions about secular singing. On the voyage out, he tried to teach a fellow-passenger to sing a love duet, took part happily in concerts on the ship and enjoyed the sailors' version of 'Home, Sweet Home', as recorded in the *Journal* on 29th June 1837.

As has been seen, the only profession ever envisaged for Nugent and Wilberforce was that of a minister in the Church of England. Henry, the third son, had to take up the torch and, fortunately, was prepared to do it. Legh and Theophilus were too young when their father died to have embarked on any career. In theory, the two younger boys were allowed a free choice but "Mr R. knew perhaps less than many other parents how to place out his children to advantage." Although he had many contacts in other walks of life, he refused to use them to further his own children's ambitions.¹⁰⁴ As it happens, however, Theophilus at ten or eleven had already expressed a preference for the one career which his father absolutely banned—the Army. "Anything but this," said Legh, "anything but this—the very mention of a military life fills me with horror... No consideration on earth could extort my consent. It would make me really miserable." After Wilberforce's death, he wrote to Fanny, saying "Do all you can with L— [Legh] and T— [Theophilus]... There is a subject which often hangs heavy on my spirits, I mean my poor dear T—'s inclination for a military life. Hating war as I do from my very heart; convinced as I am of the inconsistency of it with real Christianity, and looking on the profession of arms as irreconcilable with the principles of the gospel, I should mourn greatly if one of my boys chose so cruel, and, generally speaking, so profligate a line of life. I could never consent to it on conscientious grounds, and therefore wish this bias for the profession of arms to be discouraged."¹⁰⁵ Frances must have done her best, because Theophilus makes no allusion to his "bias" in either of his diaries; as an adult, he does, however, really enjoy shooting. His father had abominated all blood sports: "I should be miserable all the while my boys were scampering over the fields with a gun." Even fishing he deplored, out of respect for the poor tortured worm; even if artificial flies were used, it was still a waste of time.¹⁰⁶ He could not bear violence in any form,

and certainly never used corporal punishment on his children. "He was never angry with us; but when we displeased him, he showed it by such a sad and mournful countenance, that it touched us to the very heart, and produced more effect than any punishment could have done, for we saw that it was our dear father that suffered the most."¹⁰⁷ He would not have been happy at Theophilus's passion for days out with a gun, roaming along the banks of the Ganges to bag a few birds for his supper. Nor, probably, would he have encouraged him to keep company with his cousin Wellington, a Lieutenant in the Indian Army, and stay overnight for parties in the Mess, as reported in the *Journal* of 23rd December 1837. In Mauritius and Calcutta, the young doctor went to all kinds of entertainments of which his father would have disapproved: dinner parties, dances, the opera, the races: and described them to his mother without any apparent scruples.

For a country rector, Legh Richmond was astonishingly active both in his parish and on the national scene. The small community of Turvey seems to have been revitalised by his ministry, through preaching, home visiting, Sunday schools and the creation of Friendly Societies which provided a form of financial security to the poor. "Richmond, who is a most affectionate, warm-hearted creature, has made great way in Turvey. Everybody favours him, and God has greatly blessed his preaching."¹⁰⁸ By the time Theophilus was born, his father was spending several months a year on tours of northern England and Scotland, even as far as Iona. His experiences were shared with his children. He describes in his diary an iron works near Rotherham with its blazing furnaces; meeting criminals in the gaol at Lancaster; the landscape of the Lake District: "beauty and wonder and profusion."¹⁰⁹ "When he travelled he kept up a correspondence with his family, and narrated to them the persons, places, and adventures of his progress. On his return he enlivened many a leisure hour by larger details of all that he had observed to amuse and improve. It was a sight truly gratifying to witness the affectionate parent in the professor's chair, with a mind richly stored and a countenance beaming with kindness, fixing the attention of his youthful auditors on subjects abstruse in their character, but rendered interesting and intelligible to the happy group which surrounded him."¹¹⁰

Although his fascination with the East may well be a legacy from Nugent, Theophilus had clearly inherited, or caught, his

father's enthusiasm for travel and his curiosity about the natural world. The list of books left to him in Legh Richmond's will suggests that his interests had already been noticed.¹¹¹ Later on, he developed his father's ability to relate to people from different walks of life; rewarding conversations are reported with the Boatswain on board ship¹¹² and with a variety of individuals in Mauritius and India. It has to be said that Theophilus was rather more arrogant and less respectful of other people's sensitivities than Legh Richmond, who showed unusual humility, for the time, in his dealings with the poor and uneducated. (The heroine of his best known tract, 'The Dairyman's Daughter', was a housemaid, and he treated as a "brother" the former African slave whom he met on the beach in the Isle of Wight; "he had learnt some of his best lessons from them.")¹¹³ Theophilus was more inclined to make a joke of the unfamiliar, as witness his pelting the Muslim boatmen in the Hooghly with pieces of pork.¹¹⁴ However, the good qualities of his Indian servant in Calcutta made a real impression, and he was compassionate and understanding with his cholera patients.

In many ways, Theophilus had absorbed what his father had hoped to teach him. Although he had ventured further than recommended into the dangerous pleasures of the outside world, there is no sign that he was seriously compromised or 'corrupted' by them. Religion may not have been a major concern, but neither was it a burden to him; the *Journal* suggests that he had a basic, untroubled acceptance of the faith which was so overwhelmingly important at Turvey Rectory. He appears unshaken by his early experience of grief and mortality. The *Journal* suggests that this youngest son had inherited his father's curiosity, warmth and capacity for simple enjoyment without his torturing anxieties.

3. The Progress of Indians in the Caribbean

The half a million who left India for the Caribbean between 1838 and 1917 were the bravest among the millions who inhabited the populous states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and Madras from whence most of the immigrants came. For a rural people to whom the land is sacred *Dharti Mata* (mother earth) the decision to leave would have required enormous courage. For many it would have been a choice between leaving or staying to certain starvation in flood or drought-prone villages neglected

by British administrators. For thousands of others, indentureship provided an opportunity to escape from British vengeance in the wake of the Great Revolt of 1857. There is a dramatic rise in indentureship figures in the years immediately following 1857. There were among the immigrants, brave young women now in flight from abusive relationships and recent widows trying desperately to avoid *sati* (immolation) after their husbands' death. Fifteen percent of female immigrants were widows. Finally there were young people who were bored by the monotony of village life and the many rituals which controlled this existence; they wanted to experience another world. We are looking, therefore, at a risk-taking slice of India which came to the Caribbean, willing to experiment in the new space of the other side of the world. These agreement-signers took up the challenge of creating new lives in a place of exile. On the western side of the *Kala Pani* (dark waters), too, there were many opportunities for advancement, not available in India.

In the newer areas of settlement in the southern Caribbean there were virgin lands for cultivation, unlike the exhausted fields around Patna or Haidarabad in the ancestral place. In British Guiana, Trinidad and Suriname, settlements of a later vintage, the potential for land acquisition and profitable cultivation was greater than in other, older settlements such as Jamaica or Guadeloupe. In Demerara and Suriname Indians slowly drained swamplands along the coastal areas using their ancestral experience of draining similar swampy areas on the Gangetic plains. From the early twentieth century, they were also making tentative forays into the savannah lands behind the coastal swamps. In Trinidad, by 1867, they were moving away from the sugar-cane lands of the central plains into the hilly areas on the East Coast: "Since entering on the discharge of my duties as Commissioner several Indian immigrants have made applications for lands, one of them for as much as 45 acres. They are generally accompanied by some of their countrymen who settle around the headman on the land petitioned for by them."¹¹⁵ There were other equally tangible advantages provided by the diaspora: "An opportunity to select, and a chance to jettison, and some overseas Indian communities have in fact discarded the fine details of caste or of mere ritual, or fundamentalist views about the position of women. And have indeed selected, when suitable, caste associated skills, ideas of mutual brotherhoods,

of panchayats and of consensus, new forms of jurisprudence, of justice, of affinity.”¹¹⁶

Indentureship came to an end in 1920. By this time, however, most of the Indians were free persons having previously completed their indentureship. This freedom gave them the necessary space for the re-formation of the ancestral culture after the disintegration which had taken place under the bonded contracts of indentureship. One area in which there was much activity was the revival of caste occupations as these existed in India. In this way many Muslims who were weavers (*julahas*) took to making clothing, carpets, wall hangings and haberdashery. Among other re-created occupations were those of the gardeners (*kisan*), cattle-minders (*ahir*), boatmen (*kevat*), jewellers (*sonar*) and itinerant priests (*purohits*).

At the cultural level, the “reconstruction” of Indianness involved the resuscitation of life rites in the various settlements as well as the revival of major festivals from the sending areas of India. In these ways the monotony of plantation life was lessened and a sense of wholeness preserved. Among the celebrations which found new life in the Caribbean were *Deya Devali*, the festival of lights, commemorating the triumphant return of Lord Rama from fourteen years of exile in the forest. The Muslims were able to recreate the Mohurram procession which recalled the heroic deaths of Hassan and Hussain, grandsons of the Prophet (u.w.b.p.). On evenings and on weekends the followers of Islam organised their prayer recitations (*Mauloods*), sang their *ghazals* and *quaseedas* and constructed mosques in the vicinity of the estates. This cultural satisfaction provided a major platform for productivity as Indians rooted themselves in the new space. As prosperity developed, from the 1930s, they began sponsoring visits from academics and missionaries from India; these persons were able to inform Indians in the diaspora about religious, political and intellectual trends in India, thereby keeping the identity alive. The high academic and/or theological qualifications of these visitors were an additional boost to a people seeking to carve a space of their own.

A major lever to upward mobility of the Indo-Caribbean population was the work of the Christian missionaries, particularly the Presbyterian Canadian Mission. This presence lasted for a full century, beginning in 1868. The Nova Scotia-

based Presbyterians started a mission in Trinidad in 1868, moving to Grenada (1884), British Guiana and St. Lucia (1885) and Jamaica (1894), often using Indian converts as catechists in the outstations. Presbyterian success lay in their willingness to learn Hindi and to venture into isolated plantations where the Indians lived. They provided a bridge between East and West by “Indianizing” their proselytizing energies. For example, they composed Hindi *bhajans* (hymns) with Indian tunes but a Christian message and called their churches by sacred Hindi appellations: *Anugraha* (salvation), *Arunodai* (early dawn), *Nistar* (redeemer) and *Krist Mandali* (temple of Christ). Names of Christian converts also bore a Christian connotation: *Yisudas* (servant of Jesus) or *Yisuprashad* (offering to Jesus). At the same time, the Mission schools carried a very Western syllabus, providing the tools with which the Indians could confidently enter Western society. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the first Indo-Caribbean persons to emerge from the plantations were the products of the mission schools. Hindus and Muslims took advantage of the educational facilities offered by the missionaries but the actual conversion rate was low. In fact there were many instances of Hindu or Muslim youths being debarred from a career in teaching because of their refusal to convert. Most of those who did in fact convert in order to obtain employment, bided their time until the 1950s when finally, non-Christian faiths were allowed to build their own schools. At that time they moved over to the Hindu and Muslim schools with alacrity.

In his paper on emancipation previously cited, Dr Kusha Haraksingh makes the point that diasporas have a “liberating quality” in that they often allow, even demand the opening up of new frontiers. Faced as they were, with many challenges in a region where previous arrivants had already asserted their claims to physical and cultural space, Indo-Caribbean citizens in Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago increasingly asserted themselves in the public sphere from the 1930s. To achieve this, they sometimes formed their own organisations such as the British Guiana or Trinidad East Indian Association. In Suriname there was *Bharat Oeday* (Awakening India) and *Nau Yuga Oeday* (New Age Arising). Once these were formed in the separate settlements they made contact with similar groups in other colonies and co-operated with each other in

matters of mutual interests. As necessity arose Indo-Caribbean groups and persons joined other multi-ethnic organisations, particularly in labour, agitating jointly for common remedies such as better wages and working conditions, improved housing and infrastructure and enhanced educational opportunities. At the level of their particular concerns they clamoured for the recognition of Hindu and Muslim marriages, the privileges of cremating their dead, of opening their own denominational schools and for increased employment possibilities in the public service. From the middle of the twentieth century there was a noticeable increase in visits by Indian political, business and religious leaders and a matching increase in visits to India by Indo-Caribbean people in search of their roots (*Purkhon ka Desh*). As globalisation progressed so did the revival of the Indian connection in the fields of business, the film industry and education. The increase in India's reputation as a world leader in technology from the mid-twentieth century ameliorated self-confidence among diasporic Indians everywhere. From this time, too, the political presence of Indo-Caribbean leaders became increasingly noticeable. In 1982 Ramdat Missier was elected acting President of Suriname and in 1987, R. Shankar became President.¹¹⁷ Since that time there has been a constant Indo-Surinamese presence at the highest levels of that nation's politics. In Guyana, Dr. Cheddi Jagan became Executive President in 1992 and in Trinidad and Tobago, a trade unionist/lawyer Basdeo Panday became Prime Minister in 1995.

The re-invention of Indo-Caribbean culture has been characterised by a process of selective adaptation. In the traumatic crossing from the Orient to the Occident, Indo Caribbean people were able judiciously to retain those aspects of the original culture which could be of use to them and to jettison others which they considered useless. Among those qualities retained were a respect for learning, a divinely ordained love for the land (which became the basis for successful agricultural enterprise), a high regard for family life as a firm foundation for nation-building, and frugality in financial matters. In the Caribbean, as in India, they were always prepared to wait for the results of their enterprise and not expect early results; their view was long-term rather than short-term. Leaving parched and exhausted soils in over-crowded Indian villages, they eagerly embraced the opportunity to cultivate newly-

opened fields in the Caribbean where the yields were more abundant. To these new lands they brought in their *jahagi bandals* (ship's belongings) an amazing variety of seeds whose plants now adorn the Caribbean landscape: pulses, spinach, mango, pomme-granate, tamarind, guava, swamp rice, jack-fruit and other species. At the same time they were able to shed most of the caste restrictions which prevailed in the ancestral place; that process had indeed been forcibly started on the ships which brought them across the dark waters. The fear of foreign travel was now abandoned as Indians travelled across the Caribbean Sea and later to North America and Europe in search of new opportunities. Their diet became more varied as most of them switched from vegetarianism to meat-eating. The rivalries that characterised Hindu-Muslim relationships in South Asia were largely abandoned as both these groups now banded together to take up the challenges which came with their new world experience. On the ship they became *jahagi-bhais/bahins* (ship-brothers/sisters); on the plantations, fellow Indians, regardless of religion or place of origin, became *ghar ka a'dmi* (home people). These bonds lasted long after the end of indentureship. Scholarship on the Indian experience in the nineteenth century reveals the brutalities of the plantation system: violence against women, inadequate medical facilities, unhygienic living quarters, arbitrary punishments, destructive communal competition, and so on. In many ways, however, the manner in which Indo-Caribbean people have used their diaspora opportunities reminds us of Shakespeare's oft-quoted dictum — "Sweet are the uses of adversity,/ Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,/ Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

4. Homeward bound: the last return ship to India, 1955

"I goin' back home one day... one day God go find a way for me man... ah miss my people too bad... don't care what you say, you own is you own... nobody could deny that" Kareen said; he held his milk tin by its lid, using it as a handle, his eyes focused at a point somewhere in mid-space.

Ismith Khan, *The Jumbie Bird*,
Macgibbon and Kee, London, 1961, p.80

On the 4th day of September 1955, the *M. V. Resurgent* departed

from the Georgetown harbour, British Guiana carrying 235 repatriates to Calcutta. In addition to these repatriates, there were six paying First Class passengers from British Guiana and two from Suriname. On its way out, the *Resurgent* made stops at Recife in Brazil, at Cape Town in South Africa and at Colombo in Ceylon before finally docking on the Hooghly River on the 9th of October 1955.¹¹⁸ The voyage had lasted thirty-eight days, a far cry from the average ninety days which was the time taken by the original *girmityas* (agreement-signers) to arrive in the Caribbean between 1838 and 1917. Although many cases of illness were treated during the voyage, there were no deaths. The repatriates disembarked in good health and were dropped off close to their ancestral villages in India. This was a good beginning for the returnees.

Soon, however, things began to turn sour since most of these repatriates had now returned, not to the India of their dreams, but rather to a turbulent homeland. What used to be Greater India (*Maha Bharat*) was now the separate nations of India and Pakistan. The sub-continent was still traumatised by the yet unsettled problems of Independence and Partition and was in no mood to welcome its diasporic descendants. How welcome would a Guianese Hindu be in Pakistan or a Muslim in Hindustan? Many of the ancestral settlements had been washed away by the recurrent floods of the Gangetic Plains and many of the repatriates were fleeced of their Caribbean earnings by priests, worshippers of the holy profit. Under these circumstances, the majority of the repatriates became destitutes, longing to return to the Caribbean, a bother to British embassy officers in Calcutta, Delhi and London and a menace to their poor relatives in British Guiana to whom they appealed incessantly for money to return to that colony. At another level, the *Resurgent's* voyage gave closure to the hundreds of voyages to and from the Caribbean which had started in 1838 when the *Hesperus* brought its first load of toilers to the canefields of Demerara.

What were the colonial arrangements regarding repatriation? It is difficult to indicate a code of conduct since the rules were constantly changing according to the fluctuations in the sugar industry. During the mid-nineteenth century, the (British) Government of India (GOI) stated that the indentureds were entitled to a free or assisted passage after ten years of

industrial residence in the colony. Upon such entitlement, the Indian could exchange the return fare for a commensurate monetary award or for a parcel of land. In British Guiana and Trinidad, these obligations could not be overcome by lapse of time. For those who availed themselves of the return fare, this entitlement extended to the ex-indentured's spouse and children. West Indian planters were constantly pressing for the abolition of this concession. In this regard, the Jamaican plantocracy was successful in limiting the claim period to twelve years after the end of individual indentureship but for the other colonies, the Colonial Office insisted that the allowance remained on the books.¹¹⁹ Even so, the West Indian plantocracy was successful in slowly whittling down this obligation. In 1869 for example, they succeeded in setting up an offer of ten acres of land to any Indian who abandoned the right of return. In 1872, this offer was modified when the time-expired Indian was offered ten acres or the alternative of £5 and five acres of land. In 1881 the offer was reduced to £5 and in 1890 the incentive of either land or money in commutation of the return passage was withdrawn. Five years later, those who wished to be repatriated had to contribute to their own fare: the men 25% and the women 16²/₃%. In 1898 these rates were doubled.¹²⁰ Despite these incentives to remain, many Indians opted to return to the ancestral place; in fact, about a quarter of those who came to the Caribbean actually returned. Table 1 gives an idea of the numbers involved between 1922 and 1928.

Whereas 10,228 left for India during this period, a larger number, 111,303 returned to India earlier, that is, between 1893 and 1916.¹²¹ Why did these Indians, temporarily domiciled abroad, wish to return to the Orient? Many of them had been duped into embarking on a voyage which took them to a land farther away than they had envisioned. Accustomed to seasonal migration in India, they were now informed by clever *arkatias* (recruiters) that places with Indian names were only a few days away, so that a return trip would be easy. Trinidad was *Chini Dad* (land of sugar), Mauritius was *Mirch Desh* (pepper country), Suriname was Sri Ram (hero of the Ramayana) and Demerara was indianized to *Damraila*. Many labourers who had come to these places had left their families behind and now wanted closure. Some had been kidnapped into accepting indentureship and were unsettled in the new

space. A radical Indian newspaper founded during the First World War highlighted cases of those who were kidnapped or duped into indentureship.¹²²

Table 1. Return Emigration from the Caribbean to India, 1922-1928.

Colony	Year	Total Embarked	Average Age Immigrant	Average % Deaths
British Guiana	1923	211	37	
	1924	417	34	3.3
	1925	492	34	0.5
	1926	860	34	0.4
	1927	570	37	3.3
	1928	745	35	0.5
Trinidad	1922	1,075	31	1.5
	1923	994	31	3.3
	1924	886	34	0.2
	1925	898	32	1.7
	1926	996	33	2.7
	1927	898	31	0.3
Jamaica	1923	676	28	0.7
	1924	442	30	0.1
	1927	68	28	2.4

Source: File 374/1929—Report of Walker and Blandy to Secretary, Government of Bengal, 19th October 1928, Guyana National Archives. This report was prepared by the shipping company (Nourse Line) which carried out the actual transportation of the return immigrants.

Representations were made by the Anti-Slavery Society, the Aborigines' Protection Society as well as the London-based West India Committee for assistance enabling stranded wives and children (in India) to join their menfolk in the Caribbean. But this came to nothing; the only solution was a return to the family hearth. Other returnees were drawn from those immigrants who had not succeeded in establishing themselves in the colonies and who, therefore, had nothing to lose by returning. There were

also indigents (paupers, lepers, invalids and lunatics) who were repatriated by colonial governments. As late as 1938, some eighteen years after the abolition of indentureship, the Moyne Commission was told of some seven hundred poor Indians who desperately wanted to leave Jamaica: "There are at present some seven hundred East Indians who are in bad circumstances and who are desirous of being repatriated to India in the same manner as this has been done in other islands. The majority is without work and is in a pauperized condition and the others that do get work are so badly paid that the conditions under which they have to live are appalling."¹²³ During indentureship and particularly afterwards there were Indians who, as they became older, wished, in the Hindu tradition, to spend their last days in prayer and self-denying meditation (*sanyasi*) near some shrine or holy place in the motherland. The managing director of the major shipping line which transported Indians to and from India was not incorrect when he stated that "many make the voyage only to die in the native land."¹²⁴ In 1951 the Secretary of the All-India National Congress referred to this desire to die in the motherland as "the eternal call of the Ganges."¹²⁵ According to Mahatma Gandhi, writing in 1926, these people were returning to India in order to visit the motherland and because they were misled into believing that India had obtained self-government.¹²⁶

Whilst these push-factors were generally applicable with respect to Indo-Caribbean labourers who wished to return to India, there were particular considerations which made British Guiana unattractive to thousands of Indians. One such factor was the political situation. The early fifties of the last century was a time of renewed hope for the Guianese population. In 1943 came the return of Dr. Cheddi Jagan (1918-1997), grandson of indentured Bihari labourers, as a qualified dentist. Jagan had spent his early years on the plantations of Port Mourant on the West Coast. Ten years later, in partnership with the Afro-Guyanese lawyer and fellow socialist Forbes Burnham, he formed a new political party — the People's Progressive Party — to contest the elections of 1953. This party won 18 of the 24 available seats and seemed destined for a long rule, leading into Independence. Jagan was quite accurate when, in 1966, he recalled the mood at that time: "The 1953 election campaign roused unprecedented enthusiasm throughout the country. For

the first time in our history the people were really involved; it was their first election under universal adult suffrage. So great was interest that the percentage (74.8 percent) who turned out to vote was higher than in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad, where the figures ranged between 53 and 65 percent."¹²⁷

However, to the utter disappointment of the Guianese people such a fulfillment was not to be. The Cold War was heightening and the threat of a Communist takeover on America's doorstep could not be disregarded. Winston Churchill, acting under instructions from Dwight Eisenhower, suspended the constitution in October 1953 and instructed his Governor to assume full control. When Jagan and his wife Janet defied the regulations prohibiting political meetings, they were both jailed in 1954, from which time the Americans, now superseding the British as the Western imperial power, did their utmost to break up the Afro-Indian unity which had developed in the PPP.¹²⁸ Such imperialist manoeuvring, and the Guianese reaction, led to the intensification of ethnic antagonism, incessant political unrest and personal insecurity. For thousands of Guyanese, flight from the country seemed the only safe haven. Despite strenuous efforts on the parts of the now independent government of India, the British government and the British Guianese administration to dissuade would-be repatriates, the Chief Secretary to the Georgetown government reported, in late 1954, that about 400 Indians were pressing him for a ship to take them back to India. He was in an embarrassing situation and begged for an early resolution of the matter.¹²⁹

The correspondence relating to this last *Resurgent* voyage of 1955 reveals another interesting detail, namely the fact that a fair number of the repatriates would have remained in the colony had the colonial authorities provided land in lieu of the return passage. This question of land and/or money in exchange for repatriation was a key one for the colonial authorities. As aforementioned, in 1898 such land grants were abolished since the plantocracy now viewed the Indians as competitors for available space; in 1897 the British Guianese government made what it felt was the last such commutation. However, in 1903 it reversed this decision when it gave out lands to prevent the loss of labour which departing Indians symbolised. By the late twenties, this problem was again pressingly present. Mr. Kawall, an Indo-Guyanese leader, reported that some 2,000 Indians were

anxious to return to India but that appeals were being made to the Governor and the Chamber of Commerce to stem this exodus by offering incentives.¹³⁰ In 1955, as plans for the repatriation of Indians were well advanced, the Government of India, in a last-ditch effort to block the move, raised, once again, the question of land grants. In a lengthy memorandum, the Indian Government conceded that "there maybe a psychological pull drawing ex-indentured labour back to the country of their origin."¹³¹ However, it argued, such a move should be strongly discouraged for a number of reasons. Past experience had shown that the majority of repatriates were too poor to make a fresh start in India; many, being of advanced age were too infirm to take up employment; many had no friends or relatives in India; job opportunities in India were severely limited; the Indian Government had the gigantic problem of rehabilitating refugees from Pakistan, who were still pouring in at the rate of 15,000 to 20,000 a month for East Bengal alone. There was also the problem of adjustment to India: "Psychologically, the repatriates, after long residence in a foreign country, are not prepared to face conditions of life totally unfamiliar to them and which bear no comparison with their conception or picture of India many decades ago." In light of these adverse Indian circumstances, the Government of India now invoked Section 193 of the British Guiana Immigration Ordinance which stated that land grants were a possible option for the ex-indentured labourer. "Irrespective of legal considerations, the Government of British Guiana have a moral responsibility for affording every opportunity to Indian immigrants who by their honest and hard work, have contributed so much to the prosperity of the colony to settle down in the country permanently and to contribute further to its development."

The British attitude to these Indian entreaties was one of disguised, diplomatic contempt. Colonial Office and Foreign Office nawabs were sick and tired of British Guiana and its "Communist" problems and the Empire's loss of its Crown Jewel, India, festered in the British mind. Official comments in this matter of the 1955 repatriates testify to this attitude. A Colonial Office comment next to the problem of adjustment (cited above) smartly commented: "Have they deteriorated so much?!" The remarks of Assistant Secretary (in the Colonial Office) and Head of the West Indian Department, I. Wallace, in

response to the Note from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs of August 1955, are equally instructive. Wallace blamed the desire to return to India on the Indian High Commission for the West Indies, based in Trinidad. The desire to return was "the result of glowing pictures of Mother India painted in recent years by the Indian High Commission in the Caribbean."¹³² Now, he urged, the incumbent High Commissioner should be involved in discouraging would-be repatriates: "One cannot avoid a certain malicious satisfaction at the possibility of making that sort of comeback to the Indian Government." Wallace gloated over the fact that he and others in the Colonial Office had successfully pressured the Indian government to get rid of "offending" Commissioner, Nanda. Now they should not do anything to hasten the appointment of a successor. Worse than that, he feared, would be the appointment of an Indian High Commissioner to British Guiana.

It has to be noted, sadly, that these recommendations regarding the blocking of repatriation from British Guiana were being made in London at the end of October 1955, some three weeks after the repatriates had arrived in India. The Indian request for assistance had been made in August 1955, before the September departure of the *Resurgent*. The Colonial Office saw no urgency in replying promptly. Similarly, the request for the grant of land, made in August 1955, was not dealt with until May 1957 and that after an April 1957 reminder from the Indian High Commissioner to the British West Indies. Nanda's successor Rajkumar was still bent on preventing any post-*Resurgent* claims for repatriation. The Colonial Office reply stated, belatedly, that: "Land settlement in British Guiana is now a major problem affecting all sections of the community and it would not be practical for the Government to make separate arrangements in settlement schemes for one particular category of the community. Indeed to attempt to do so might lead to most unfortunate consequences."¹³³

Whilst all of this diplomatic manoeuvring was taking place in the United Kingdom, India and British Guiana, arrangements were being made for the repatriation of a constantly fluctuating number of hopefuls. In September 1954, Georgetown's Chief Secretary asked the Colonial Office to find a ship which could take about 400 immigrants to India.¹³⁴ In November of that year he pressed his case; he had received deposits from a number of

Indians and was now embarrassed that he could give no firm indication regarding the availability of a ship.¹³⁵ The Colonial Office found itself in a quandary. The last ship which had transported 324 persons, the *Orna*, in 1949 had been scrapped because of old age. Now they cast their net widely in the hope of finding a small troopship, a hospital ship or an aircraft carrier. In order to reduce costs, the Governors of Jamaica and Trinidad were instructed to find out persons who were entitled to return passages or were willing to pay their own way. Both colonies replied in the negative. British Guiana was also directed to locate cargo which could be taken to the East. Among the ships canvassed, the *Mohammedi*, which normally carried pilgrims from India to the Hajj in Saudi Arabia, indicated that it would not be available until early 1956. The charge for its hire was £60,000. Air travel was then considered but there were problems of overnighing and the air fare alone was a prohibitive £400. An Italian company, Flotta Lauro, could take the passengers but only up to Italy. Finally the British-owned *Resurgent* was found. The cost of the entire journey would be £52,250 and the ship would take cargo to the East. The Georgetown administration indicated that it had a repatriation balance of £83,000 so the *Resurgent's* fee was acceptable.

As news of the finalisation of the arrangements became public, the would-be repatriates were caught in a tug-of-war between their own desire to return to the further shore and officialdom's determined efforts to dissuade them from doing so. At home the *Daily Argosy* cautioned that registration for the return passage was to close at the end of July 1955. It further indicated to prospective paying passengers that the meals in the First Class section of the ship would be prepared by Indian cooks and "may, therefore, not be up to the usual standard enjoyed by such passengers."¹³⁶ However, the strongest pressure against repatriation came from the Indian High Commissioner in the Caribbean. In 1951 the Commission issued a press release which clearly stated the Indian government's position. This was that whilst the Government of India appreciated the desire of persons of Indian origin to return to India, it was at that time trying to settle some two million refugees who had fled from East Pakistan. Persons who wished to return therefore, should ensure that they had financial resources to maintain themselves there; destitute Indians would

only add to India's problems.¹³⁷ In 1954 there was another press release discouraging Indians from returning. Nevertheless, one year later, 175 men, 59 women and 9 children departed from Georgetown on the *Resurgent*. As aforementioned 234 of these were time-expired labourers and their families, the other 9 were paying First Class passengers from British Guiana and Suriname.

Considerable care was taken in preparation for the long voyage to the Orient. For a full week before the voyage, daily visits were made to the *Dharam Shala* (House of Refuge) where the repatriates were housed, by Dr. C. R. Subryan, Assistant Director of Medical Services. He was accompanied each day by four Nurses/Dispensers who ensured that an adequate supply of medicines was placed on board. Dr. J. Bissessar, Surgeon-General of British Guiana, was commissioned to travel on the *Resurgent* as Medical Officer. Although there were no deaths on the voyage, many of the repatriates were unwell, an ominous portent, bearing in mind the squalid conditions in their overcrowded land of destination. For example, no fewer than 91 persons were declared Invalid, chiefly because of advanced age; there were 84 cases of Chronic Bronchitis and/or Asthma; and 12 cases of Hernia.

It would be useful at this stage to record the 1992 recollections of Chablall Ramcharan who, in 1955, travelled on the *Resurgent* as Clerk/Interpreter.¹³⁸ Ramcharan's parents had both arrived as indentured labourers from Benares. He himself had worked his way up to the Pupil Teacher's grade and through private study had passed the Hindi Interpreter's Exam. This qualified him for a job in the Immigration Department from whence he was now deputed to accompany the repatriates: "My function was to look after the well-being of the returning immigrants. If they were sick, I made sure they were properly cared for. I also ensured that they got the type of meals they wanted. I was authorised to issue orders to the kitchen of the ship. We employed people from among the immigrants to do the cooking and paid them."¹³⁹ Ramcharan remembered that the Government of India had asked the immigrants to remain in British Guiana and to make a contribution there. "But," he recalled, "some immigrants felt it was all a sham and that it was the Government of Guiana that was discouraging them."

Upon arrival, the repatriates were taken to the railway station

nearest to the ancestral village and left to find their way forward. Some remained in Calcutta, others went up-country to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and a number, of Madras origin, travelled for days to the South. However, the home-coming was not as rosy as had been anticipated. The returnees, coming from easy-paced Guianese villages, were now caught in bustling over-populated Indian towns where the governing principle was survival of the fittest. The food was different from that which had evolved in plantation villages, the ingredients were strange. Many original settlements had vanished because of flooding or land development. Because of Partition entire villages had migrated and for those who found their villages, there were additional problems. They had lost caste by crossing the *Kala Pani* (dark waters) and now had to pay large sums to the village priests to be cleansed of this indignity. The Guianese-born spouses and children knew little of the languages spoken in the villages and were therefore unable to make the necessary connections. Instead, they were derisively branded as *tapuhas* (island people), strangers in the civilisation where a thousand rules guided a person's life from the cradle to the grave. The consequence of all of this was that within six months of their arrival in India at least 84 of the surviving repatriates were in Calcutta demanding that they be sent back to British Guiana. Other returnees appeared at Deputy British High Commissioners' offices in Bombay and Madras making the same demand. By January 1957, the situation had not eased. In that month the British High Commissioner in New Delhi complained that: "Members of the High Commissioner's staff there [Calcutta] were greatly embarrassed during the month of December by the activities of these people who took to invading the entrance hall of the Deputy High Commission and making a nuisance of themselves. Their mood was at times ugly; threats of violence were made, and a certain member of the staff was at one time in serious danger of his life."¹⁴⁰ The repatriates, the letter continues, were asking not only for news of their return to Georgetown, but also for employment, accommodation, money, food and other essentials.

Chablall Ramcharan in his reminiscences tells of the plight of those whom he had escorted to the ancestral country: "To my surprise, a few days after I had seen them off, about forty immigrants returned to my hotel and held on to me weeping for about ten days. I had to be at the Immigration Office in Calcutta

preparing reports on these immigrants. They all wanted to go back to Guyana. The conditions they encountered in their villages were unbelievable."

Because of the urgency of the situation, many letters and telegrams passed from Delhi to London to Georgetown: "One possible solution would be for a ship to be specially chartered. This might pay for itself in part by combining cargo with that of passengers or by taking fare-paying passengers as well as repatriates. It would be helpful if the Colonial Office could approach the Government of British Guiana on these lines, and in any case, we would all greatly appreciate some decisions as soon as possible."¹⁴¹ At the same time, frantic efforts were made to contact relatives in British Guiana requesting assistance for their stranded kith and kin in Calcutta: "ALMEL is married to HINDEL of New Dam, East Canje, Berbice, British Guiana. PUNGAWANI is married to LATCHMANEN of the same address. Both these men are said to be cane-cutters and the owner of the estate where they work is stated to be an Englishman by the name of BOKERS."¹⁴² The letter is filled with pages of names and addresses of next-of-kin in British Guiana with an appeal to locate these relatives and ask for passage money for the return journey. Balgobin, a professional boxer, had tried to make up passage money by fighting Indian boxers but his aggressiveness was causing "a great deal of trouble in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras." It was now necessary to send him back to Georgetown. Another method of assisting the repatriates was to utilise the services of the Nourse Line which ran three passenger ships a year to Trinidad; but each vessel accommodated only eight passengers. In fact these places were booked by prospective returnees who had kept their Guianese-derived savings. Now they had to bide their time until the next sailings.

The final damning answer to this debacle came in a telegram from the Governor of British Guiana dated 31st January 1957. This was sent first to the United Kingdom High Commissioner in New Delhi and copied to his deputies in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras as well as to the Colonial Office in London: "This government is unable to accept any obligations to provide financial assistance to enable *ex-Resurgent* repatriation immigrants to return to this colony. Efforts to organize local Indian communities to contribute on humanitarian grounds have been unsuccessful. Those affected can therefore expect no

assistance except what they can obtain from friends and relatives. Should any of those affected succeed in securing a passage, he would be allowed to re-enter the colony."¹⁴³ After this final communiqué the matter disappears from the official records. The worsening political crisis in British Guiana with its immense international ramifications now took centre stage and the repatriates were forgotten. We can assume that those who had booked their passages on the Nourse Line did in fact return, but this was a handful. The 91 aged Invalids and the 84 cases of Chronic Bronchitis and/or Asthma would have found it difficult to survive in the intense heat and bitterly cold (winter) climate in the mid-continental plains of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Those who did would probably have returned to Calcutta, to the permanent refugee suburb of the old city, called Matiaburz. There they would have found fellowship in the company of returnees from Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa and the Caribbean and employment in the many low-paying factories bordering the settlement. In these crowded slums, benevolent people and organisations tried to rehabilitate the returnees. The investigator for the Imperial Citizenship Association reported that he found among the returnees from British Guiana, Fiji, Trinidad and South Africa "mothers who had left their children behind, wives who came without their husbands, husbands without wives and they were all clamoring to be re-united with their dear and near ones."¹⁴⁴ Others, about two dozen at most, who went with sufficient savings might have set up small shops or engaged in entrepreneurial trades, becoming part of India's millions.

The sad story of the *Resurgent* and its human cargo is but a footnote to the larger story of European imperialism. The trade in human bodies was only one aspect of a much larger commerce which linked the Old World with the New in an already globalised world. The half a million Indian labourers who were transported to the Caribbean were seen as no more than replacements for African labour which had fled from the plantations in search of less enslaving occupations. There was little European, Christian consideration for the value-system or the different ways of seeing which these Asians brought. There was little interest in gender balance. The consequence of this was considerable social instability among the immigrants. The incessant problem of land reclamation was trouble enough, and this was compounded by intense competition for the small

settlement spaces which were available. From the mid-twentieth century, of course, there was deliberate destabilisation through Big Power interference. Running from these problems, the repatriates sought refuge in the bosom of their Motherland. However, India was herself trying to re-construct a society which had been altered by centuries of European pillage. The experience of these last repatriates finally convinced East Indians in the Caribbean that their future lay, not in India, but in the Americas, a young civilisation with enormous scope for development. India would remain a source of inspiration but the Americas would become the new homeland.

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Notes

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⁶ Sir John Gladstone's 'Statement of Facts... a letter to Sir R. Peel', 1830: GG2868.

⁷ Letter from John Gladstone to Sir R. Peel, 5th April 1831: GG303.

⁸ Plan for emancipation drawn up by J. Gladstone and J. Moss, deputed by the West India Interests of Liverpool, 30th May 1833: GG2876.

⁹ Minutes of a meeting of Gentlemen interested in British Guiana, 11th July 1833: GG2876.

¹⁰ Letter from James Stuart to John Gladstone, 28th Jan. 1835: GG2764. A letter of 12th July 1837: GG2764, gives further examples: "The Magistrate of the district on the East Bank of the River has told the people that their 7½ hours Labour begins from the time they leave their houses in the morning, and, as they have sometimes to walk a mile and a half or two miles, they have not failed to take advantage of this new construction of the law and take their own time in reaching their work... The interference with the administration of the law in the rural Districts has brought the Labourers in many places to a state of idleness and rambling habits which is fearful to contemplate..."

¹¹ Letter from the Rev. W. Gladstone to John Gladstone, 2nd Jan. 1835: GG221.

¹² Letter from W. E. Gladstone to John Gladstone, 26th Jan. 1835: GG224.

¹³ *Times*, 2nd April 1838: "Mr. Gladstone's eloquent and able speech was calculated to weaken, not remove, many persuasions amounting to prejudices, with regard to the extent of those misdeeds and criminal abuses of the Abolition Act... Still there is much matter of obloquy, from which neither Sir G. Grey nor Mr. Gladstone has succeeded in exonerating the West India proprietors."

¹⁴ *Gladstone Diaries*, Vol. II, p.52.

¹⁵ Letter from John Gladstone to Gillanders, 4th Jan. 1836, quoted in Scoble, op. cit., p.1.

¹⁶ Letter from Gillanders, Arbuthnot and Co. to John Gladstone, 6th June 1836: GG358.

¹⁷ Letter from J. Moss to John Gladstone, 10th Sept. 1836: GG297.

¹⁸ Letter from J. Moss to John Gladstone, early 1837: GG297.

¹⁹ S. C. Checkland, *op.cit.*, p. 321.

²⁰ 'Note on Mr Gladstone's letter as to the Hire of Coolies in Bengal', March 1837: GG281. "It appears from the *Asiatic Journal* of the present month (March 1837) that the engagements of Coolies at the Mauritius and the mode of conveying them from Calcutta to that Island have engaged much of the public attention and... it is stated that 'the Governor-General has taken measures to put the exportation of Coolies from Calcutta to the Mauritius under proper regulations'. It also appears that there was a report in India that the experiment of sending the same description of labourers to the West Indies was about to be tried."

²¹ Letter from Lord Glenelg to John Gladstone, 29th April 1837: GG348.

²² Letter from John Gladstone to Lord Glenelg, 29th April 1837: GG348.

²³ Letter from J. Moss to John Gladstone, 16th May 1837: GG297.

²⁴ Letter from John Gladstone to Lord Glenelg, 5th May 1837: GG348.

²⁵ Letter from W. E. Gladstone to John Gladstone, 5th March 1835: GG224.

²⁶ Dr. Theophilus Richmond's father, the Rev. Legh Richmond, was born in Liverpool, where his grandfather Henry Richmond had also been a doctor.

²⁷ Letter from T. Gladstone to Lord Normanby, 3rd August 1839: GG530.

²⁸ Despatch from Lord Glenelg to Sir J. Smyth, 19th August 1837: GG348.

²⁹ Letter from Capt. Baxter to John Gladstone, 2nd Feb. 1838: PP XXXIX, No.16, p.162, encl.6.

³⁰ Letter from W. E. Gladstone to John Gladstone, 30th Nov. 1837: GG225.

³¹ Letter from G. L. Arbuthnot to John Gladstone, 23rd Feb. 1838: GG358, "A circular from a Mr. Crewdson has been shown me, calling the attention of the Christian public to the Order in Council, under which you have been authorised to import to Demerara 'Hill Coolies' from India declaring it to be tantamount to a renewal of the Slave Trade...", confirmed by letter from J. Moss to John Gladstone, 24th Feb. 1838: GG297.

³² Letter from John Gladstone to Lord Glenelg, 28th Feb. 1838: GG348.

³³ Letter from John Gladstone to the Duke of Wellington, 28th Feb. 1838: GG358.

(a) "unless such, or other means, are adopted to promote the emigration of free labourers to be employed for their future cultivation [i.e. the sugar plantations] their productive advantages are likely to be greatly diminished, if not wholly lost to the Mother Country from the period in 1840 when the termination of the Negro Apprenticeship will take place". (b) "long intercourse and patient enquiries made from those... intimately acquainted with the character, dispositions and habits of the Negro population... satisfy us, that no dependence can be placed on their continuous labour for the purpose of cultivating the Cane in these Colonies."

³⁴ (a) Register of Indian Labourers proceeding from the Port of Calcutta, January, 1838 on the *Hesperus*: Enclosure A in Despatch No. 6, 5th Sept. 1839, from Governor Light to Marquess of Normanby, PP XXXIV, pp.194 - 201. (b) Return of Emigrants landed from on board the Ship "Hesperus", R. E. Baxter, Commander, from Calcutta, from the 8th May to the 10th May 1838, *ibid.*, pp. 202-204. (c) Return of Emigrants landed in Demerara, from on board the ship *Hesperus*, R. E. Baxter, Commander, from Calcutta, from the 8th May to the 10th May 1838: Enclosure in Despatch No.2 from Governor Light to Lord Glenelg, 30th Aug. 1838, PP XXXIX, p.61-63.

³⁵ Speeches of the Duke of Wellington in Parliament, arr. Col. John Gurwood, John Murray, London, 1854, pp.189-190.

- ³⁶ Letter from James Stuart to John Gladstone, 14th April 1838: GG2764.
- ³⁷ Letter from John Gladstone to Lord Glenelg, 26th May 1838: GG358.
- ³⁸ See fn. 34 above.
- ³⁹ (a) Letter from John Gladstone to the Duke of Wellington, 9th June 1838: GG358; (b) Statement of the expenses incurred in *Hesperus* voyage with Coolies, 1838: GG358.
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- ⁴¹ 'To the Editor of the *Guiana Chronicle*', Monday 7th May 1839: Encl.6 in Despatch from Governor Light to the Marquess of Normanby, 5th Sept. 1839, PP XXXIV, p.195.
- ⁴² T. P. Richmond, *Journal*, 5th March 1838.
- ⁴³ *Royal Gazette of British Guiana*, 8th May 1838: BL Colindale, MC558.
- ⁴⁴ *Times* report on House of Commons, 26th May 1838: "Mr. O'Connell moved the next, which denounced the Order in Council of the 12th July 1837 as a revival of slavery in the West Indies by exporting the kidnapped Hindoos to them, and also a transplantation of idolatry among the negroes."
- ⁴⁵ Despatch and encl. from Gov. Light to Lord Glenelg, 30th Aug. 1838: PP XXXIX, No.2, p.57.
- ⁴⁶ Despatch from Gov. Light to Lord Glenelg, 11th Jan. 1839: PP XXXIX, No.7, p.74.
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- ⁴⁸ *Hansard*, 24th July 1839, vol.XLIX, p.722.
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- ⁵⁰ "When they run away and are stubborn, they get two or three lickings": evidence of Alex Barrington; "Mr. Jacobs lick a we, Demerara not good, chigar there and coolie go dead"; evidence of Naran to Magistrates, in Encl. 2, Despatch from Gov. Light to Lord Normanby, 8th May 1839: PP XXXIX, No.9, p.79.
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- ⁵² Scoble, op.cit., pp.1-20.
- ⁵³ T. P. Richmond's report, incl. deaths on the voyage: PP XXXIX, Encl.2/3 to No.16, p.160.
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- ⁵⁵ Richmond, H. I., *Richmond Family Records*, vol.iii, Allard & Son Ltd., London, 1938, p.263; plaque in Turvey Church, Beds; *Royal Gazette of British Guiana*, 7th July 1838, BL Colindale, MC 558.
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- ¹²² *The Indian Emigrant*, Madras, Feb. 1916, p.207. Also, July 1917, p.203.
- ¹²³ (N.A.) CO 950/21: Motta, Oppenheimer and Cox to Secretary, Royal Commission, 4th Nov. 1938.
- ¹²⁴ File No. 374/1929. Guyana National Archives.
- ¹²⁵ N. V. Rajkumar, *Indians outside India*, Delhi: All India Congress, 1951, p.36.
- ¹²⁶ *Young India*, Allahabad, 9th Sept. 1926.
- ¹²⁷ C. Jagan, *The West on Trial*, Hansib Reprint, London, 1997, p.107.
- ¹²⁸ For a good account of this see S. Rabe, *US Intervention in British Guiana*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2005; and D. Dabydeen (ed.), *Cheddi Jagan: Selected Correspondences 1953-1965*, Dido Press, Chichester, 2003.
- ¹²⁹ (N.A.) CO 1031/1956: Jakeway to Mayle, 2nd Nov. 1954.
- ¹³⁰ *Commercial Review*, Georgetown, April 1929.
- ¹³¹ (N.A.) CO 1031/1956: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi to the High Comm. of the U.K, New Delhi, 27th Aug. 1955. The following quotations are taken from this source.
- ¹³² (N.A.) *Ibid.* Note by I. Wallace, 31st Oct. 1955.
- ¹³³ (N.A.) *Ibid.* N. S. Porcher to N. V. Rajkumar, 6th May 1957.
- ¹³⁴ (N.A.) *Ibid.* F. D. Jakeway to N. L. Mayle, 2nd Sept. 1954.
- ¹³⁵ (N.A.) *Ibid.* Jakeway to Mayle, 2nd Nov. 1954.
- ¹³⁶ *Daily Argosy*, Georgetown, 15th July 1955.
- ¹³⁷ (N.A.) CO 1031/1956: Press Release. M.P. 38028.
- ¹³⁸ F. Birbalsingh, *From Pillar to Post*, TSAR, Toronto, 1997, pp.65-74. Ramcharan's recollections are taken from this source.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.67.

¹⁴⁰ CO 1031/2766: D. Skinner to Chief Secretary, British Guiana, 24th Jan. 1957.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. D. Skinner to R. Ormerod, 13th June 1956.

¹⁴² Ibid. H. E. Davies to Chief Secretary, Georgetown, 6th Aug. 1956.

¹⁴³ Ibid. Inward telegram to Commonwealth Relations Office, 31st Jan. 1957.

¹⁴⁴ B. D. Sannyasi and B. Chaturvedi, *A report on the emigrants repatriated to India*, Calcutta, 1931, p.3. This report was for an earlier period but remained relevant long afterwards.

RESOLVE WELL AND PERSEVERE

JOURNAL

of a

VOYAGE

to the

MAURITIUS, CALCUTTA

and

DEMERARA

in 1837-8

BY

T.P. RICHMOND, M.D.

Haec olim meminisse jubavit¹

1838

¹ “*Haec olim meminisse jubavit*”—(It should be “*juvabit*”, not “*jubavit*”). “One day we will be glad to remember [even] these things.” This is a slightly loose translation, as it is an impersonal construction: “Remembering these things will cause [us] to rejoice.” Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 203.

Dedicatory Epistle

My dear Mother

It is related of a certain defunct old Scotch lady, whose development as a bookworm was of the first magnitude, that having at one time exhausted every other attainable supply of provision for her literary appetite, she commenced the perusal of Johnson's Dictionary,² and halted not in the undertaking till the last of the Alphabetical dynasty expired in the person of Z; then however she closed the volume, according to her own declaration, "for ever and aye", remarking at the same time that "it was not one she could vara weel recommend, seeing that she had na' even yet been able to arrive at the threed of the discourse". I mention this veracious anecdote because I have had frequent misgivings while writing the present journal that your opinion when you come to the end of it, (always supposing that your patience will reach that desirable goal) will bear a striking first cousin resemblance to the above, inasmuch as you will find little in it of either novelty or marvel, of things to smile at or subjects to sigh for. Set not your affections on the reading of wonderful adventure and surprizing scenes, of strange passages and melancholy hardships, of romantic doings and surpassing facts,

Of moving accidents by field and flood
Of hair breadth 'scapes ———
Of Antres vast and deserts idle,
Or of the cannibals that each other eat
The Anthropophagi and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders,³

For of such there are not; the golden days of wonder speaking

² Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755).

³ "Of moving accidents...beneath their shoulders" — *Othello*, Act I, Sc iii, lines 135-6, 140, 143-5 (not exact).

travellers are past, and instead of soaring into the sublimity of “most peculiar lies”, those who now follow their footsteps must be content to sink their diminished heads in the bathos of sober clad reality.

“Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur cum illis”.⁴ In short “a round unvarnished tale”⁵ of the most remarkable Marine and Terrene events that occurred during a visit to Calcutta in the East and Demerara in the West Indies, including a short sojourn at the Mauritius is all that I pretend to offer, trusting nevertheless that it will not prove altogether “stale flat and unprofitable”⁶ to those few for whom it was principally written, and who, remote from these scenes themselves, will not I am sure be the less interested in their description, because attempted by one to whom they are endeared by the fondest ties of Affection and Relationship, and who will consider his endeavours to be more than repaid should they succeed in affording them but one brief hour of amusement, or in chasing away one cloud that may arise in an occasional moment of care; for then will these pages prove an index to the heart by recalling the memory of the writer, when absence and the many vicissitudes of an uncertain destiny forbid the enjoyment of a closer communion.

And now my dear Mother I will bid you God speed, begging however that you will not forget the Why, When and Where I wrote, and that, as I had no printers devil at my elbow to assist tho’ often abundance of Elemental Spirits to confuse, me, it may perchance be necessary to cast an indulgent and not a critical eye upon the Orthography, Grammar & Calligraphy

of your

Affect. Son

T.P. Richmond

High Seas

⁴ “*Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur cum illis*” — “Times change and we change with them”. The Latin was proverbial, but the source is apparently not classical; one version (“*omnia mutantur...*”/“all things change...”) is attributed to the Emperor Lothar I (b.795, reigned 814-855).

⁵ “a round unvarnished tale” — *Othello*, Act 1, Sc. iii, line 90.

⁶ “stale flat and unprofitable” — *Hamlet*, Act 1, Sc. ii, line 134.

Friday – June 23rd, 1837.

Sailed at 2.P.M. from Liverpool, the day very fine and the Sun smiling most auspiciously on us – Was accompanied to the ship by Dr & Mrs Ralph and Mr Semple with whom I had been staying at L'pool, and whose great kindness and attention to me I shall never forget. There are two passengers going out to the Mauritius, Mr & Mrs W— who are both very young, both very much in love, and both very melancholy on leaving England, at which latter I do not wonder, being in much the same condition myself from the like cause; And who is there but will not say that it is a melancholy thing the leaving all that we love and hold dear so far behind, knowing at the same time how impossible it is to see or even hear of them for many a long and weary month; what may have happen'd within that time, what changes may not have taken place? And yet how much more melancholy would it be, were it not for the knowledge that, tho' we may be isolated as it were in the midst of strangers, removed from all those with whom we have been used to commune and associate, the Present perhaps in a cloud, the Future unknown, there is still the Past to look back to, replete with many a fond recollection and assuring us that however great may be the space that separates, Memory will still unite, and that when ploughing the waves of the Ocean in some lonely vessel at the distance of half the globe, there are yet friends and kinsmen whom nor time nor distance can sever from our hearts, but whose reciprocal love wafted by a fragile sheet over thousands of intervening miles, sweetens even absence itself as it awakes recollections of those early and pleasant days when, united among ourselves, a whole and happy family, Home was our world and parting was a thing unknown. = I fear you will think that I am getting very dismal on board "the Hesperus", and the truth is that I am rather so just at present, and lest the disease should prove infectious I will shut up my book until to morrow and wish you a good night.
= N.B My bed is 5^{ft} -10ⁱⁿ by 2^{ft} - 5ⁱⁿ -

Saturday – 24th

As I am writing this journal at your request and for your amusement my dearest Mother I shall not adhere to the everyday incidents of the voyage simply, which must necessarily be very tedious and monotonous, but shall put down whatever I think may serve to amuse you or beguile a stray hour hereafter by recalling reminiscences of past days and scenes when we may again be separated far from each other = So now to business. The Calm still continuing, took the opportunity to put my cabin in order and arrange my boxes, one of which is so abominous that it could well afford to be made into three. Have not yet been attacked by the Devil in his favourite form of Sea sickness, but am hourly looking out for him; He has however entered into a fine Spaniel dog that I have brought, and his miserable looks, prostrate tail and severe ventral tremulations are quite affecting to behold. Oh, Adam, Adam, if you had loved Pippins less or Gooseberries more, we should never have been seasick!

Sunday – 25th

The wind blowing pretty fresh, and I felt somewhat qualmish, which however - went away as breakfast went down; but about dinner time, got dreadfully bad, and tumbled into bed immediately, where, tho' so ill, I could not help laughing to hear Mr and Mrs W — play a concertante duett at Cascading in a Maestoso Doloroso style, and most accurate time, but it was decidedly too Forte to be agreeable. – Had a long conversation with the Captain, who is a young and most gentlemanly man, and I feel sure will prove a most pleasant companion. = Was soothed to sleep by the sounds of a large Musical box that I set a playing for that purpose, and which had the same happy effect upon my neighbours, who innocently imagined that I meant it as a cure for them, but, “Beloved breth’ren, Charity tinkled for me”!

Monday – 26th

Feel better, and have employed myself in trying to better the condition of the fowls, whose coops are perfect Black holes of Calcutta,⁷ and they are dreadfully cramped in their legs. The sailors give them beer to make them stand as they say, which is

⁷ Punative cell at Fort William, Calcutta, in which 146 Europeans were thrown, only 23 surviving the next morning. This horrific incident occurred in 1765, by order of Suraja Dowlah.

somewhat like the Yankee custom among the Kentucky servant maids who are reported to take a pint of Yeast just before they go to bed, that they may be the better able to "Rise" early in the morning! A great crowd of Porpoises are swimming and leaping round the ship, and causing the sea to appear very beautiful from its phosphorescent state; it seems as if filled with innumerable stars floating among clouds of fire.

Thursday – 29th

We are to day skirting the Bay of Biscay and feel it in the frequent and lengthened swell = Was amused by Mr W—'s mistaking an old portmanteau that had been thrown overboard, for a large fish, and at his assiduity in throwing out hooks to catch it, which I let him do for a long time. The Stormy Petrel or Mother Cavy's chicken is flying around us, and is a small pretty looking bird. Spent some time in shooting for a wager with Mr W— and the Capⁿ; our mark was a bottle tied to a string and thrown into the sea, and I had the gratification of coming off the loser. The night has been one of the most lovely possible. A perfect calm, the sky studded with stars as bright as little moons, and not a sound to be heard but the occasional blowing of a Grampus, was a combination of circumstances that as I lay dozing on deck, made me poetical. You'd better skip!

A Calm.

I

The night is clear
The sky is fair,
The wave is resting on the ocean;
And far and near
The silent air
Just lifts the flag with faintest motion.

II

There is no gale
To fill the sail,
No wind to heave the curling billow;
The streamers droop
And humbling stoop
Like boughs that crown the weeping willow.

III

The moon is bright,
Her ray of light
In silver pales the blue of Heaven
Or tints with gold,
Where lightly rolled
Like fleecy snow, the rack is driven.

IV

How calm and clear
The silent air!
How smooth and still the glassy Ocean!
While stars above
Seem lamps of love
To light the temple of devotion.

Saturday – July 1st

Mrs W——t is a very pleasant and agreeable little woman, but rather too fond of her mate, i.e. she has too much of the kiss and pat style about her, and indeed he is much in the same way himself. A wife must be a prodigious acquisition on board a ship above all places, and I vehemently wish that I had one, but what can't be, wont be, so I must put up without one, tho', God agreeable, not for long; And after all Marriage is only the gate by which the happy lover leaves the enchanted regions to return to Earth! (Sour grapes.) After Dinner there was a vocal concert, each of us singing in turn, which when it got dark was taken up by the Sailors, and their full clear voices sounded delightfully. — The first thing they sang was "Home, sweet Home", and never before were we all so pleased with it.

Oh! hark to the strain,
Let me hear it again,
T'is a spell that can waft me o'er land & o'er sea,
Oh! hark to the strain,
Be it pleasure or pain,
That sends my heart, Fatherland, throbbing to thee.

What a power the simplest music has in conjuring up old associations! It is not only in itself the most delightful, animating, soothing and inspiring of all the arts, but it is in a manner the

soul of all the rest. He who is not moved by the concord of sweet sounds, cannot possess a genius for any art. Music requires no antecedent culture of the mind to make us discover and recognize its "Heaven born origin" – It speaks a language which no man understands, but which all men feel, seizing upon us at once, and making us beings of another world! You know how fond I am of Music, so do not be astonished at my getting warm in its praise.

Sunday – 2nd

Did not feel at all comfortable till after dinner, when "Richard was himself again"⁸ and has continued so ever since. The steward is a most useful man, possessing in addition to his stewardship a knowledge of Shaving, Baking, Cooking, Haircutting, Pill-making and rather too much of Talking. I find that the unsteady motion of the ship is remedied in a remarkable manner by sitting on an Air Cushion, which makes it a deal pleasanter and places you much in the same situation as Mahomet's coffin, suspended between Earth or rather Sea, and Heaven. The dogs begin to look rather Hydrophobic from the increasing heat of the weather, and I fear that mine will not escape its influence.

Tuesday – 4th

Was dreadfully disturbed last night by the outrageous snoring of Mrs W——t, which was worse than any woman's I ever heard before – Gracious! what a noise she made, sometimes "Alto", sometimes "Basso" and sometimes both together, mingled in one long, scare-crowling note, it more resembled the din produced by Tippoo Saib's Tiger⁹ in the India house, than any thing else. As it completely prevented me from sleeping, I got up and went upon deck, where I spent part of the night in meditating upon this curious dispensation of Providence and revenging myself as follows.

⁸ "Richard was himself again" – seems to have been used by a number of authors, most notably Walter Scott (at a later date). The only instance predating Richmond is from the play *Richard III* (1700) Act 5 by Colley Cibber (adapted from Shakespeare).

⁹ "Tippoo Saib's Tiger in the India house" – Ruler of Mysore, Tippoo (c1749-99) was known as the Tiger of Mysore. He owned a mechanical statue of a tiger eating a European which emitted a scream. The curiosity was purloined by the British on Tippoo's death and installed in the now-disbanded East India Co. Museum on Leadenhall Street. It is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Lines at Midnight

I

I cannot close my weary eyes,
From yonder bed such sounds arise,
And banish sweet repose;
Then let me to beguile the time,
Accompany with tuneful rhyme,
My neighbours tuneful nose.

II

What nice amusement this! to note
From that incorrigible throat
What various noises pour;
In loud smooth breathings now they gush,
And now the mingled discords rush
In one tremendous roar.

III

Oh! horrid sound; I'd sooner far
List to a 3 stringed crack'd Guitar,
By tuneless mortal play'd;
Or warbling in the lofty guttur, (sic)
I'd sooner hear a Tom Cat utter
His tender Serenade.

IV

Grant oh! ye Gods; that when I wed,
I may not lay my sleepy head,
Beside a snoring wife!
No – let me rather live, unblessed
With all the joys that lend a Zest
To Matrimonial life!

Wednesday – 5th

Sat down on a nail and tore a hole in the left partition of my unmentionables, which I forthwith sat down to mend, and have mentioned here for two reasons; 1st that I may bear witness to the exceeding usefulness of Isabella's work-case, and 2^{dly} to give

a striking proof that people are not always correct in describing a Tailor as only the 9th part of a man!¹⁰

A good sized Turtle was taken fast asleep, and safely deposited in a tub to “bide his time”. Fish called Boneta’s are in great numbers, as also a much larger kind named Albicores, but both are too wide awake for our hooks. Puffins come to us occasionally, but take good care to keep out of shooting longitude. We have hardly any twilight here, it becoming quite dark in a few minutes after the Sun sets. That event is the signal for the Cock-roaches to come out, and most unanimously do they obey, running over every part and place of the cabin; they are most abominable looking animals and it is perfectly useless to kill them for the purpose of lessening their numbers, as twenty live ones come to the funeral of every dead one. The pall bearers are Earwigs, of which we have some hundred weight in the ship.

Thursday – 6th

To day we passed Madeira, and tho’ 30 miles off smelt it most distinctly – There was a curious marine dish at Breakfast called “Twice laid” made of Salt fish and Potatoes; it looked nasty but eat well. An immense Shark was near us but very wisely came not too near. I lay a long time upon deck musing on various subjects foreign and domestic, lull’d into a state of great quietude and calm repose by the influence of “that slender yellow speckled tube, which when creditors dun like fiends and debtors take the act, when women turn false and men selfish, when the future looks dark and the present dreary, by its fragrance renders you fit to associate with philosophers, and for a brief period makes you insensible to every sorrow, and raises dreams more entertaining than those of sleep.” What is this wonderful thing you will perhaps ask; I answer, a cigar. = The sailors I find are very averse to taking Medicines, and with all my eloquence I cannot get them to appreciate properly the merits of that verse in the Apocrypha (I cannot “prate of its whereabouts” but it is there I am certain) which explains that “The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth, and he that is wise will not abhor them.”¹¹ Salts are their favourite

¹⁰ “Tailor as only the 9th part of a man” – proverb that appeared in Chapter 33 of Thomas Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus* (1833-34).

¹¹ “The Lord hath created medicines ... not abhor them” – a near-identical reworking of Ecclesiastes: 38:14.

curative beverage and they think nothing of taking two fistfull's at a time; peace be to them.

Saturday – 8th

There has been a calm for the last two days, and as the sun is most roaringly hot we could well dispense with it; the ship is nearly motionless, and in all respects we are

Idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.¹²

A pretty large Boneta was speared, and in dying changed to the most beautiful blue colour I ever saw. We found in its stomach a most remarkable looking fish called the Skid or Ink fish, whose body is like a hollow case from which the head and neck protrude, terminating in ten feelers or arms: the tail exactly resembles the fluke of an Anchor. One of the ingredients of our soup at dinner was an unfortunate mouse that ventured too near the pot – what an ignoble destiny!

His belly to fill, o'er the side he did stoop,
And dreadful to tell, was boiled in the soup.

Had a long practise on my flute, which I foresee will be one of my pleasantest and most constant companions, provided the heat does not crack it.

Sunday – 9th

Rose early to look at a picturesque island that we were passing called the Great Salvage, which lies about halfway between Madeira and the Canary isles. A Dolphin was caught, and it was really a beautiful sight to see the changing hue's of its body whilst dying. The principal colours were Gold, Purple, Green Blue and Greyish White. There was a magnificent view of the Peak of Teneriffe towards evening, and it would be difficult to find any thing more imposing in appearance than this amazingly lofty mountain. Its height is twelve thousand feet or more, and it is very rarely that its summit can be seen from the sea, being almost

¹² "Idle as a... a painted ocean" – Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Ancient Mariner* (1798) part 2.

always enveloped in clouds. Its whole appearance in the setting sun and calm ev'ning reminded one of Coleridge's beautiful hymn to Mont Blanc, of which I repeated the last few lines for the edification of Mrs W— t, and will put them down here for yours.

Rise O ever rise!

Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth!
Thou kingly spirit throned among the hills!
Thou dread Ambassador from Earth to Heaven!
Great Hierarch – tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell you rising sun,
Earth with her thousand voices praises God.¹³

Tuesday – 11th

We passed a very lovely looking island yesterday named Palma, of considerable height and size. We were so near that the trees were quite distinct and as you may suppose we all longed to pay it a visit. We are surrounded by Flying fish, which much resemble a flock of swallows in their size and manner of flying. The Turtle was killed by having its head cut off, which latter article of furniture I thought was to prove immortal, for it held a large bit of wood firmly between its teeth, long after its body had been changed into Calipee and Calipash. An Alderman would have stroked his stomach with a most emphatic "Thank God" had he dined with us today, for the soup and steaks were prime. The heat is now most intense, the varnish on the decks being actually in a state of frizzle and bubble, and it is very difficult to overcome a most overpowering propensity to sleep. The very effort of eating makes the perspiration, like Bob Acre's courage, ooze from our finger ends, and it is hardly to be wondered at considering that the thermometer has for the last two days been standing at 101°.

Thursday – 13th

Charles Lamb has somewhere or other (in his essays of Elia I think)¹⁴ thought fit to dedicate a whole chapter to the praises of the "Crackling of Roast Pork"! Shades of departed Pigs, what

¹³ "Rise O ever... voices praises God" – Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 'Hymn before Sunrise', in the *Vale of Chamouni* (1802).

¹⁴ "Charles Lamb... essays of Elia": 'A Dissertation upon Roast Pig' in *London Magazine* (1823).

could he mean by thus descanting on your Cutaneous charms; was he in earnest, or was he sane? The Lord forgive him if he was. I have suffered greatly from its effects today, not in body but in mind, and this is the tale of my misery. The heat of the morning and the diabolical smell of new varnish on the poop, had made me feel sosoish, nervous and stupid, in fact blue devilish and cross, as everybody is at some time or other, & much I should say as Job felt when he was sitting in the fender and polishing his corporation with patent varnish in the shape of a broken pipkin; In this plight I sat down to dinner opposite an over roasted leg of pork, which was to fill the vacuities in six sets of bowells. (sic) If you know the delights of looking at a picture or reading a book, whilst somebody else is leaning over your shoulder and peacefully victualling his stomach in your ear, you may judge to a small degree what I suffered from the loud and unanimous chump, chumps, crump, crumps, chew, chews and crackle, crackles of six large mouths imbibing roast pork. I bore up as long as I could, but was finally compelled to yield to destiny, and left the table under a plea of sickness. "Readers this is not a fiction, but "a Sea Sick'ning" fact". This day is but the commencement of the pigging season (one was killed yesterday) and the same ordeal will in all probability recur!!!!

Monday – 17th

San Antonio, one of the Cape de Verd islands was in view last night and is a beautiful and remarkably lofty place. Immediately after breakfast an immense shark was seen near the ship, and in hopes that his days were numbered we prepared to catch him. A prodigious hook fastened to a chain and writhing in the greasy embrace of almost a quarter of pork was thrown out and directly run at by the shark. For a little time he only smelt and pushed it about with his shovel nose, and we began to fear that he had already breakfasted, when his large white belly turned slowly up (a sure sign that he was going to take the bait) and the next instant he was ours. Job or whoever it was may talk about Leviathan¹⁵ making a great splashing in the might of his power, but it could not be much greater than this shark's was in the power of our might, for he made the sea like a tub of soap suds and so vast was his strength and weight that it took 7 men to pull him in. He was "accompanied to the water's edge" by two

¹⁵ Job and Leviathan—Job 41:33.

Pilot fish (the never failing companions of a shark) with whom he affectionately shook tails as the rope gradually removed him out of their reach and sight. His struggles on deck were tremendous, and he would very soon have stove in the planks, but that his tail was cut, in which organ unlike to Samson the whole strength of a shark lies. Tho' this operation made him more composed it did not kill him, and you will have some idea of his exceeding love or rather tenacity of life when I tell you that he breathed, mov'd and had his being after a pole had been thrust down his body, his fins cut off and his "high and ample forehead"¹⁶ smash'd in with an axe. I attended his Autopsy, being anxious to see the contents of his stomach whether it held gold watches, purses of money, young children, arms, legs &c. &c. and all which articles have been found in that situation before now; but it and its lengthy companions being slippery, gave us the slip, slid through our fingers, and disappeared in the sea, where they doubtless lie among the newest additions to "the treasures of the deep". His jaws which are furnished with ten rows of fearful looking teeth, I have saved and shall bring home as a memento of this days sport. I may as well mention en passant that the last of the pig showed itself at dinner in the form of a Boiled head, so that there will be no more roast horrors. I gave them as "grace before meat" instead of that highly popular one "For what we are going to receive, we beseech thee O Lord to make us thankful", an old monkish one which I thought more appropriate:

Caput Apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.¹⁷

Two more of the Cape de Verds were visible in the ev'ning, but not very distinctly.

Thursday – 20th

One or two more sharks have been caught but none so large as

¹⁶ "high and ample forehead" – if it has a specific provenance, probably William Godwin's *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (1799).

¹⁷ "*Caput Apri defero/Reddens laudes Domino*" – "The boar's head I bring, giving praises to the Lord." This is from the 'Boar's Head Carol', which is a macaronic composition (i.e., mixed English and Latin). Earliest known publication is 1521; it was reprinted in the nineteenth century.

the first – They are numerous here, and from the clearness of the water, we can see them a long way down.

Here far below in the peaceful sea
Where the waters murmur tranquilly
The dreaded Shark is seen to rove
Thro' the bending twigs of the coral grove.¹⁸

A homeward bound vessel came in sight and was the means of setting us all hard at work writing letters, but a squall coming on we had the mortification of seeing the ship vanish, our hopes blighted and our letters still born. Two very large Whales are attending us, and their spouting and blowing is incessant. It has been a very rainy day, or rather a day of waterspouts, for an English shower of the first magnitude could not look at a tropical ditto. I was washed completely off the poop by an illnatured wave that took me unawares and afforded a fund of entertainment to the rest, whose jokes are unceasing; but fear not, I shall repay them, poor geese;

Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est.¹⁹

The worst thing is that my garments are rent, and on too large a scale for me to hope to mend.

Monday – 24th

“Most admired disorder”²⁰ reigns through the ship from one of the masts having broke early this morning, and taken part of another in its descent – It has smashed the Mate’s foot dreadfully, reducing it to the consistence of boiled calf’s head, and to the colour of squash’d blackberries. There was a vile smell in my cabin when I awoke, so bad that it would have justified the Scotticism to say that I “felt” it, which upon search I found proceeded from the depths of my stocking where Puss had most ingeniously contrived to leave me a remembrance of her that I would well have dispensed with; it was transmitted into the sea

¹⁸ “Here far below... the coral grove” – an adaptation of the closing line of *The Coral Grove* by the American James Gates Percival (1795–1856).

¹⁹ “*Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est*” – “There is nothing more foolish than a foolish laugh.” Source is Catullus, xxxix.

²⁰ “Most admired disorder” – *Macbeth*, Act 3, Sc.iv, line 110.

with rapidity, and could I have found her she would have followed = N.B. Must not forget this circumstance when I make an inventory of my wardrobe – Left stocking missing. = There are great numbers of flying fish hereabouts, constantly pursued by an enemy called the Skipping Jack, and their different attempts to catch and escape are very amusing to see. It is impossible to describe the extraordinary beauty of the nights in this latitude, for no pen could do them justice; there is a constant succession of Meteors, falling stars & vivid sheet light'ning, beside the brilliancy of a new constellation named the Southern Cross composed of four large stars; added to these there is the most beautiful phosphoric light from the water that you can conceive, we literally sail in floods of fire: Montgomery might have sat on our bowsprit when he wrote thus:

Gleamed the Sea
Whose waves were spangled with phosphoric fire,
As tho' the lightnings there had spent their shafts,
And left the fragments glittering on the field.²¹

Pelican Island.

Friday – 28th

“Fun is fun but opening your oysters with my razor is not fun at all” is a saying that I thought of this morning when I saw our nigger cabin boy very quietly scraping an old dirty teapot with my penknife, and in which I assisted by sending him and his pot head over heels along the deck; knives are too precious at sea to use them thus. A beautiful Nautilus sailed by us, of a pink colour and much resembling floating gauze; it is known among sailors as the Portugese Man of War. A large Shark was caught, lost and caught again, and to save the trouble of killing it on deck we dispatched him with numerous wounds of the harpoon, a most deadly weapon in the hands of a strong man. A plank fell on my dogs hind legs at dinner time and has quite incapacitated him from walking, tho' he contrives to locomote himself by a most laughable species of steering very analogous to that employed by those poor wretches who go about London

²¹ “Gleamed the Sea...on the field”—James Montgomery, Scottish poet and hymnist (1771–1854). The son of a Moravian preacher, his parents died on a mission to the West Indies.

with their “bottoms in a bowl”, using their hands as a pair of oars. As we are prevented from bathing in calm weather by the too close vicinity of the sharks, I take the opportunity of rainy nights to promenade the decks in my shirt and it answers admirably, except that the showers are generally rather too sharp. This journal consumes a vast number of pens, being spoilt by the sea air which makes them quite soft; I shall not be able to say like Pliny’s translator,

With one sole pen I wrote this book,
Made of a grey goose quill,
A pen it was when I it took,
A pen I leave it still.²²

Holmes

Sunday – 30th

Somehow I always feel melancholy on a Sunday here, and less inclined to talk than any other day – Old recollections crowd on me, the thoughts of other days and the doings of other times, till I hardly feel like myself and could fancy my boy-hood coming over again. Such were my reveries to day as I lay for some hours in the solitude of the main top “chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy”,²³ sometimes reviewing the past, and contrasting it with my present situation, far from family and friends, with nought but the sea and sky around and little save hope to steer, and sometimes looking forward to the future as the dim vista of a gladsome prospect to be attained; O, with whatever expectations we may part from the land of our birth and the home of affection; with whatever eagerness the restless activity of youth may thirst for change or seek for fortune; however curiosity may stimulate or however rich and glowing the colours in which Ambition may paint the “goodly prospect” that lies before – fancy connects the feelings we cherish with the forms we love, and as the moving ocean bears us from kinsmen and friends, the heart gradually sickens with the sadness of solitude, and feels that prospective anticipation is but a small and inadequate remedy for the lonesome desolation of the present. Parting with friends on a voyage and for a long time,

²² “With one sole... leave it still” – from Pliny’s *Natural History*; also used by Walter Scott in *The Fortunes of Nigel* (1822).

²³ “chewing the cud... and bitter fancy” – *As You Like It*, Act 4, Sc. iii, line 100.

presents a softened but striking analogy, and excites feelings not altogether dissimilar to those produced in the minds of surviving friends by that more painful and lengthened separation, when the soul is severed from its earthly moorings to launch upon the great ocean of Eternity, and the waves of time beat around the home of the departed, but his spirit no longer dwells upon the waters. = You will say I have all of a sudden got very dolorous, and I shant say no, out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh, and that is my excuse, tomorrow I shall be different. I begun some verses from my lofty pedestal which as I did not finish I shall leave to next Sunday, may-hap you will like them.

Tuesday – August 1st

There is a great deal too much wind to be perfectly pleasant and I find that I am hardly yet initiated into the mysteries of salt water. Mrs W — is a far better sailor than her husband, who is more like an old woman than a man and is perpetually coming to me with complaints of his seasick-ly propensities, but I tell him that the only consolation I can give him is what we in our profession are accustomed to give Ladies under particular circumstances, viz. “that they must be worse before they are better.” We spoke a Dutch vessel from Amsterdam and soon afterwards a very large Indiaman whose name however we could not make out. There was some chootna pickle at dinner, which reminded me of my happy and delightful visit at Guestling last Xtnas and my promise to bring Mrs Close some if ever I went to India; how little did we think then that I should so soon be able to fulfil my promise. Had rather an angry discussion on politics with Mr W — who is a rancorous whig and a rat to boot; It was odd but we both had to give up from a mutual attack of vast Hiccups.

Friday – 4th

Seeing the Boatswain reading his bible I went to talk with him, and found he was a most curious compound of sense and its opposite; He could not understand he said why we were sent into this world just to go out again, why not keep out altogether. I answered this searching query in the quaint language of old Latimer,²⁴ who used to say,

²⁴ Bishop Hugh Latimer, famous Protestant preacher burnt at the stake outside Balliol College, Oxford in October 1555.

I live and yet I know not why,
Unless it be I live to die;
I die, and dying, lived in vain,
Unless I die to live again.

But whether it satisfied him or not I cannot say, as he had to pipe the men to dinner just as I finished. Tried after tea to make Mr W. learn the duett of "Fairy like Music",²⁵ but verily think it would be easier to teach an oyster how to dance a hornpipe.

Sunday – 6th

Address of the Winds.

We come, we come! and ye feel our might,
As we're hastening on in our boundless flight,
And over the mountains and over the deep,
Our broad invisible pinions sweep
Like the spirit of Liberty wild and free!
And ye look on our works and own 'tis we:
Ye call us the Winds! but can ye tell,
Whither we go, or where we dwell?

II

Ye mark, as we vary our forms of power,
And fell the forest or fan the flower;
When the violet moves and the rush is bent,
When the tower's o'erthrown and the oak is rent,
As we waft the bark o'er the slumb'ring wave,
Or hurry its crew to a watery grave:
And ye say it is we! but can ye trace,
The wandering Winds to their secret place?

III

And whether our breath be loud and high,
Or come in a soft and balmy sigh,
Our threat'nings fill the soul with fear,
As our gentle whisperings woo the ear

²⁵ "Fairy like Music" – a song by Mrs. C.B. Wilson (1797–1864), 'What Fairy-like Music' ("What fairy-like music steals over the sea,/Entrancing our senses with charmed melody?").

With music aerial, still 'tis we,
And ye list and ye look, but what do ye see?
Can ye hush one sound of our voice to peace,
Or waken one note when our numbers cease?

IV

Our dwelling is in the Almighty hand,
We come and we go at his command:
Tho' Sorrow or Joy may mark our track,
His will is our guide and we look not back;
And if in our wrath ye would turn us away,
Or win us in gentlest air to play,
Then lift up your hearts to him who binds,
Or frees as he will, the Obedient Winds!

And if in the hour — but no, I have written enough, peradventure you will get weary. A fine and very large Swordfish has just passed us fast asleep, but unfortunately we were going too fast to catch it. This is the anniversary of my visit last year to Sharpitlaw one of the pleasantest I ever spent in Scotland or out of it. Peace to them and theirs.

Tuesday – 8th

Today we crossed the Line, and happily without any of the usual ceremonies — Instead of Neptune we were greeted by a large Booby who was shot for his courtesy. I have mightily offended Mr W, and the whole circumstance is so absurd that I must relate it. As he was taking a morning walk along the lower deck a sudden lurch of the ship prostrated him (stern first) into a vast jorum of miscellanies, the contributions of Pigs, Goats, Dogs, Ducks &c. and in the midst of his dismay I told him to ask the Cook for Mrs Glass's Cookery book²⁶ and read her directions how to dress a round of beef, and which perhaps you will recollect commences thus, "Take your R — p and wash it &c. &c." You've no idea how cross it made him, more especially as "nilly, willy", he was obliged to do it, but he is too good tempered to be so long. You will say we verify the proverb

*Parva leves capiunt animos*²⁷

²⁶ *Mrs Glass's Cookery Book*—1800s Irish cookbook.

²⁷ "*Parva leves capiunt animos*"—"Little things amuse little minds." The Latin is from Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* (*Art of Love*), I, 159.

but think before you judge and make allowances for the monotony of a sea life. Did not forget that it was Charlotte's birthday but drank her health and prosperity, as did also the others, in a glass of wine after dinner. God bless the dear girl. Have just finished a set of experiments upon the comparative powers of cockroaches in sustaining life when their mouths are filled with poisons such as, Turpentine, Corrosive Sublimate, Caustic &c.

Friday – 11th

Had a general inspection of all my clothes for the purpose of giving them an airing, and for the first time discovered that a wicked woman who I had paid in Liverpool to mark my linen had played me a trick and not marked one; what a false faithless thing a woman is!

A preaching Friar there was, who thus began:
The Scripture saith – “There was a Certain Man”;
A certain man? But I do read no-where
Of any Certain Woman mentioned there:
A certain Man a phrase in Scripture common,
But no place shews there was a Certain woman!
And fit it is that we should ground our faith
On nothing more but what the Scripture saith.

In addition to the above grief I spilt the contents of nearly a bottle of port wine on a pair of new inexpressibles, so that this day has been an unlucky one in my almanac. In other respects the even tenour of our way has been little disturbed by any thing but the wind, which has contrived to make sitting disagreeable, standing impossible and lying precarious.

Tuesday – 15th

Have lately made the discovery that in all probability the Jews were acquainted with the manufacture of sugar, for Isaiah speaks most distinctly of the Sugar Cane in his work Chap.43, verse 24.²⁸ I intend to prosecute the subject and find out whether it

²⁸ Reference to Isaiah 43 v24: “Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.” It appears that Richmond is wrong, and that the cane in question is not sugar but hollow sedgy reed (possibly from India, in which case ginger grass and lemon grass are likely candidates) which was dried and powdered for use in anointing oil and perfumes.

was moist or loaf, or both. A Liverpool vessel homeward bound passed us, but could not stop to take letters, so we have now given up all hopes of being able to write home before we get to the Mauritius. I wish you had been with me last night to look at the moon & stars, they were nearly as large again as I ever saw them before. I wish I knew more of Astronomy than I do, for it would be a delightful study now. The last practical lesson I had was, in company with Legh, from our dear Father, one summer's evening in the balcony at Turvey Rectory. He had Urania's mirror, and the constellation he explained was Orions Belt; I have never forgotten it since.

O had I nursed when I was young,
The lessons of my Father's tongue,
(The deep laborious thoughts he drew
From all he saw and others knew,)
I might have been, ah me!
Thrice sager than I e'er shall be.

B Cornwall²⁹

Won five shillings from Mr W. at pistol shooting to his no small chagrin, and I don't know myself how it happened, for the ship was very unsteady.

Friday – 18th

Are you musical Sir, said a young lady at the piano one evening to a by-stander? No Ma'am was the answer, I am not myself, but I have a very excellent snuff box that is. I could not help thinking how exactly the above anecdote suits Mr W as his wife was again extemporizing on her nose last night; ~~she~~ he must be as good to him as a self playing organ or grand piano. There is a curious phenomenon visible every evening at present in the Magellan clouds,³⁰ which are three in number, one black and two white, and which remain stationary throughout the year. We spoke with a Yankee whale ship, and gave him the news of the Kings death,³¹ which he seemed to think as much of

²⁹ Bryan Waller Procter ('Barry Cornwall') (1787–1874), friend and biographer of Charles Lamb.

³⁰ "Magellan clouds" – two fixed stars (actually galaxies) visible in the southern hemisphere, brought to Western knowledge by the explorer Ferdinand Magellan in 1519.

³¹ "Kings death" – the King is William IV, who died on 20th June 1837.

as if it had been a pigs. – There is a storm brewing up if we may judge from the appearance of the skies, and preparations are accordingly being made for its reception, the most disagreeable of which is the shutting in of the deadlights, xcluding (sic) alike sun and air.

Sunday – 20th

“Good Lord deliver me” from ever again passing such another night as the last, or even the fourth part of it, it was, terrible, horrible, abominable. About six o’clock the wind began to rise very fast, and it was impossible to go on deck without being drenched by the seas that were every minute washing over. As soon as it was dark, (and a most Egyptian darkness³² it was,) it began to rain most furiously, and the concatenation of noises from all parts of the ship, which seemed to us to concentrate in the middle of our cabin, was most astounding, and to uninitiated ears not a little alarming. The roaring of the wind, the dashing of the sea, the fluttering of the sails, the splashing of the rain, the bellowing of the Captain, the shouting of the men, the howling of the dogs, the squeaking of the pigs, the neighing of the horses, the bleating of the goats, the tumbling of the chairs, the breaking of the glasses, the clattering of the crockery, the groaning of the ship, and last though not least, the tears of the woman, made a scene of confusion and uproar that must be seen to be felt, heard to be appreciated and altogether avoided if it is possible. But the climax of this Elysian evening was yet to come, the cup of our gladness had yet to overflow. It was just at the eleventh hour and just as I was mentally weighing the possibility of keeping in bed against the probability of rolling out, that a most violent shock was felt and in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, an enormous wave rushed in through the door and windows, and dashing over table, chairs, forms, sofas and every thing else that dare oppose its might, finished its career by bursting into our sleeping cabins and literally flooding them knee deep – Boots, shoes, books and boxes took a sail from my chamber into “my lady’s”, and gowns, pettycoats*, stays and stockings made a voyage of discovery from her’s into mine; whether they discovered the North West passage I cannot

*Some will say this word is spelt wrong but I think it is correct.

³² “Egyptian darkness” – a reference to the 9th plague (Exodus 10:21 – 29).

say, but I can vouch for myself that I anchored safely in Table bay, from which exalted site I looked upon the devastation around, and piously meditated upon the pleasures of those who "Go down into deep waters". About one o'clock the force of the storm abated, and I tried to get some sleep, feeling however much like a fish out of water from the counter reason that I was in D°.

Wednesday – 23rd

What an extraordinary thing the Sea is, and how variable its moods and aspects. Yesterday like a boiling cauldron, roaring and dashing it seemed the very emblem of rage and terror, whilst to day it is like a silver mirror without motion and almost without a ripple, the image of peace and love. A variety of sea birds are flying around, appearing as it were by magic and lost again ere you can follow their flight Gulls, Cape Pigeons, Cape Hens, Gannets and the Stormy Petrel are our principal visitants, & their tameness is wonderful. Three of our geese died yesterday all at the same time and without any kind of notice. Their demise is a common calamity as they diversified to a considerable extent the tiresome diurnal dishes of ducks and fowls. Any body dropping in to dine with us, would say that we fared like the rich man, sumptuously (and like him also in purple, seeing we all wear blue cloth jackets,) and so we do, but there is a greivous (sic) want of novelty in the dishes. Almost every day there is Soup, Fish (hermetically sealed) Fowls, Pork, Beef, Curry, Potatoes, Rice &c. and for drinkables there is Porter, Ale, Cyder, Sherry, Port and Claret, besides Puddings, Pies and new baked bread, so that an Epicure might live to his hearts content if he was partial to "Monotonous Variety". As I am fully descanting upon this interesting subject, it is fair to add that fresh Pork and Mutton occasionally pay us a visit - It is getting most excessively cold, and I am frequently obliged to turn in between the blankets to keep warm. I had a beautiful view of a waterspout this morning and was greatly astonished at seeing the way in which it sucked up the water in a mighty pillar of foam and bubbles.

Monday – 28th

There has been another very violent gale, and as it happened in the day time I did not dislike it so much as the last. The sea was grand being in that state and condition termed "running mountains high", and verily it was no exaggeration to say so –

Standing upright is out of the question for any of us to attempt, so we walk mathematically at an angle with the deck of 45°. The magnificent Albatross is our constant neighbour now, and is without exception the finest bird I ever saw – one that we shot and sent out the boat for, measures above 13 feet from wing to wing, and is of a pure white interspersed here and there with a fringe of black; the thickness of its feathers is most extraordinary – We got also a very large and beautiful Gull, and a Cape Pigeon which latter, having tied some green ribbon round its neck, was again set at liberty, the envy of its compeers and mates. – After dinner I gave a demonstration on the Eye to an audience which tho' few was certainly select, and the whole affair strongly reminded me of a similar scene at Major Close's in the Abbey Road just this time two years. I forgot to mention that a very valuable horse died yesterday from the effects of the late bad weather, and another is so much injured that it is expected to die every hour.

Sunday – Sept^r. 3rd

The last few days have been so dreadfully cold, damp & disagreeable that I have done little else but lie between blankets sometimes reading and sometimes composing; my thoughts were directed towards the latter recreation by a letter that Mrs W. read to me, but being too long to describe in prose, I shall attempt it (for the lack of other matter) in verse – The subject is rather melancholy, but I never read anything more beautifully described than a child's deathbed was in that letter.

The Widow and her Child

Part 1st = The Questioner =

Where does my Father stay so long,
Mother from you and I?
Why does he not return again,
Why do you weep and sigh?
Three months you said he would remain
And leave us all alone,
Yet by the winter's storm and snow,
Twelve months are past and gone.

II

How well I now remember him,
As he held me on his knee,
There is the lovely bird he brought
From the far Indian tree.
All other ships are coming in
Parting the white waves foam,
When will my Fathers ship return,
Oh! when will he come home?

III

Thy Father tarried long my child,
Upon the distant main,
The hurricane the ocean swept
He'll ne'er return again.
His gallant bark my gentle boy,
Now rests beneath the wave,
That placid, calm and smiling sea,
Flow's o'er thy Father's grave.

IV

Again you weep my Mother dear,
Shall we not see him more?
"Ask if the deep and fathomless,
The dead again restore.
Sweet child thou art the only tie
The world has left to me,
But he from Heaven beyond that sky,
Will watch and smile o'er thee."

Part 2nd= The Dreamer =

Oh Mother, dear Mother what dreams of delight,
Here brightened and gladden'd my slumbers tonight!
Me thought the kind Father we mourn for as dead
Had returned to our dwelling and stood by my bed.
He questioned me much on the paths I had trod,
Of affection to you and obedience to God:
And my answers he seem'd so rejoiced to obtain,
And said that ere long I should meet him again.

II

The Mother felt faint and desponding of heart,
She looked on her child and she knew they must part,
For the flush on his cheek and the light in his eye,
Foretold that the sweet one was destined to die.
One murmuring thought on her trial she cast,
But she sunk on her knees – the temptation was past,
And she sobbed forth while clasping the hand of her son,
“Let thy will not mine blessed Saviour be done”.

III

Night came – the fair boy was reposing in sleep,
His Mother sat near him to watch and to weep:
The Volume of Life her sad vigils beguiled,
As she turned o’er its pages, and look’d on her child:
On his young lip a smile now appeared to arise,
And he suddenly opened his radiant eyes,
Then stretched forth his arms as tho’ called to his home,
And softly he whispered, “Dear Father I come”.

IV

Life fled in that moment – all cares were in vain,
Friends came at the tidings, a sorrowing train;
They wept for the sweet playful child they had known,
But more for the widow deserted and lone.
Yet not without hope her affliction deplore,
For the God who has taken can also restore,
And the desolate widow has trust in his love,
Who can call her to join the dear lost ones above.

Thursday – 7th

We have had a fearful Twenty four hours of Storm, Wind, Rain, Thunder, Light’ning and Hail without intermission. – For eleven hours I have not had a dry thread about me, the cabins being inundated and the beds almost drowned – At one time we were in no small danger, as the whole of the Bulworks were washed away and the waves were breaking over with tremendous violence – The Ocean was beyond description grand awful and magnificent and I stood for hours in the midst of the storm to look at it. To add to our discomfort the kitchen was thrown down

and we could not get any dinner, no small mortification to people who are wet, cold and miserable, but it is one of the pleasures of going round the Cape of Good Hope and we must put up with it as others have done before us.

The storm is now abating and we are gradually getting dry, added to which the kitchen having been reinstated, we have been enabled to offer a sacrifice of Mutton Curry and Fowls to the God of the belly, tho' the weather much against our will turned it into a Burnt Sacrifice. - The Hailstone Chorus was played to perfection this morning, many of the stones being as large as good sized filberts. Enormous whales are following us and sending up fountains of water from their blow holes, one of them is a most gigantic beast, and I am certain above 100 feet long. I cannot resist putting down (though hardly fit for ears polite) the contents of a letter that I found in one of the seamens books and addressed to the owner - The want of punctuation is unique, & must be my excuse.

Dear John

I send you 2 pups for your 2 sisters which are 2 bitches -

Yours for ever
Will B.

Wednesday - 13th

We are to day passing the Mozambique Channel, a latitude rather renowned for its storms at this season of the year, tho' it apparently seems to be inclined to favour us, as the skies are cloudless and the water smooth - An odd looking fish was caught yesterday, which bore a strong resemblance to a John Dory, and on that account was cooked, eat and praised - Being fond of Natural History and wishing to render this book as instructive as I can, I shall relate a curious circumstance concerning the above mentioned animal, tho' I by no means wish to be considered as vouching for its accuracy. A noted gourmand was one day complaining to a celebrated Zoologist that, "tho' he relished a John Dory more than any other known fish, yet they were so expensive that he could but seldom afford to eat them, and he should be exceedingly glad to learn the reason why

they were so scarce compared with many others who could boast of many more personal charms, tho' not of such exquisite flavour". "The reason" answered the Professor gravely is this, "The John Dory's are so exceedingly ugly, that the Jenny Dory's will have nothing to say to them." With the above I shall close for the day, as there is nothing to write, worth putting down.

Scenes in the Isle of France

Saturday – 30th

Having been for the last four days confined to my cabin by painful illness, it was no small pleasure to hear the Anchor let down early this morning in the harbour of Port Louis.³³ Mr and Mrs Wilmot were no less pleased than myself, for we were quite weary of a fourteen weeks passage, and almost tired of our own company; Not by any means that we disliked each other (for it was quite the reverse) but that we had talked each other and each others topics all out, and hence we sighed for new scenes, new objects and new faces. Fancy was picturing out to our imaginations the pleasures we should have on shore, the sights, the prospects, the people, in fact the every thing that a new and distant country was to give us – I really think we should often have leaped in an ecstasy of joy, if we could have seen but a single human being from the shore, or looked at but one green field; a potato ground would have been a garden, a grass plot a paradise! – The first view of the Mauritius is very beautiful, being surrounded by a range of precipitous and picturesque looking mountains, covered in some places with the most verdant foliage, whilst in others it is quite bare and burnt up. Port Louis the principal town lies at their feet, commanding the entrance to the harbour and presenting a most formidable appearance from its strong and extensive fortifications. No sooner was the Anchor down than we were boarded by the Custom House officer and the Port Surgeon, whose queries being satisfactorily answered we were duly authorized to go on shore – The first Lieutenant of the *Pylades* Man of War also paid us a visit to make sure that we were Her Majesty's subjects and not sailing under false colours. These preliminaries over the Captain Mr W. and myself went on shore, the first to transact business and we to stroll about and see the place. The Wharf or landing place which is very extensive was a

³³ The capital of Mauritius since 1735.

most amusing and busy sight. Covered with people of all costumes and tongues Animals and Vehicles of all kinds and varieties, noise and uproar of all sorts and dimensions, the effect, on our first landing was quite overpowering, and it took us some little time to collect our ideas and let the novelty of first impressions wear off, before we could criticise or minutely contemplate the variegated assembly before us. The Chinese with his peaked shoe and long pigtail, the Arab with his lofty turban and flowing vest, the Turk with his cloth of many colours and his flowing beard, the Indian with his tunic of shawl and robe of muslin, the picturesque clad Greek, the Grave Parsee, the black favoured Negro and the still blacker Caffre man, were every instant passing before us, mingled together in "most admired disorder", each discoursing in his Country's tongue and the greater part regarding with the most unequivocal signs of admiration our wandering and astonished gaze. The intense heat of the sun's rays however compelled us at last to quit this gay scene and seek repose and shelter in an Hotel. The hot season has not commenced here yet tho' it soon will, but I find even their cool time far too warm for a European constitution. The heat is still further increased by the extreme whiteness of the streets and the abominable clouds of dust which are perpetually raised by the breeze from the adjacent mountains, and but seldom laid by watering, which from being so near to the sea might easily be done. Having had Tiffin which was completely a la Francaise and rested ourselves a little, we went to the Government house to give a letter of introduction to his Excellency, who is an aged and weather beaten but very kind, person. His Aide de Camp, Mr Henry took us over the barracks and to some other places which we were not likely to have found out ourselves. The Government House is built in the form of three sides of a square and is large and roomy tho' not a very elegant looking building. Some of the apartments are very large and the floors are composed of inlaid woods polished like mirrors, and so exceedingly slippery that great caution is requisite to avoid falling. Except that there are sentinels walking in the court, there is no external state kept up, and in his own house Sir Edward Nicolay seems as insignificant a personage as any other liege in H.M. dominions. At 5 P.M. we returned to the ship, quite wearied out but on the other hand much delighted with our first insight to Oriental life.

Sunday October 1st

"Butter and Honey shall ye eat,"³⁴ says somebody of older times, "that ye may distinguish between the good and the evil"; and I flatter myself that we were all well qualified after breakfast this morning, to speculate on the goodness of fresh butter and the evil of salt do. No person but he who has had experience, can have any idea how grateful the change is in articles of diet after a long voyage, and especially in the familiar items of bread and butter; we hailed their appearance as long lost friends and incorporated them with ourselves in a very small space of time, to the progressive comfort of our own selves and the no less satisfaction of their individual owners – After breakfast, I took Mrs Wilmot to Massy's Hotel, where we had engaged rooms beforehand, and then as it was too late to go to Church and some friendly clouds were partially shading the countenance of the sun, we took a stroll round the environs of the town for the purpose of getting a more perfect idea of Mauritian scenery than our experience of yesterday afforded us. The principal objects in the botany of Port Louis are the Aloe, the Cocoa Nut, the Tamarind and the Prickly Pear, including also the Plantain. The Aloes are magnificent growing to an immense height and size, and forming a most impregnable Chevaux de Frieze wherever they are found; they are as numerous and as wild as our black berry bush. The Cocoa Nut is a peculiarly beautiful tree, having a smooth and lofty stem surmounted by a feathery crown of large and pendulous leaves; the nuts grow at the bottom of each leaf stalk, hanging by a stem more or less long; all that I have seen yet are green, but it is quite common to see them ripe and unripe on the tree at the same time. The Prickly Pear is a very curious looking plant, and is well known in a dwarf state as one of our green house inhabitants. It is composed entirely of thick, broad leaves, growing one out of another, covered with spiculae of slender but most acute little prickles with which the fruit, the production of a most beautiful oval shaped scarlet blossom is also guarded, and affords an impenetrable hedge for gardens, to which use it is principally put in this island. The Tamarind is the most abundant tree here, as it is also the most beautiful; its appearance is not unlike that of a large and wide spreading Ash, and covered with its hanging

³⁴ "Butter and Honey... and the evil" – a paraphrasing of Isaiah 7:14: "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse evil, and choose the good."

fruit as it now is cannot fail to strike a stranger with its lovely green, and umbrageous form. The Tamarind fruit is most intensely acid, & cannot be eaten unless preserved; after trying but one pod, my tongue had just the sensation of having been scraped with a file, and retained it for a most inconvenient length of time. The Plantain is an extraordinary looking shrub, formed of broad and exceedingly lofty leaves, whose tops hang down, and whose whole extent is divided as it were into slips or ribbons – Its flower is most superb being a large crimson and purple bell with curious over hanging stamens. The fruit grows in a concave circle, its shape not unlike that of a small cucumber, & is of a delicious flavour. The Mangoe is another large tree that is pretty abundant, and is at present covered with fruit, which are not ripe however till Decemb^r: in its green state the Mangoe is particularly unpleasant having a most overpowering flavour of turpentine, but in its ripe state it is considered the finest fruit that the island produces. We met numerous parties of the inhabitants, principally females, amongst whom I saw several very pretty faces and no less pretty feet, but what struck me most was their hair which is exceedingly beautiful, of great profusion and length, and worn in most becoming plaits; it is evidently their great pride, and I had the better opportunity of admiring them as with only a few exceptions they wore no bonnets, but a lace veil thrown over their heads and a variously coloured parasol to shield them from the sun. Almost all that I saw were French, who constitute the greatest part of the population, and the whole town both in its houses and inhabitants has quite the cut of a French place; nor is this much to be wondered at, when we recollect how recently it has fallen into our possession,³⁵ and that, excepting a few merchants and three Regiments of our soldiery, the former residents still remain, multiplying and to multiply - After an agreeable but weary walk, we were glad to find ourselves once more under shelter and sitting before a comfortable dinner of which Venison and Champagne formed a part.

³⁵ Mauritius was ceded to Britain in 1814, under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Slavery was abolished, as in the West Indian colonies, in 1834, and after a transitional period of apprenticeship, Indian indentureship was introduced in 1835, with 451,776 Indian immigrants arriving in the period up to 1910. See M. Carter, *Servants, Sirdars and Settlers* (OUP, 1995).

Monday – 2nd

As the day promised to be very hot and sultry, I kept on board all the morning and employed myself in writing home, which I really felt to be a treat, for I detest letter writing most cordially when at home. Having heard rather flattering accounts of the theatre and the company at present here, I went to see it in the evening, and was both surprized and delighted with my visit. The Opera of *Tancredi*³⁶ was remarkably well performed both as to singing and music - The principal female singer has lately arrived from Calcutta where she was a great favourite and I should say deservedly so, for her singing is extremely sweet and attractive. I am sure that if Rossini was to go to such an outlandish place as he would probably consider Port Louis, and hear his beautiful air of “*Di tanti Palpiti*” warbled as I heard it last night, he would not only be astonished but very much gratified. The Orchestra is numerous and effective, and I am told, composed almost entirely of Amateurs. The interior of the theatre is neat and pretty, and was most numerously attended, including the Governor and his staff who made rather a brilliant appearance in the stage boxes. There was a considerable sprinkling of handsome looking women both French, Creole i.e. half cast, and English, and their dress was remarkable for its elegance and simplicity, being in most cases white muslin with little attempt at ornament, and a lace veil, thrown negligently over their beautifully black and glossy hair, flowing down behind the shoulders. As far as I can judge from what I have at present seen, the females here may be described under three classes; the White or Aristocratic, composed altogether of the French and English; the Creole or Half Cast, who are the most numerous and bating a little too much olive in their complexion, the most good looking, having beautiful hair, sparkling eyes and extremely pretty feet and ancles (sic), and 3^{dly} the Original Native or Negro who are detestably ugly and resemble a combination of Ourang Outang and Nigger, a cross breed as it were between Man and Monkey, more than anything else that I can think of. The French and English population are quite distinct, and national jealousy, fostered by various local causes, prevents in a great measure anything of mutual

³⁶ The opera *Tancredi* (1813) by Gioacchino Rossini and librettist Luigi Lechi, based on Voltaire's play *Tanocrède* (1759). ‘*Di tanti Palpiti*’ was the hugely popular melody featured in it.

intercourse or social hospitality. As the theatre was not over till late and the hotels, of which by the by there are only two good ones, were shut, added to which I was desirous of seeing the Market or Bazaar as it is called, we preferred sleeping "Al fresco" to going on board or knocking up the sleepers in the Inn. I accordingly lay down under a shed, first on a native who I did not see and secondly on a bundle of hay, where I had not sooner fallen asleep than I was as instantly awakened again by one of the most horrible and discordant noises that I ever heard; I must say I jumped up in a great fright to see what it was, and found that it proceeded from a fat mule who took this way of letting me know that I was on her territories – A kick on the nose however soon sent her away and I slept without further interruption till gun fire (4 o'clock) when I was roused by the jabbering of natives, neighing of mules and creaking of carts, who all seemed to start into life like magic, and caused a curious contrast to the profound stillness that had reigned thro' a lovely tropical night, undisturbed by aught but the near murmur of the sea or the distant hail of a sentinel. The Market is held from about half past four to eight and is a gay and stirring scene to the eye of a stranger. The fruits vegetables &c. are brought from the country in small carts drawn by Buffalo bullocks, which are very fine animals having a prodigious hump growing out of their necks, and who are just yoked together by a rope and guided by a string passed through their nostrils – The different articles are arranged on the ground, sheltered from the sun by a wooden covering, and superintended by their owners and vendors who sit cross legged on a small stool, smoking their Hubble Bubbles or Hookahs with the most laughable composure and sang froid as to whether they sell or not – Every thing that can please the sight or tempt the palate is here, from the lowly violet and blushing strawberry to the perfumed rose and the luscious pine – Fruits of all kinds known in our climate only by report or an occasional glimpse in the Hot house, lovely flowers of every hue and form, bright plumaged birds of rainbow tints, and exquisite shells of divers colours, are intermingled with the more useful and necessary articles of life, less showy indeed to the eye but not any the less attractive to one, to whom tho' their appearance may be unknown, their names are familiar. It was here that I first became acquainted with the Plantain, the Banana, the Pummelo, the Guava, the Yam, the Papao, the Maize plant, the

Sugar Cane and a number of others whose names from the difficulty I experienced in making myself understood, I have not yet learned. The language spoken by the mass of the people is not French but a villainous patois or adulteration of it called Creole French, which is quite different from the parent language and very difficult to understand— It is principally confined to the lower orders, the French of the higher classes being tolerably pure, and kept so by the constant influx of the continental traders — No less than seven French vessels are in the harbour at present — Ladies and Gentlemen, early as it is, come in general to market for themselves, followed by servants or Peons as they are termed to carry their purchases, and one and all are, at the primitive hour of five in the morning, dressed with as much neatness and taste as they could be at five in the evening, and just as fit to appear in a drawing room, as one of our English fair ones would be after a two hours toilet or perhaps more. The customary hours for walking are from 5 to 8 A.M. and from 4 to 6 P.M. the heat being too great in the middle of the day for females to venture out, and the fashionable place of resort is the Champs de Mars, where a military band plays twice a week; it is a circular space of considerable extent and is used twice a year as a race ground.

Wednesday – 3rd

I made a call today with D^r P. of the 87th, upon a gentleman who has lately married, and was happy in being introduced to his bride, as pretty a piece of domestic poetry as one would wish to meet with in a summer's day. She is of French extraction, eminently beautiful and has not yet attained her fifteenth year, which however is nothing extraordinary here, where the female arrives at maturity at a very early age compared with us. She was dressed in a most elegant morning robe of white muslin; one of her pretty little feet alone was visible and shrouded from the too curious gaze in a satin slipper, the other with retiring delicacy was withdrawn within those precincts where the imagination might not follow; her long and glossy hair was braided over her alabaster forehead and she was reclining in all the voluptuousness of Eastern luxury upon a superb Ottoman in a room partially darkened by Chinese blinds, and attended by a young native to fan her with the small Punkah that he carried in his hand — The whole thing altogether was rather “too good” for any one beyond a glumpy old Monk, and she looked so

excessively young and so passing pretty, that ere five minutes were fled, I felt a most overpowering inclination to kick her happy and good looking husband out of the room and give her a kiss before he could come back again. – But, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife” came to my aid just at the proper time, so with a mighty effort I quelled Apollyon till I was enabled to look at and talk to her with the fortitude and resolve of the first Martyr of Antioch.³⁷ Without joking she is a sweet creature and one of Natures fairest and choicest productions; Her husband is the Baron D’Estrente - After tiffin I took a short ride with D^r P. to visit the Civil Hospital and on the way there was considerably amused at the odd manner in which the women are accustomed to carry their children, which they effect by setting them astride on one hip, and making a counterbalance by leaning over on the other; it may be convenient but certainly is not either graceful or decorous, for the little wretches are stark naked, monstrously ugly, always either eating or crying, and altogether very unlike what imagination would picture as component parts of the Kingdom of Heaven. At six o’clock I went to dine with the mess of the 87th, from which in spite of good company and most excellent music I retired at an early hour, as I have to set out tomorrow morning at 5, on an excursion with Mr W. to the other side of the island.

Friday –5th

Having just returned from a most delightful visit to Makeburg, I cannot do better than sit down and describe while yet fresh in my recollection. Makeburg is the name of a small military station about thirty miles from Port Louis and ranks next in size to it, tho’ far superior in point of scenery and local attractions – A two horse carriage or Diligence as they call it, performs the journey in about seven hours, including an hours stay for breakfast, but not a change of cattle, the same pair going the whole way. The road for about 25 miles is beautiful, and it is more like travelling thro’ an extensive garden than anything else, so varied and luxuriant is the scene. For some time the hedges were full, if not altogether composed, of Roses in full bloom, mingled here and there with a superb yellow flower of

³⁷ “the first Martyr of Antioch” – Ignatius, bishop and first martyr of Antioch was sent to Rome early in the Second Century and was there torn to pieces by wild beasts.

the Campanula family and of most delicious scent; these were succeeded by groves of Aloes, Tamarinds and Prickly Pear, overarched by the tow'ring Palm and the spreading Cocoa Nut; then again came plantations of Sugar Cane, Coffee, Maize, Indian Corn and Nutmegs, the latter giving out an almost overpowering fragrance, and all of them affording shelter and food to birds of every kind and colour from the sombre looking Mina to the gaudy Paroquet. Deer and Monkeys were peeping and chattering at us, and Butterflies with wings of gold and purple were flying all around us; the hum of insects as they gathered in the sunshine and the whisperings of the breeze as it died away among the shady Bananas, was our music, and he must indeed be soulless and wretched who would not feel amidst scenes like these, that admiration swelled his heart with praise, and that the worship of his Creator could never be more grateful, than when offered up in such a lovely portal of Natures mighty temple, at such a beauteous shrine of God's own workmanship. You will think me very enthusiastic, but you could not have helped being so yourself had you been with me, besides which you must remember that I am yet but a novice in the wonders of Eastern land. At 10 o'clock we arrived at a small place called "Coeur Pipe" where we breakfasted, after which as the horses were not sufficiently rested Mr W. and I proceeded along our way on foot till the Carriage should overtake us. The Roads are exceedingly good, being made and kept in constant repair by the convicts who are sent here in considerable numbers from India, and their dismal appearance working in irons is the only blot upon the harmony of this fair and lovely prospect. At a little after one o'clock we reached Makeburg which is situated within a mile of the sea, and is bisected by a beautiful branch of "The Grand River". We were most kindly received by Colonel Wilson and the officers of the 35th, to whom General Nicolay had before sent to introduce us, and who after a visit to their billiard room and an invitation to dine with them in the evening, left us to examine the place at our leisure. Our time was principally employed in searching out a house for Mr W. who is coming to reside here as a stipendiary magistrate, but we did not neglect to observe the general aspect of the place which is picturesque and pretty, especially along the banks of the river, where trees and vegetation are abundant and studded with numerous villa's and Cottages Ornées. After a late dinner

prolonged by the exquisite playing of the band (said to be the finest out of England) we adjourned to Colonel W.s to smoke and from thence to bed, where if I had not been so excessively sleepy I should have waged a furious war with the numerous little Lizards who were glancing along the walls in all directions. At 7 this morning we set off on our return to Port Louis where we arrived about 3, suffering a little from the extreme heat of the sun, but both of us delighted with our brief excursion.

Monday – 8th

Went to the Military hospital which is visited by the surgeons at 6 in the morning; it is very extensive and kept in the most beautiful order – Breakfasted afterwards at the Table d’hote at Massy’s hotel where an excellent table is kept and where you are sure of meeting with good society – Most of the company were French, but I sat next to one very pleasant Englishman, an officer in the Company’s service who has lately come on leave for the good of his health, and with whom I struck an immediate acquaintanceship. Claret is universally drunk (sic) at breakfast, and a small cup of coffee is only handed to you when you have finished – Many took a glass of Liqueur which is made in the island and bears the attractive appellation of Parfait Amour; it is pretty good but of not nearly such a flavour as its namesake which comes from France, and which is also of a much richer colour. After breakfast I went to see the Catholic chapel which is a large building and contains a very fine organ. The Bishop is a young and pleasant man, but I am told rather lax in discipline, as there is nothing he is fonder of than spending his evenings over the Ecartè table. – There is only one English church which however is attended by a numerous and genteel congregation, and has likewise a capital organ, recently arrived from London. Went to tiff with the Governor and was introduced for the first time to Lady Nicolay, a celebrated beauty in her youth. I had afterwards the great delight of playing a duett with young Nicolay on the flute, who plays uncommonly well but who unluckily is just going with letters of Embassy to Her Majesty of Madagascar = The precocity of the young ladies here is extraordinary, and I have been astonished at seeing girls who looked almost too young to be able to lace their own stays, who were not only wives but in some instances even Mothers. Their education however is very much neglected, the solid and useful

accomplishments of a well brought up female being sacrificed for those hollow but more showy ones, which are considered the ne plus ultra of a fashionable fair one, and the best baited hooks for a connubially disposed Gudgeon. The consequence is, that out of the numerous early unions which take place here, few comparatively turn out happy, added to which the great facilities for obtaining divorce, which are enjoyed under the present laws of the colony, tend still further to cast disgrace upon the sacred tie of marriage, and to render nugatory the otherwise binding vows of love. The following will serve as an illustration. Lady Nicolay told me that at a large party she was at soon after their arrival, her attention was directed to four ladies who had at different times been married to one man who was also there and who to her great astonishment was talking and laughing with them in the most unconcerned manner possible. These people had been successively married to each other, too early of course to judge how their dispositions assimilated or how suited to form mutual happiness, got tired of each other, agreed to go before the Civil Commissioner, sign a paper to shew they were willing to separate and come away arm in arm, regularly divorced but not a whit the less good friends; the one gets another husband the other another wife, and at home or abroad meet each other on the best of terms and with every demonstration of the most perfect cordiality; the warmth of other days is lost in the coldness of Platonic friendship, the passionate vows of youthful love forgotten in the emptinesses of common place etiquette – Well indeed may we say after this;

Can such things be
And overcome us like a Summer cloud,
Without our special wonder?³⁸

Tuesday –9th

Got up at 4 O'clock with the intention of ascending a lofty hill called the Pousse which stands about 3 miles from the town, and is so named from its fancied resemblance to a mans thumb. The bottom of it is covered with many beautiful trees and plants, amongst which were growing Pine Apples, Peaches, Oranges, Lemons, Citrons, Guavas & Raspberries. Pines are so abundant in every part of the island that a gentleman told me it

³⁸ "Can such things...our special wonder?" – Macbeth, Act 3, Sc.iv, lines 110-112.

was his usual custom when he was out shooting to cut off a slice from one and leave the rest, certain of finding another when he should want one. I counted thirty three myself within about ten minutes. The oranges however as being more refreshing are my favourite fruit and next to them the Guava which is very juicy and of a most peculiar flavour – The Raspberries and Peaches are not equal to ours, but they grow of an amazing size at a place called Redwin about 8 miles off, where the Governor has a country house. The milk of the green cocoa nut is one of the pleasantest drinks when you are hot and thirsty, but they are very difficult to get at from their great height; a good sized one holds from three to four tumblers full. I got on very slowly towards the summit of the Pousse and was at length obliged to give it up from the following incident, which however I have not at all regretted – As it was the first time he had touched land since leaving England, I took my dog with me, but he heated himself so much with running that he was seized with the most frightful fits, and I was obliged to carry him for a considerable distance in search of the first house I could find. I came to one at last very prettily situated in a garden in which the Master, who is a rich planter of the Pamplermousse district, was sitting in his morning gown, smoking; he was exceedingly kind, sent a servant with my dog to bathe him, asked me to take a cheroot with him and when that was finished insisted on my coming in to breakfast; I was the less averse to this, not only because I was rather tired, but because I had seen more than one pair of black eyes peeping from behind the blinds and had occasionally detected the silvery tones of a female laugh in the intervals of my hosts' conversation. Accordingly in I went and having beforehand told my name was introduced in all due form to the lady of the house her son and two daughters; one of the latter was a sweet little merry, black eyed girl and I took a fancy to her as soon as I heard her speak; before the breakfast was half over we were all quite at home with each other, tho' a little more facility in speaking French would have been to my advantage as with the exception of the two old ones, they could speak but little English; however it made us more dependent on each other, and before breakfast was finished I had engaged to accompany young B. on a shooting excursion and Miss B. on the Piano with my flute, for I soon found out that they were all musical; what French woman is not? At 12 o'clock I left

promising soon to repeat my visit, and not a little pleased at my unexpected rencontre with this agreeable family, for which by the way I am indebted to my dog. The Musquittoes tho' not yet numerous are very troublesome and plague me xcessively, but our greatest curse is a swarm of flies, the largest body I verily believe (sic) that has met together in one place since the days of Moses and Aaron, those celebrated founders of the Fly Monarchy;³⁹ their constant buzzing is perfectly odious. We had a very pleasant dinner party on board, including Mr and Mrs W—, Henry, the Governor's A.D.C. and one or two others, after which we took a sail by moonlight and as we were coming back I dropped my hat overboard which, when it was recovered we found it tenanted by a big Prawn to the no small amusement of my companions who wished me to preserve it as a specimen of choice Zoology.

Wednesday -10th

Spent the morning in making several calls, one of which was upon a young wife M^{rs} A—t who is a good xample of the incompatibility of an early marriage with a good education. Tho' she has been married 8 months, she is not yet sixteen and comes into town daily to attend classes and learn what would be called in England the rudiments of a polite education; her husband is one of the wealthiest men here and both accomplished and literary as I am told; now what enjoyment can he have in such a wife, xcept just to look at and admire her, as he would a picture in an Exhibition or the Speaking Doll in the Soho Bazaar? I must say however that she is a dear little creature and would do credit to anybody's ménâge, as far as face and figure are concerned. In the afternoon I went a sail with the Captain to visit the tomb of Paul and Virginia,⁴⁰ those mawkish creations of S^t Pierre's imagination, who are said to be buried in this place near a bay about 9 miles distant. It was dark before we got back and at one time we were in rather a dangerous predicament as the boat struck upon a reef of Coral rocks, and required both time and labour independent of standing up to our middles in water, to get her off again. Tired as I was however, I could not resist going

³⁹ "Moses, Aaron...the Fly Monarchy"—a reference to the 4th plague (Exodus 8:16-28).

⁴⁰ *Paul et Virginie* (1788)—a novella by Jacques-Henri Bernardin de St Pierre (1737-1814).

to hear the opera of *Le prê aux Clercs*⁴¹ which was performed in most creditable style; Ma'amselle L'Emery the Prima Donna has some of the sweetest Alto notes I ever heard, xcept those of Grisi.

Friday –12th

Went to Mass and found myself kneeling beside my pretty friend Pauline B. who was there with her Mother and sisters – I accompanied them part of the way home and engaged myself to dine there on Monday when they are to have a small party in honour of Young B.'s birthday. The official intelligence of the King's death arrived to day after a long and accidental delay, and consequently altho' I mourned for him in England four months ago, I am called upon to do the same charitable thing at the Mauritius now; but I shall do no such absurdity at least not in outward show, preferring rather to trust in the hope that H.M. of blessed memory will rest as quiet in Heaven, (always provided he has got there,) without hatbands and crape, as if the whole world wore them for him. The firing of the minute guns by the fort and ships of war and the finale of a Feu de joie in honour of the Queen had a grand and impressive effect as they were reverberated in a thousand echoes by the surrounding mountains. During a stroll in the evening towards Pamplemousse, one of the divisions of the island, I met with a nice little girl of the half and half breed with whom I entered into conversation, and upon asking her name was so pleased at finding that it was Charlotte that I gave her a Rupee not to forget Theophilus, much upon the same principle as the Missionary who went out to convert the Negro's in the West Indies, and who happening one day to meet a blacky whose name was Aaron, gave him a shilling that he might remember Moses. (If the Bible Society was to act upon this hint, what a vast surplus of information in Scripture Biography there would be.) The costume of the Natives and Coolies here must be rather a blush exciting spectacle to a lady on her first arrival, as it consists of only a piece of cloth wrapped round their middles, and it is highly absurd to see them stoop; custom however reconciles every thing, and what, in England would shock the delicacy of every female who ventured out, is regarded by their fair sisters

⁴¹ *Le Prê aux Clercs* (1832)—an opera by Ferdinand Hérold (1791-1833). Giulia Grisi (1811-1869) was a contemporary star who played the opera-hall circuit between Milan, Paris & London.

of the East with as much unconcern as Eve looked upon Adam in the days of their first innocence. Went again to the theatre to see *Robert le Diable*⁴² performed and was not a little astonished at recognizing an Edinburgh face in the opposite box; it was the pleasantest object I had seen on this side the Equator, and I could not help telling her so, tho' she was not out of the way pretty either. She is on a visit here previous to going on to Sydney where she is to be married. Went after the opera to sup with Galland of the 87th, where I also met an Edinburgh college friend who graduated with me and is now appointed an Assistant Surgeon out here.

Tuesday –16th

My visit to Monsieur B. last evening was so exceedingly pleasant and delightful, that I cannot help making mention of it – I was asked for six o'clock, but an engagement with Captain Kerr of the Sterling (a great favourite of mine) prevented me getting there till near seven. I found them just sitting down to dinner, having given up the expectation of my coming, and was most kindly greeted by all, particularly by my pretty little Virgin worshipper, (with whom by the by I forgot to mention I had a charming morning's practise last Saturday) and whose bright little eyes I could not help conceiting myself,

Look'd brighter when I came.

Well, down I sat, she on one side and a pleasant looking olive complexioned girl on the other, both so agreeable, vivacious and joyous that it was hard to know which to prefer, and I could not but think of Captain Macheath in the *Beggars Opera*⁴³ when he is obliged to xclaim,

O! how happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away.

The party consisted of about thirteen, principally friends of Young B. (whose birthday it was) and his sisters, and with the exception of one young lady I was all that was completely English among them; but fortunately almost all understood more or less

⁴² *Robert le Diable*—a play by Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864).

⁴³ 1728 ballad opera by John Gay.

of English, so that I had no lack of converse, tho' to tell the truth I greatly preferred the half French half English way, in which I and my two neighbours amused ourselves. After dinner one of the most beautiful silver Cups I ever saw was brought in filled with a peculiarly "O be joyful" looking fluid, in which the health of young "Come of Age" was unanimously drunk, and who made a remarkably neat speech on the occasion. We then all adjourned to the drawing room and from there to the garden, where under the smiling auspices of a most lovely moon and amidst the fragrance of a thousand tropical flowers, dancing was commenced and kept up with the occasional intervention of a song till, I am afraid to say, how early in the morning – In fact the whole scene was so beautiful, so Eastern and so delightful that I never enjoyed myself more in my life, and only returned to the Hotel to go to bed and sleep the Evening over again in a morning dream. Met the Captain at the Table d'Hôte from whom I learned that Sunday next is fixed for our sailing. Most exquisite shells and coral are found here, tho' like every thing their price is exorbitant – It is a fearfully expensive place even in the smallest and commonest articles, and nobody could afford to live here or set up in business who had not some fortune to start with. The exchange is carried on in Dollars or Piastres (4/) Rupees (2/) and Marquees, two of which make three halfpence – Took my gun to get a little shooting among the hills, but the heat was so excessive that I was obliged to give it up and lie down in the shade, till the sun went down. There is plenty of game more in the interior of the island, consisting principally of Deer, Hares, Partridge and Ptarmigan, besides great numbers of Monkeys & Paroquets for those who prefer that kind of sport.

Thursday –18th

Met a gentleman at Tiffin yesterday who is universally known here by the sobriquet of L'homme Absent; and which I think is a distinction he has most fully entitled himself to wear; it was gained by him from the following circumstance: He was engaged to be married to a lady who tho' living at Bourdeaux had followed him here at his request; the wedding day was fixed, and in its proper turn arrived; a numerous cortège of friends and kinsmen were assembled and the blushing bride in all the virgin timidity of her situation was awaiting in suspense if not with impatience, the entrance of her betrothed, when, instead

of her elect entered a footman, and informed the company that his Master had set out at day break to attend some races that were held at Flacq, a military station more than 30 miles off, having quite forgotten the Trifling duty that should have commanded his presence at home. And so it turned out to be, the enamoured Benedict never thinking of his error till the middle of the race dinner, which, to do him justice, he instantly left and hastened with all becoming speed to sue for pardon at the feet of his indignant mistress, which it is needless to say he easily obtained from one who had crossed the salt sea for no other purpose than to become Double for the love of a Single. The above is almost as bad as the story of the celebrated Dutch Philosopher Tycho Brahe, who going to undress himself one night in a fit of Astronomical abstraction, was observed to throw his pantaloons into the bed, and himself over the back of a chair!! I went out this afternoon to dine with Mr C. Collector of the Customs, who has a sweet little place about five miles off. There is a fine view on the way of the celebrated mountain Peter Botte, so named after the person who first ascended to the top; the feat has only been attempted once since by three officers about ten years ago – The difficulty and risk of ascending it consists in the summit, which is an immense rock poised as it were upon a long narrow neck and of course over-hanging on all sides, so that it is like climbing the Juttock shrouds of a ship without however the aid of ratlines – Its appearance among the surrounding hills is exceedingly curious and picturesque. = Mr Cunninghame's garden is a very perfect thing of its kind containing almost all the indigenous trees and plants of the island; amongst them I saw the Ebony, Pomegranite, Ipecacuhana, Clove, Cinnamon and Cotton trees, and also a very extraordinary one named the Travellers Friend from its affording a large quantity of pure and excellent water, which is contained in cells at the bottom of its immense leaves and connected with one another; if a puncture be made into this reservoir, the water springs out like a fountain to the amount of several pints; its name is most appropriate, and the tree is a beautiful provision of Nature for a warm climate, where water is almost a more essential article than bread. The island is however abundantly supplied with xcellent water.

Saturday –21st

This being my last day here, I made my last visit to the Bazaar

to make a few purchases, and again took my dog with me to take his farewell of the butchers shop; instead however of flesh, he unfortunately set his affections on flowers and thereby got himself into a sad scrape, for seeing a bunch of roses lying on the ground and most probably recognizing his country's emblem, he made straight up to them, and after an affectionate smell proceeded to salute them in the altogether peculiar manner of the Canine tribe; a prodigious hubbub was the consequence, sticks, stones and staves flew about in all directions, and never was there a more inglorious retreat than that which poor Dash made with his tail between his legs, from the infuriated nymphs of the Market Place – Whilst I was almost dying with laughter, Captain Kerr of the *Augustus* came up and proposed a fishing excursion but I had not courage to brave the heat, so having promised to dine with him on board his ship, I proceeded forthwith to the hotel to breakfast where I soon forgot the mishaps of my mornings marketing in the mysteries of a Boneta pie, and the lively conversation of a jolly little Frenchman. The Fish that are found here, are not very numerous, but what there are have the most peculiar shapes and colours imaginable; some are a uniform bright blue, some red and others again green; there is one variety which is figured exactly like a flag, being flat, of a dark blue colour and embellished with four parallel stripes of red down each side; it is called the Old Woman, but why, or what is the analogy between them and that interesting class of God's creatures I am not able to say, tho' I can answer for their eating, which is excellent – This then concludes my remarks and my adventures in the Mauritius, a place where I have been both delighted and edified, and which from various causes I shall ever remember with pleasure, but where never the less a four weeks visit, for a mere looker on, is quite sufficient, unless he haply be entitled to wear the Armorial bearings of an open carriage and a wide purse, favours which as yet the Lord has not blessed me with – And now Farewell, the Blue Peter is flying; the sails are swelling and the winds are propitious; the water sparkles in foam from our bows, and mountain and hill are fast flying from us; even now the island is but as a speck, and again we are alone on the watery waste, leaving numerous and pleasant recollections behind but also bearing many a fond anticipation of what we are to meet on the famed and beautiful shores of warm and sunny India.

“Isle of Beauty, fare thee well.”⁴⁴

Sunday – Oct 29th

Little has occurred during the past week, that is in any way worthy of being immortalized. We have lost our passengers and time therefore hangs more heavily on our hands than it was wont to do. Their absence however is in some degree compensated for by the tricks and frolics of a particularly sagacious monkey that I have brought from the Mauritius, and which I am never tired looking at. For the first few days it was very miserable and unhappy at being taken from its home, and it was ludicrous tho’ almost affecting to see him going through his tricks with averted head and downcast eye, sighing piteously and refusing to be comforted, and in every way but by words, reproaching us for laughing at his woe and making him feign to be merry in the midst of his sadness. Poor Jacko, thought I at the time, there are many like thee in the world who are compelled to counterfeit gladness when sorrow is rankling at the heart, and who part not with it so quickly as thou wilt do,

As a beam o’er the face of the waters may glow
While the tide runs in darkness & coldness below,
So the cheek may be tinged with a warm sunny smile,
Tho’ the cold heart to ruin runs darkly the while.⁴⁵

At eleven o’clock this morning I betook myself to my cabin to join you all in reading the Church prayers, and under this pleasant illusion of mutual tho’ distant communion, had advanced as far as the first lesson, when it suddenly struck my innocent imagination that, from the difference of time caused by our respective latitudes, instead of being engaged in kneeling

⁴⁴ “Isle of Beauty, fare thee well” — from *Isle of Beauty* by Thomas Haynes Bayly (1797-1839), songwriter and dramatist.

⁴⁵ “As a beam... darkly the while” — Thomas Moore (1779-1852).

at the throne of Grace, you were all fast asleep in your beds of down; this so completely threw cold water on my romance, that I immediately shut up and left the second lesson to read itself. I had scarcely got on deck when a monstrous shark was seen at our stern, and in a very short time was hooked; as it was too large to be conveniently pulled up, independent of the horrid business of killing him, we attempted to destroy him by firing balls into his body, but altho' several entered the most vulnerable places, and the sea all around was tinged crimson with the blood that poured out from each orifice, yet he tore himself off the hook by his fearful struggles, and actually swam away from before our eyes as if nothing had happened to him, beyond taking a few pills or losing a teacup full of blood.

Monday, Novemb^r 20th

We again crossed the Line last week under the heaviest rain that I have seen yet, and the heat so absolutely stifling that it was almost too great to bear. We were much astonished one evening to see a fine and beautifully feathered owl seated on the main yard; nobody had observed it come, and it was a mystery from whence it had arrived, as we were not near any land at the time. Various attempts were made to catch it, but without success, and at last after wheeling once or twice round the ship it said Good by and flew slowly away, the Lord knows where. Two Evenings after this, a number of very small and pretty birds like Humming birds, having most extraordinary long and slender bills, were flying around us, evidently blown by the wind from the Nicobars, a beautiful group of islands that we were close to, and completely exhausted by their flight. In a short time they fell fast asleep on our Yards, Ropes, Anchors &c. and were easily caught with the hand. We are now some little way advanced in the Bay of Bengal, its waters smooth as a mirror in the calm, and numerous fish amongst which are the Swordfish and very large Snakes, are sporting and basking in the rays of the sun – In a few days we expect to reach the Pilot station where there are always some pilots waiting to take ships thro' the dangerous navigation of the river Hoogly, and which is said to be more intricate and difficult than any other place known. I should but ill perform my duty as a journalist were I to omit mentioning the almost unearthly magnificence of the sun sets in the Bay of Bengal and between the tropics

generally. Every evening have I stood on deck gazing at them and each time with increased delight, till, like the Gheber⁴⁶ of old, I could almost have fallen down and worshipped what seemed so near akin to the reality of Divinity, the Aethereal presence of a Deity. No pen or pencil can give any adequate idea of a tropical sunset, to one who has not witnessed it, yet still I will make the essay, useless as it is; the peculiar beauty of the scene commences about half an hour before sun set, when the light, feathery and fantastic clouds in the higher regions of the atmosphere become fully illuminated, and resemble Fleeces of burnished gold hanging in the concave arch of heaven. As the sun disappears below the verge of the horizon, bright and refulgent radii shoot out, of great size and of ever changing lights and shades of the most amazing beauty and variety – These fade slowly away and are succeeded by a rich universal glow, in which it is easy to fancy that you see land rising out of Ocean, and spreading in far perspective on either side; and whilst the denser and darker clouds on this brilliant ground exhibit to the imagination all the picturesque images of towers, forests, cities, mountains and every configuration of living and imaginary beings, those fleecy and higher clouds already mentioned, seem so many glorious islands of the blest, swimming in an ocean of imperishable light. Such is an imperfect description of a sunset between the tropics, than which Nature cannot present a more beautiful scene, or one which from its warmth, novelty, repose and glory, is more calculated to fill the mind with pure and exalted ideas or tranquillizing and lovely images.

Friday – Decemb^r 3rd

We got a pilot last Tuesday, and have now fairly entered the River Hoogly, that mighty branch of the still more mighty Ganges; but as owing to strong tides and little wind, we are obliged to anchor twice in the twenty four hours, our progress is but slow, – which however is a matter of little regret as it affords ample opportunities for observing the country. This morning we passed Saugor an uninhabited desolate looking island, covered with thick jungle, infested with Tigers and celebrated as being the place where the horrid rites of Infanticide of Child Sacrifice were carried on till within the last few years. A little further on is a monument called Silver tree erected to

⁴⁶ *Gheber* – Parsee, i.e. sun-worshipper.

commemorate the miserable fate of a young English lady, who landing there to see the place, was seized and devoured in the very midst of her friends by an immense Tiger. At one o'clock we came to an anchor opposite Kedgree, the first regularly inhabited place on the Hoogly, and were immediately surrounded by numberless bumboats, laded with all the different produce of the country in the shape of fruits, Vegetables, Straw hats, Mats &c. The clamour and uproar they made was tremendous, and as they cared nothing for buckets of water which were plentifully showered down on them, some small bits of Pork were thrown at them, and this being an article which their religion teaches them to look upon with the greatest horror, it was a priceless bit of fun to see their energetic scrambling and tumbling over one another to avoid the accursed contamination, jumping into the river to wash first themselves and then their boats, and in less than five minutes scattered in all directions praying, swearing and crying, till out of hearing and almost out of sight. At the termination of this little comedy, the Captain and myself went on shore with our guns to enjoy a little shooting, and under the burning rays of an almost vertical sun – This latter circumstance however affected me very little, imprudent as I was, partly from the excitement of sport and the novelty of scenery, which prevented me from thinking of Coups de Soleil, and partly because I was constantly up to my middle in water, wading through the Rice or as they are termed here Paddy fields, and which are the principal coverts for the different birds from the shelter and food they afford. Few persons in England can boast of such a day's sport as I had at Kedgree, either in point of Quality, Quantity or Variety; Wild Geese, Ducks, Curlew and Snipe were literally as plentiful as sparrows in a farm yard, added to which flocks of gigantic Cranes were rising at every report that our guns made, and innumerable Doves frightened by the unusual sounds, were wheeling around us like a blue opaque cloud - My first fire on the shores of Hindostan brought down one of these Cranes, a temptation that I could not resist, tho' quite useless. It was a beautiful bird of great size and perfectly white, xcept in its long and swan like neck, which was dashed with spots of the most glossy black and exquisite tint - Before dark we had killed as much game as loaded two boatmen, and then proceeded on our way back to the ship, which we reached in a state of hunger, weariness and

fatigue such as I never experienced before, and (unless as well repaid) do not wish to again.

Tuesday-7th

The banks of the river have been gradually getting more beautiful and picturesque as we advance nearer and nearer to Calcutta, being now clothed with numerous Cocoa Nut and other large trees, whose dark and massy foliage as they hang over the water seem as tho' inviting to repose and shade, while green fields of Rice, Indian Corn and other grains, flocks of Sheep, Goats and Cows, and the occasional appearance of a native village surmounted by the time worn turret of some mouldering Mosque or Pagoda, add a soft and pleasant harmony to the sylvan beauty of the landscape. This morning we anchored opposite a particularly lovely looking spot, overshadowed by Plantain and Date trees, and shewing in the background the magnificent appearance of the celebrated Banian – I went on shore immediately to examine more closely this wonderful production of Nature and found that it quite equalled my anticipations from what I had seen and read of it in books and drawings. Tho' by no means one of the largest of those that are found in India, yet it was a tolerable size and shewed the peculiar structure and interlacement of its boughs most beautifully. Each horizontal branch as it came out of the parent trunk, gave off one or more perpendicular branches, which descending to the ground take root and again spring up to meet the original stem: Thus they go on increasing, spreading and multiplying and each forming as it were a distinct tho' firmly united tree, till as you stand underneath and look up, it presents the appearance of innumerable arches of the most mazy and intricate lacework, supported on lofty pillars and affording a shelter that is alike impervious to sun or rain. It struck me as a beautiful instance of the size and use of this extraordinary tree, when I saw a large Hawk and several Doves take shelter one after another within its branches, each unnoticed and unknown by the other; persecutor and persecuted harmoniously resting under the same roof – After having sufficiently admired the Banian tree, I continued my walk and came all at once upon a Native village, where I was excessively amused at the commotion my arrival caused and the instantaneous hubbub it produced. Groups of naked little children were playing on the

ground and rolling in the dust, who, the instant they saw me set up a most furious screaming and ran away as fast as their bandy little legs could carry them, and in some cases a good deal faster, whilst the women who are not permitted to see or be seen by an European, covered their faces with the long veil that they all wear and ran away still faster till they had bolted themselves in as firm and secure as though I had been Dr Faustus or the Devil himself. – I waited for some time behind a tree in hopes that some of the fair ones might reappear, but they smelt a rat and kept themselves close so long, that I was e'en obliged to go away and be content with this very cursory glance of the Indian ladies. The village was very prettily situated near a small arm of the river, and was surrounded by cocoa nut and Plantain trees, these with a little rice affording the principal sustenance of these people – There were great numbers also of Doves and Paroquets in a state of wonderful tameness from not being molested by the Natives, who never-the-less take the most undisguised delight in seeing them shot, and will run for miles after any bird with a broken wing, for the mere gratification of catching and carrying it afterwards. The Native Huts are built entirely of mud, generally with a little court to each and connected with one another by covered passages – The one that I entered consisted of but one room, without any vestige of furniture beyond a couple of earthen pots to cook their rice in; chairs are not known, as they all sit on their natural benches i.e. their buttocks, with their knees higher than the chin, and the body slightly bent forward, being a position, that if I was to practise for the remainder of my natural life, I am perfectly satisfied I could never accomplish, and the attempt is too painful to continue long for the mere fun of the thing. Leaving the village behind me, I went on sometimes over fields and sometimes thro' wood and jungle till I began to feel very tired and I was looking out for some shady place to lie down in, when by ascending a little hill I suddenly came upon a scene which for its perfect loveliness and romantic beauty, its exquisite repose and delightful coolness, could hardly be equalled, certainly not excelled, by any other spot on earth, however varied its charms or however numerous its attractions; it was equally fitted as a retreat for Peri's or a miniature picture of Paradise. A lake clear as crystal and calm as sleeping infancy lay before me, its surface scattered over with the brilliant flower of the Red Lotus resting

on its broad and dark green leaf, skimmed by Kingfishers whose oriental tints glittered in the sun, as tho' they were emanations from that sun himself, and its banks clothed with the Cocoa nut, Date Peepul and Plantain, in which the Doves were cooing and holding gentle converse with each other, whilst the green and sparkling little Paroquet was glancing from branch to branch, or hanging by its beak from the bending extremity of some slender twig – A tall and stately Crane stood at one corner, motionless as a statue and as tho' it were the presiding Deity of the place, altogether regardless of my approach. A small but partly ruined Pagoda stood at the further end with a flight of steps reaching down to the water, from which a very old man, who I fancy was the attending Brahmin or Priest, was sprinkling himself and going thro' numerous devotional ceremonies; the place was evidently sacred to one of their Gods, and was but little visited by the footsteps of strangers, as indeed it was most meet that it should not be – Such a picture of sweet repose and calm beauty I can but seldom meet again, and I lay there under the thick shade of the dark Peepul, so wrapped up in my own thoughts, and so completely forgetful of every thing around, that ev'ning closed in unawares and I was fain to take the speediest course to the ship, lest she might set off without me – Fortunately I was just in time, and having first satisfied the cravings attendant upon a prolonged fast, I sat down to give you the above account of my brief but delightful excursion, which I have happily finished as the discordant sounds of the native Tom toms and the shrieking howl of the Jackal have begun to make themselves heard.

Wednesday –8th

At last we have arrived at Calcutta, the Metropolis of the East, the far famed City of Palaces, the Emporium of wealth, the chosen habitation of luxury! The last few miles of the approach from the river is a succession of beautiful villas, belonging to persons who either reside there altogether or go after the business of the day from the city; it is named Garden Reach⁴⁷ and both in appearance and situation reminded me strongly of English scenery. The first building on the left hand is the Bishops

⁴⁷ Garden Reach—one of the most fashionable areas of Calcutta where many Europeans built impressive “Garden Houses”—Palladian mansions—with grounds sweeping down to the Hooghly's edge.

College⁴⁸ a Gothic edifice of considerable size, and which altho of such recent date, has quite the antique look from a distance of one of its venerable breth'ren of Oxford or Cambridge. Next come the Company's Botanical gardens covering an extent of many acres and known at once by the Garden house and ornamented gateway. It is at this spot that by a sudden bend in the river, the first view is attained of the towers of Fort William and the still distant spires and palaces of Calcutta, overtopped by the noble dome of Government house⁴⁹ and its gigantic figure of Minerva. Few things can be more striking than this approach to Calcutta or more likely to attract the admiration of the stranger from its varied novelty and scenic beauty. A broad and rapid river glittering like burnished silver in the sunshine, boats of every shape and variety sailing on its bosom, its banks covered with handsome houses, sloping lawns and luxuriant vegetation, the distant view of the town and the airy tracery of its numerous shipping, the passing and repassing of the gaily painted *Beauleah's*, some laden with fruits and vegetables for the market, and others containing parties of pleasure going out for the day, the various costumes of the boatmen with their loud and unceasing cries, formed a *Coup d'Oeil* not easy to be described and still less easy to be forgotten — As we advanced nearer and nearer the interest and novelty of the scene increased, and just as we got opposite Fort William, as tho' Fortune was resolved to favour me to the utmost, its guns fired a grand salute answered again by the ships of war, in honour of the Prince of Orange who has been on a visit here for some time and set out this morning on a visit to the Governor general (Lord Auckland) who is waiting for him at Meerut. It was getting dusk when we finally anchored off Banksaul Ghaut, and in a very short space of time, nothing was visible in the town but the illuminated windows of its saloons or the bright reflection of a lamp as some fair lady or jovially disposed gentleman were rapidly borne along to the festivities of a dinner party or the uproar of a symposiach. The most profound silence soon succeeded, and at the distance we

⁴⁸ Bishops College—founded by the first bishop of Calcutta, Thomas Fanshawe Middleton (held office 1814-22). Work began on the building on 15 December 1820.

⁴⁹ Government House, Calcutta—built between 1799 and 1803 by Marquess Wellesley. The architect was Charles Wyatt (1759-1819), an officer in the Bengal Engineers and the design was based on James Paine's and Robert Adam's Palladian-style Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire.

lay there was no sound or signal that could announce our vicinity to a mighty metropolis, save the occasional cry of a wandering native or the unearthly howl of the famished jackal prowling thro' its deserted streets. And here I lay down my pen waiting for the inspiration of tomorrow's visit, to enable me to give you some description of my long desired admission into the City of Palaces, and my first introduction into Oriental society. I forgot to mention that I was waited upon two days ago by a multitude of Musquitto's, who are like so many Imps in miniature set loose in the world to torment and annoy poor mortals to the utmost.

Scenes in Calcutta

Sunday — 12th

My time has been so completely occupied and filled up in one way or another since my arrival, that this is the first opportunity I have been able to get for the purpose of continuing my edifying remarks. Now however I shall proceed, and at any rate it has given me the greater leisure to collect facts and look carefully about me. At the first glance few places have a more imposing appearance than Calcutta, for the many houses or rather palaces of the Europeans as they stretch themselves in long lines and spacious squares with their lofty verandahs and pillared portico's present a most noble aspect. Many of these houses are connected with each other by long terraces forming delightful promenades in the cool of the evening, and almost all have gardens in which however small, flowers and flow'ring shrubs of the most beautiful description attain to the greatest perfection. A great number and variety of curious trees are also found growing about these buildings, and everywhere foliage of one kind or another is seen crowning the towers and gateways, while clusters of blossoms unrivalled in size and beauty, hang over the walls and give out their perfume to the passing breeze. The above view will however only answer for parts of the town, for unfortunately in other quarters there are blemishes too many and glaring to pass by unnoticed. Long Bazaars in which the huts constructed of unbaked mud, rough thatch and thick bamboos have the most poverty struck appearance imaginable, are placed at right angles with the principal streets and squares, and native shops of the meanest description are repeatedly seen encroaching upon the princely mansions of the great. The curious admixture of civilized and savage life is seen to still greater advantage by ascending the roof of some central house and looking over the wider portions of the city and its outskirts. Close to some well cultivated garden

an uncleared patch of jungle is to be seen, the tall grass waving by the side of a swamp or stagnant pool, while a little further off the denseness of the forest reminds one of the near vicinity of the Sunderbunds, and its still occasional inhabitants the Tiger and Wild Hog. Cultivation however has been most rapidly extending, and but few years have elapsed since many of the sites now covered with noble looking houses or swarming with bazaars, were divided between forest and swamp, peopled only by fierce and ravenous beasts. The "West End" or fashionable part of Calcutta lies in the suburbs, and forms an entire side of an immense open plain, confronted at one corner by Fort William and at the other by Government house, it is called Chowringee and is inhabited altogether by the wealthier class of Europeans. This is now almost a city in itself occupying a large tract of ground, and its termination is lost in the broad and beautiful avenues leading to Allipore and Kidderpore, two pretty little villages about three miles from the centre of the town and entered by two very neat suspension bridges. The Government house is a superb building standing by itself in a large quadrangle, and its four sides faced by lofty gateways ornamented with the Sphynx and royal arms, and also by the constant presence of one or more Adjutants, who perched upon the loftiest pinnacle they can find, remain for hours as motionless and majestic as tho' they were part of the stonework itself. These birds are protected by the government on account of their services in destroying the offal and carrion of the city, and it is a fine of 50 Rupees to kill one; they are consequently so tame that they are daily seen walking along the most crowded streets fearless of being molested; their most favourite resort however is in Tank square, so called from a large tank in the middle, where they may be constantly seen walking with their solemn aspect along the edge of the water, or resting in the branches of its overhanging trees and looking in their shade like sable spirits of evil: During the greater part of the day Calcutta is almost bathed as it were in sunshine, the Atmosphere shedding a golden haze upon every object, and the river literally too dazzling to gaze upon, added to which the immense multitudes crowding the streets on all sides, principally dressed in white muslin and occasionally diversified by a gay coloured turban, complete the effect of a scene brilliant even to painfulness. As evening approaches the city assumes a different but infinitely

more beautiful aspect. The changeful river now a violet colour, now of the hue of the rose and anon like polished silver studded with gold, shews the white sailed skiff or the lazy Budgerow in bright relief, whilst many a noble edifice before obscured in the hazy veil of intense sunshine, comes out in the soft shadows of an Eastern twilight with most beautiful effect. The refreshing coolness of the hour also invites those inhabitants who have been close prisoners during the day, to walk out in their balconies and verandahs; carriages of every description and colour from the humble Palkee Garnee to the dashing Barouche are seen at the doors, and horses and dogs are led out to exercise. All the different roads are gay with equipages, but the Strand, a long and broad avenue stretching along the side of the river, is the grand resort for the circles of fashion and the presence of beauty. Here may be seen to advantage the last importation of female fascination, the admired centre of an admiring circle, the object of jealousy and alarm to those who having had their day are now become *passée*, and a subject of fertile speculation to the "idle many" who have nothing else to think about, or who want a more interesting topic to debate upon. But a short time however is allowed for the beauty to display her charms, or the Belle her newly arrived fashions, Night at once spreads its mantle o'er the scene, and starry darkness speedily pervades the whole of the lately brilliant mass. This is the signal for thousands of lights to gleam and glitter thro' the city, every window is thrown open and all exhibit a gay illumination as the all important hour of dinner is at hand; This past the streets again resound with the wheels of carriages, torches are glancing in all directions, and ever and anon sweet strains of music are borne from the open *jalousie* of some bright saloon, where the votaries of *Terpsichore* are busily engaged in their vocation or the more intellectual *conversazione* is assembled. Long ere these have dispersed, crowds of Jackals who have lurked through the day in drains and gullies or hidden themselves in the numerous holes and corners of Calcutta, rush shrieking through the streets and uttering the most appalling sounds, whilst the natives who rejoice in any kind of noise no matter what it is, parade about singing and playing on tom toms, brass pans and other discordant instruments, till weary and confused the spectator is glad at last to escape and retire to the solitude and silence of his own bedroom. So at least I felt, when having passed

the whole day and half the night in observing what I have above attempted to describe, I felt myself so overpowered (sic) by lassitude and fatigue that I went fast asleep as I returned home in my Palanquin, and could hardly muster up strength to take off my clothes and creep within the precincts if the indispensable Musquitto curtain.

Palanquins are the universal conveyances during the day, and are the most delightful and luxurious things imaginable; Their shape is more like that of a large trunk than any thing else, with sliding doors at either side and a window at the bottom – The interior is fitted up with silk lining, and contains a small drawer to hold any little article; the bottom is covered with a straw mattress on which you lie xtended at full length with the head and shoulders resting on a large square cushion also made of fine straw, that is suspended from the upper end; This with a smaller cushion for the feet completes the furniture of a Palanquin, in which you are carried on the shoulders of four men at the rate of about three miles an hour – The motion is very easy and quite free from jolting, and if the bearers (who are all of the Gentoo cast) are strong and of a uniform height, I know no conveyance that is equal to it in point of ease and comfort. They are remarkably cheap, a first rate one with four men costing only a Rupee (2/) for the day, for which they attend you wherever you go, and if you dine out, wait to take you home. I have engaged one by the month and it is always ready waiting for me on the steps of the Ghaut at whatever time of day I may happen to want it. – I spent Friday morning in going through the principal Bazaars which are three, the Old China, New China and Burra, there is one also called the Theives (sic) Bazaar, but from its ominous name I did not venture into it. They are very different places from what I had fancied, consisting merely of narrow dirty looking streets with shops on each side. There are no windows and none of the good are exhibited to view, but kept carefully packed up within; The sellers stand at the doors accosting every one that passes and proclaiming the names and cheapness of their wares in concert with twenty others. Salaam, Sahib want good India handkerchief? Walk in here, very cheap; China crape, shawls, scarfs very grand, Master just see, no buy if he no want; dat fellow dam rogue, he cheat like devil, I honest man, Allah-il-Allah! Sahib want gloves,

Ladies dresses, white breeches, shop full, Master capital judge; dat rogue no got good, no body buy there, all English gentlemen come here; Master very rich, plenty Rupees, if Master go there dat ugly devil cheat him, Haram zadda ma ka chute! – Such was word for word the conversation going on all around me as long as I was in the bazaars, nor did it cease till I got into the palanquin and shut myself from their view. Many of the articles I saw especially the shawls and scarfs were very beautiful but excessively dear, few being less than 100 Rupees and many above 6 and 700; they always ask about half more than they mean to take, and the above are the reduced prices. A China crape handkerchief that I looked at was valued at 20 Rupees, and if he gave it for less the man declared that he should not get his cost price; I offered him 10 rupees which he refused but came down to 18 on my rising to go, 16 at the doorway, 12 at the bottom step and 10! when he saw me going towards another shop. Such was also the case in regard to a Hat, for which I was asked 21 rupees and got it for 11. I should not have got on so well by myself, but having been forewarned of their knavery to strangers I took my Kitmurgar or servant with me, who told me what the things were worth and what I ought to give for them. A native servant is indispensable here for taking care of your clothes, waiting at meals, performing commissions, going errands &c. which a European servant could never do half so well. The wages of a Kitmurgar is only 8 rupees per month, and for this he feeds and clothes himself and attends daily from morning to night, besides accompanying you on journeys of any moderate extent. My man who was highly recommended to me is a very intelligent and handsome fellow, and I think myself very fortunate in getting him; when dressed in his rose coloured turban and cummurbund and white muslin tunic, with the natural additions of long curly hair – and jet black Mustachios, I assure you he cuts a most imposing figure – At one o'clock I went to take Tiffin with Mr Downing, a young lawyer here, who was the first acquaintance I made and who is one of the pleasantest persons I ever met with. A Calcutta tiffin is much the same as an English dinner, there being as great a variety of dishes and a dessert afterwards. It is wonderful how they can eat so much as they do, and then sit down to a dinner afterwards at 7 o'clock, but habit makes it a second nature with them. Beer is drunk in vast quantities and is certainly the most refreshing beverage for a hot climate, it is made

much more bitter and not nearly so strong as with us, and I saw one person drink three bottles to his own share, which compared to some was, I am told, very moderate. In fact all the inhabitants of Calcutta male and female are most staunch advocates for the doctrine conveyed in Dr Johnson's celebrated epigram;⁵⁰

Hermit hoar in solemn cell
Wearing out life's ev'ning gray,
Strike thy bosom, Sage, and tell
Where is bliss, and which the way?
Thus I spoke and speaking sighed,
Scarce repressed the starting tear,
When the hoary sage replied,
"Come my lad and drink some beer."

At 7 o'clock I went to dine with Mr G. where there was a large party and a very pleasant one. On my arrival I was ushered by several servants or Peons into a very lofty and spacious room, where the company assembled till the announcement of dinner. Two rows of beautiful pillars extended the whole length of the apartment, and open doors on one side led into a billiard room and a large balcony; the floor was covered with very fine matting, no carpets being used, and the furniture of which there was very little compared to an English drawingroom, was made of the most superb Mahogany and Maple wood. When dinner was ready, large folding doors were thrown open, letting in a flood of light from numerous chandeliers and presenting a novel and beautiful sight to the unaccustomed eye of a European. The table which was covered with the most magnificent China and silver plate, was surrounded by a crowd of servants in full oriental costume, each standing behind the chair of his respective master or mistress ready to attend to their wants and anticipating them almost before they can be named. Numbers of wax lights were arranged along the walls, and a large Punkah extended the length of the dinner table, to keep the room at a proper temperature; when we were all seated the scene was very gay, and for some time I forgot my appetite in the occupation of looking about me. The number of dishes was prodigious one following another without intermission and the last

⁵⁰ "Hermit hoar in... drink some beer" — Dr Johnson from James Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 1777, Ch. XXIV.

course consisted entirely of various kinds of Curry, but very different from what are so called in England. Every variety of wine was on the table from Lort Shraub (Port or Claret) to the sparkling Simkin (Champagne) the bottles being covered with differently coloured cloths wetted in a solution of salt petre to keep them cool. I was struck with one custom that is prevalent of asking you to take beer as they do wine, but I could not help thinking it a very capital practise. When anything is wanted and no servant is present, it is usual to call out Qui Hi (who waits) which never fails to bring forth the immediate response of Sahib (Sir). The gentlemen sat but a short time after the ladies, which I find is the universal custom, and after coffee had been handed round, we separated, I remaining to have a game at billiards with young G. and most of the others going to a large ball that was given by Dwarkanuth Tagore,⁵¹ a wealthy and celebrated Rajah in Calcutta.

I got up early yesterday morning to take a walk by the river side, and was horridly disgusted first by coming upon a dead body that was being devoured by Vultures, and then by seeing no less than three others floating slowly along and covered with crows who were pecking away with the greatest gusto possible, especially at the eyes and lips. This revolting sight is seen more or less with every tide, for the natives never bury their dead, but having partially burnt or rather singed them, they are thrown into the river thus to become a banquet for these loathsome animals. And yet this water thus impregnated with the essence of dead men and women, besides a variety of other oblations liberally bestowed by the Indians, is the daily drink of every person in Calcutta from the highest to the lowest; and I must say that when filtered it is excellent, always provided you think nothing about its chemical composition.

I passed the remainder of the day in writing home and also to Wellington Powell, who I intend if it is possible to go and visit next week, and in the evening I went out to dine with Mr Dallas where there was great fun and jollity, and where I slept all night without Musquitto curtains; "and thereby hangs a tale" which however I have not time to relate now, as a party of friends are coming on board to tiff. So for the present I make my Salaam.

⁵¹ Dwarkanuth Tagore—possibly Dwarkanath Tagore (1794-1846), a Bengali entrepreneur and ancestor of Rabindranath Tagore.

Thursday — 16th

For the whole of last Monday and Tuesday I was obliged to keep myself a close prisoner, from the direful attacks of Musquittos, which I partly brought on myself as I mentioned above by incautiously sleeping without gauze curtains. You can have no idea what a frightful face I had from the swelling and marks occasioned by their bites. It looked exactly as though I was suffering under an aggravated chicken pock, and never was a poor devil more annoyed than I am, especially as I am told that the marks will not disappear for a fortnight at least; O with what unction I could perform Lady Macbeth's night gown scene and electrify the Audience with "Out d— d spots"⁵² - However I ventured out yesterday to go and tiff with Padre Charles as he is called, the Scotch clergyman here, who has got a delightful house at Chowringee as well as a very pleasant and pretty wife, whom I had before met with in the days of her virginity. I saw there for the first time a delicious fruit called the Custard Apple, which is also common in the Mauritius but was not ripe at the time we were there. Its average size is that of a large Orange deeply indented with squares after the manner of the pineapple; The inside is precisely like thick Custard and requires to be eaten with a spoon; it is at once the pleasantest and most curious fruit I have yet seen. Oranges and Limes are just in their season and as plentiful as potatoes in the Emerald Isle, they are sold at 3 for a Pice, four of which coin make an Ana or 1½ of our money, so that you get 50 for sixpence. The lowest coin (so to speak) in India is the Cowrie, a small shell found in the river, 60 of which go to one Pice and as there are 64 pice to the Rupee, it consequently requires 3840 of them to make the same sum, so that a man might load himself and his family with money and yet not be able to boast of more than 4 or 5 shillings. The Cowrie is only used by the poorest class of natives in dealing amongst themselves. The next coin in value is the Pice a troublesome tho' at the same time useful copper piece smaller and thinner than a halfpenny, and about the value of ¾ of a farthing. The Ana is only a nominal exchange not really existing and reckoned either in pice or ¼ Rupees. The Rupee is of silver value 2/, and the highest coin in circulation is the gold Mohore value 16 Rupees and very scarce, every thing being charged and paid in Rupees or Promissory Notes — And so much for the Exchange of India.

⁵² "Out damned spots" —he misquotes *Macbeth*, Act 5, Sc.i, line 32.

= The dress of the natives particularly of the better class is very picturesque, consisting almost entirely of white muslin thrown round and round them, and which no body but themselves could ever wear half so gracefully as they do. Shoes are seldom worn except by the Baboos and Sircars and some few others, who have them of differently coloured leathers, often ornamented with gold and silver lace, and very much turned up at the toe. No native whatever be his rank ever enters a room without leaving his shoes at the door, it being the same token of respect with them as taking the hat off is with us.= The principal Castes here are the Mussulmen by far the most numerous, the Hindoo and the Gentoo, beside the Brahmin, the highest of all; The Gentoo is the lowest, composing the large body of Palanquin bearers and also found among the Dingy Wallahs or boatmen. Their only garment as a cloth round the middle, their forehead and temples are painted with red and white lines and they have their hair all shaved off except a long tuft on the crown, by which they imagine they are to be pulled up to heaven at the last day. They are so bigoted that if a European only looks into the pot in which they are boiling their rice, they immediately throw it away; I myself saw this done yesterday, because I went up to one of their fires to light a cheroot and took off the cover of the kettle to see what was in it. — The native Ladies are not particularly handsome and are but seldom seen out of their palanquins, but the Armenian and Cashmere women are really beautiful; their complexion is light and their feet and figures, especially of the Armenians are perfect. The Cashmere woman is rather inclined to en bon point, something of Lord Byron's Dudù make, and they have a custom of staining their eyelashes black, which imparts a peculiarly lustrous and at the same time languishing impression to their large and swimming orbs. All wear Bangles and Bracelets on their Arms and legs, many of them exceedingly valuable being of solid gold and silver, and enormous earrings of uncouth shapes, with occasionally rings thro' their noses, a fashion however chiefly confined to the Hindoos. They do little else all day but smoke their Hookahs or Hubble-bubbles, which are mostly very handsome and filled not with tobacco, but with an aromatic mixture containing opium termed Jaggery, and the smoke from which is drawn thro' Rose water. During a call I made with Downing upon one of his native clients (an event by the by of very rare occurrence) who was a Beebee of some

consequence, I was much amused at the incessant gurgling and puffing that proceeded from three Hookahs and their owners but which at last got very tiresome as, not being able to speak their language, and they being too closely veiled to allow me to exercise the function of sight, I had nothing else to do but sit quiet and listen. — The most generally handsome women in Calcutta next to the English are the Chee Chees or Half Casts of which there are great numbers very wealthy and respectable, both married and unmarried; they are generally the offspring of European fathers and Native mothers, are always well educated and have the most intelligent and expressive faces I ever saw; their eyes and hair like those of their sisters in the Isle of France are particularly beautiful. I met two of them, sisters, the other evening on the course, who positively looked like two bright Angels just come down from heaven, only slightly discoloured by their aerial journey through the grosser atmosphere of this lower universe; God bless them, said I.

Water is very abundant in Calcutta and necessarily so from the numerous bathings and ablutions practised by the natives and enjoined by their religion. It is preserved in large handsome reservoirs called Tanks, which are always situated in the centre of a square and form a most pleasing object for the eye; They have two large flights of stone steps, one at each end, reaching to the water, and they are carefully guarded at night to prevent them being poisoned, a thing that at one time frequently occurred. At almost all hours of the day but especially at morning and evening crowds of natives resort to these tanks, and still greater numbers to the river which they regard as sacred, and, immersed up to their middles, go through a long string of prayers and absurd ceremonies; which being ended they commence a series of dips, first towards Mecca and then towards Medina, at the same time filling their mouths with water and then squibbing it out as far as they can, and finally conclude by making a most out of the way splashing and hubbub for their own private entertainment.

Sunday — 19th

A stranger walking through Calcutta cannot but be surprized at the prodigious numbers of Hawks and Crows, that frequent its streets and fly about him in all directions. Every building is

covered with them, and so bold are they that it is a common thing to see them carrying off the food of an unwary native, or ravishing from the basket of some itinerant “conna” vendor — During our passage up the river when the ship was surrounded by flocks of these birds, I used to amuse myself occasionally by throwing first a bit of meat into the air, which was invariably caught by the Hawks before it fell, and then a hot coal which burnt their mouths and put them into a ferocious state of rage and scream. Vultures are also abundant but keep more to the river side, where they find abundance of provision of a far richer and superior character as to nourishment than the indiscriminate offal of the town can afford. I allude of course to the dead bodies, on which they entirely subsist, live and have their being, never quitting one till all the choicest morceaux have disappeared and nothing is left worth the trouble of pecking for, when they bequeath it to the crows and fishes and follow up the scent of some other one; I have now several times seen a full grown and perfect corpse carried up by one tide, and again brought down by the next a corrupted and ghastly spectacle, its flesh hanging from the bones in shreds and tatters, and the greasy and discoloured water bubbling with uncontrolled freedom in the loathsome cavities of its well scooped eye sockets. Faugh! It makes me sick to think of it, and then the smell, ugh, God grant that I may never be buried by a native on the shores of Hindostan.

Calcutta is infested with black Rats of an immense size, like little pigs, who run about the streets at night in regiments, quite unheeded by the natives who are too great cowards to throw a stone at one: At a gentleman’s house one day in a room on the ground floor I saw no less than three of these beasts coolly march along under our very noses. They are exceedingly destructive to merchandize and stores kept in the Godowns or warehouses of the differend (sic) shopkeepers. — The shops here are not very numerous compared with the size of the place, but they are generally very extensive and combine in many cases several trades together. The handsomest and most showy ones are the Jewellers, Confectioners and Chemists, the latter beaming in all the refulgence of Red, Yellow and Blue which so eminently distinguishes their bretheren (sic) in the towns, villages and metropolis of merry old England — European articles of every kind are most terribly expensive, Rupees being always charged

for shillings, which in fact is exactly double. This is what makes money fly so fast in India, for there being no intermediate coin shillings and sixpences, you must either fork out your rupee when less would do, or fill your pockets with dirty looking pice ad infinitum, till like the Roman damsel you sink at last under the accumulated pressure of riches and verdigris. — The shopkeepers are important looking personages, and live at an expensive rate, having capital houses either in the town or its suburbs and all keeping a carriage or buggy, which are no doubt all paid for from the preposterous charges they put on their goods.

I went this morning to St. Andrew's church to hear Mr Charles preach, who by the by preaches rayther too long, like some of his breth'ren nearer home, and was quite astonished at the beauty and elegance with which the interior is fitted up. The floor is altogether composed of white and black marble, which makes it most delightfully cool and at the same time most confoundedly slippery as I testified to the amusement of many, and it is the first presbyterian church I ever saw or heard of that contains an organ — Punkahs are suspended over every second or third pew, and there are the most nid nid naddin arm chairs to sit in that ever were manufactured — There was also a charity collection (a thing that invariably happens whenever I go to a strange church) and an ugly favoured box being shoved into the pew, I was obliged to pay for my seat nolens, volens. When I returned on board I found a large party who had come to tiffin, assembled round a group of Conjurers and Snake dancers (this being the principal day for these kind of people to go about) and was perfectly amazed at the curious exhibition I saw. They handled the most poisonous snakes, among which was a magnificent Cobra di Capello, with the greatest indifference, letting them wind round their head, neck and limbs in the most frightful manner. During the whole time and also while they are dancing, a man plays upon a small tom-tom or little drum, and sings in the most exquisitely ugly manner, nor dare he leave off this till they are safely housed in their baskets, as when removed from the fascination of music they speedily get savage and dangerous. They also exhibited that often heard of feat of making a goat stand on the top of a tall stick, which is done by gradually adding to the height and letting the goat get accustomed to his exaltation by degrees; it was a pretty sight and remarkably well

performed. The conjuring tricks were mainly a repetition of what are done every day in London by the Indian jugglers, but many of them were very astonishing and appeared to smack a good deal of genuine diablerie, especially one in which a large hens egg was sent flying out of the nose by a villainously loud sneeze. These were succeeded by boats filled with shells and birds of every variety and plumage. The most lovely as well as the most numerous were the Paroquets, a small bird of a bright green in its body, and having a head exactly resembling the colour and tints of a ripe Orleans plum. There were also different kinds of Pigeons, talking Minas, Bulbuls who have a remarkable tuft on their heads, Java sparrows, Avadavats an exceedingly minute and elegant little creature, Owls, Peacocks and a host of others unnameable by me, though fully deserving to be so. It is vastly amusing to bargain with these men and see how they come down from their first price to comparatively nothing: as an example I may mention that a box of shells for which they asked 20 rupees, was finally bought by me for 3!!

Tomorrow I intend going to Chinsurah to see Wellington Powell, and when there I shall proceed about 50 miles further up the river to a place called Dhobah, for the triple purpose of shooting, seeing the country and calling upon a gentleman to whom I have got a letter of introduction, and who rejoices in the euphonious name of Wagentreiber – And now I must to bed for it is waxing late, and I have to be up betimes tomorrow morning to taker a ride to Kidderpore – Buona Notte.

Saturday – 23rd

During the last week I have been domesticated at Chinsurah in Wellington's quarters, and very agreeable and pleasant my sojourn has been, for besides Well. himself a host, his brother officers are among the most liking men I ever met with, and were exceedingly kind and attentive to me. Chinsurah lies about 30 miles from Calcutta on the banks of the river, and it is easy to get there in one tide if you go by water - I have engaged a boat called a Beauleah built expressly for sailing on the river, and a very pleasant and comfortable mode of conveyance, being fitted up with sofa's in a very goodsized cabin and having 7 men to row. I left Calcutta at two o'clock last Monday and enjoyed the sail excessively, the scenery being very beautiful and interspersed

with frequent buildings, Pagoda's and Mosques of different kinds and dimensions. About half way lies Barrackpore a military station and the country residence of the Governor General; it was at one time celebrated for its Zoological park commenced by the Marquis of Hastings, but now almost destroyed by the disgraceful neglect and parsimonious economy of the Government; nearly opposite Barrackpore on the other side of the river is Serampore, a kind of City of refuge for insolvent debtors &c. but not possessing any particular external attractions. A little further on is a large and very extensive Pagoda, its buildings stretching on either side of a wide Ghaut or landing place and frequented at particular periods by vast crowds of Hindoo worshippers. The banks of the Hoogly at this spot are covered with trees of remarkably beautiful foliage, peopled with birds of divers plumage, and their dark shade contrasted with the bright glare of sunshine reflected from the silvery bosom of the river, have a most refreshing and sweetly pleasing effect. As it was beginning to get dusk we passed the most picturesque and highly ornamented Mosque I have yet seen, except as depicted in some oriental drawing, and which in the gathering shades of twilight shewed to great advantage. It is evidently of great antiquity, for from its ruinous condition in some parts, it is not now used as a place of worship, the Mahometans having built a smaller one for that purpose at a little distance from it, and its white walls and lofty minarets sparkling in the rays of the setting sun, displayed themselves in strong and speaking contrast to the solemn and mouldering ruins of the other, thus slowly yielding to the power and spoliation of all destroying Time. My servant who is a devout Mussulman and would not touch Pork for the universe, as soon as we came opposite the Mosque, went down upon his knees like a shot, and proceeded to offer up his evening sacrifice of prayers, the burden of which consisted in reciting Allah il allah, Allah Ak bar, and numerous bendings of his body and touching the ground with his forehead at rapid intervals; after which he got up apparently much refreshed in spirit and commenced laying out dinner for me, which I attacked like a true Briton, for the river breeze carried hunger in its breath. Soon after we came to Chandernagore a small French settlement and the only one that Nation possesses in India, and ere I had finished the Cheroot that was lit opposite its windows, the well known bugle call

announced our vicinity to the place of my destination, where accordingly in a few minutes the boat came to an anchor, and where in a still shorter time I was enjoying the happiest moments I have known since quitting England, in hearing from W. the latest news of home and its inmates, and in talking over the recollections of other days, the reminiscences of bygone years. Chinsurah is but a small place, not gifted with any particular natural beauties, and more known as a manufactory of Cigars than anything else, of which great quantities are made from the Sandonay tobacco. The barracks are spacious and commodious, the rooms being lofty, well ventilated and of tolerable dimensions, in fact they are palaces to many of the officers quarters I have seen in England. On Wednesday morning there was a review of the regiment by Sir Willoughby Cotton, and I turned out of bed to see it but was far more amused with watching the reviewer than the review, for of all the big bellies I ever saw (and I've seen some large ones too) Sir W.C. had the most enormous; if Eglon's king of Moab⁵³ was as large, why, woe to the floor of his favourite summer parlour.

There is a very large Alligator here preserved in the museum of the Baboo's College,⁵⁴ which was caught last year after having destroyed several people; it is nearly 20 feet long and in its stomach was found the arm of a woman and various bracelets, bangles &c. shewing his amorous propensities and feminine desires: Alligators of a smaller size are very common all through the river, and from their voracity and strength render the pleasures of bathing very unsafe, more especially when assisted by the ground shark another frequent and terrible animal. — Some of the rides about Chinsurah are very pretty, and I have been out every evening on horseback to see them all, and other places as well that were worth exploring. I went yesterday ev'ning with several others to an establishment of Ice fields,

⁵³ "Eglon's king of Moab" — from Judges 3:17. It seems Richmond misremembers his Sunday school, or else his grammar is incorrect; Eglon was a King. Eglon was also a city, but not in Moab.

⁵⁴ "Baboo's College" — 'Baboos' comprised the English-speaking indigenous elite who constituted the principal mediators with the colonial authorities. The college may have been the result of Macaulay's Minute on Education (1835), designed to transform India into an English-speaking, Christian country (and more precisely create native clerks for the colonial apparatus). Western accounts of Anglo-Indian life often favoured transliterations that accorded 'baboos' the greatest affinity with 'baboons'.

where to my no small amazement that article is manufactured every night – It is accomplished by placing numerous rows of shallow earthenware pans in the ground, filled with water and kept cool by saltpetre. The evaporation that goes on during the night is sufficient to produce a degree of cold that makes a thin coating of ice appear in each pan, the aggregate of all which affords a considerable quantity. Ices of all varieties and flavours are abundant in Calcutta, and by no means expensive, costing only 8 Annas (1/) and being very nearly as large again as the London ones at 6^d. En passant I may here remark that a person must take a journey to India to appreciate fully the melting virtues of an Ice, the fabled Ambrosia of the Gods, could hardly have been superior. To day there has been a long talked of cricket match between Chinsurah and Calcutta, but as the sun was rather too warm for mere spectators, I soon left the field, and after having witnessed part of a very uninteresting cock fight, I sat down to continue this journal and smoke a Hookah, which however I must now relinquish to dress for dinner. Tomorrow I continue my travels, going but slowly that I may get the more shooting, and shall call here again on my way back towards the end of the week, when Wellington has agreed to return with me to Calcutta, where I expect we shall have very good sport together, at least it shant be our faults if we don't.

Saturday – 30th

I mentioned in my last that I was going further up the river to visit Dhobah, which I accordingly did and with my gun only for a companion, have now explored above 90 miles of the shores of the Hoogly in the most delightful manner possible, the principal events &c. I shall now proceed to relate.

Soon after leaving Chinsurah the scenery loses a great part of its previous beauty except in detached places. Long banks of sand frequently extend almost as far as the eye can reach, without a tree being visible or a house to be seen. These sands are much frequented by Brahminy Ducks, the shyest and most knowing birds in creation, for they will but seldom let you come within shot and the moment you raise your gun, off they go “and leave not a wreck behind.” However, I managed to bring one down out of the cabin window to the vast delight of the boatmen, who plumped up to their necks in water to cut its throat before it

should die, as Mussulmen will not eat anything from which blood has not flowed previous to death. I got several times out of the boat to walk along the shore but the sun as often compelled me to return, and indeed there was no great temptation for except a few Pariah dogs and an occasional Eagle nothing was to be seen. The heat at last made me very hungry and having signified the same to my servant, he proceeded to report the like to a highly loquacious fowl, and in a very short time one of the most capital Curries I ever tasted was set before me, with the additions of Potatoes, Cold beef, bread, butter, Oranges, Guavas, Plantains and the fluid auxiliaries of Wine, Brandy and Beer, so that I was able to make a very respectable dinner in my Aqueous Saloon. Whilst thus harmoniously employed, my olfactory nerves became suddenly aware of a far different odour from that of the savoury dish before me, and which from its peculiar intensity I was convinced could only belong to a corruptible descendant of Adam. Accordingly having taken an observation I soon discovered a body floating majestically down the stream, which when it came nearer turned out to be a female with the anomaly of a baby not a week old hanging by its arms round her neck; an enormous Vulture sat on the former busily employed in devouring the latter, and as I felt rather piqued at having my dinner interrupted, I sent a ball through his body which effectually prevented him from completing his repast. By this time we had arrived at a place called Sook Saugor and it looking a likely place for sport I went on shore, where however I did nothing but chase Monkeys till nearly dark. They were immense creatures, almost as large as myself, and their agility was astonishing; After much ado I wounded one as he was mounting a tree, but his companions helped him away thro' the jungle where I could not follow. I shot some Doves luckily for supper, which my man stewed in prime style, and after having read and smoked for a couple of hours I got into bed, the boat having anchored on account of the tide opposite the village of Culna. Next morning I was again on shore at sun rise, traversing a field that was literally covered with the bleached skulls and whitening skeletons of human beings, left there by Jackalls and Vultures and never removed by the natives. The country was now again becoming very beautiful and more cultivated than any I have passed yet; the banks were thickly wooded and in places very precipitous, and every now and then a nullah or

small branch of the river shewed its vista'd perspective in all the beauties of foliage and sunshine. After breakfast as I did not expect to reach Dhobah till late at night, I set out to cater for my dinner and under the guidance of one of the boatmen I came to a place where 50 persons might each have shot his own dinner. It was an inland lake or rather immense Paddy field, and actually swarming with Snipe Curlew and Wild Duck. I spent several hours here rowing about in a Dingy or small Canoe, and killed more than was sufficient for myself servant and 7 boatmen, besides keeping the best as a present for M^r W. As I was taking my solitary dinner at 2 o'clock it all of a sudden came across me that this was X^tmas day, and I could not help comparing it with my preceding ones, so different was it in every respect. At any rate, I drank all your healths in sundry glasses of excellent Madeira (a gift from the Mess at Chinsurah) and then went to sleep in hopes that I might dream of you. I was awakened soon after 5 with the intelligence that we were just at Dhobah, being much sooner than I expected; Whilst dressing I sent my servant with the letter of introduction, who returned accompanied by M^r W.'s son to bring me straightways to dinner, as a X^tmas party was assembled and just on the point of sitting down. Accordingly off we went and after a very kind reception, I proceeded in spite of my noontide tiffin and after the example of those around me to enter into the joys afforded by those genuine old English dishes Roast beef and Plum pudding. Dhobah is very prettily situated on the side of a nullah and is celebrated for the extent and mechanism of its sugar works. I went all thro' them next day with Mr W. and was much gratified at seeing the different processes and conditions of the fluid, from the expressed juice to refined sugar. N.B. The Sugar Candy was particularly fine, and I could not but take away a considerable lump to sweeten my coffee in the Beauleah. There is also a large Indigo manufactory here; but as the owner was from home I did not see it. In the afternoon we went out shooting clad in Solah hats, which are very large shaped like a mushroom and as light as a feather, being made of the same material as Rice paper, which contrary to its name is obtained from the lower part of a thick kind of Bamboo that grows in water and is named the Solah tree. During our wanderings we came to a small Pagoda having an altar in the middle, on which was placed one of their idols decorated with flowers and having a lamp burning before it. It

was an absurd little clay figure of a dog on a horse, and as nobody was near I took up his Godship and put him in my pocket, much to the disquiet of young W. who directly set off as hard as he could go and advised me to do the same. This I did at a somewhat slower pace, not understanding altogether his reasons but Mr W. senior told me afterwards that if the natives had seen me they would most certainly have proceeded to mortal violence for insulting their temple. Luckily no harm came of it, and I have preserved my little Deity to ornament or rather disfigure your mantelpiece. The next morning (Wednesday) I went to see some Elephants that are kept by a gentleman near here and met them going down to the river to drink, mounted by several people. Had I not been excessively sore from a fall the preceding day whilst hunting Monkeys in a Bamboo tope, I should have had a ride for the curiosity of the thing, but as things went I could by no means do it conveniently. In the evening after dinner I was obliged to leave my hospitable friends tho' it was long before they would allow me to go, and again set off for Chinsurah, having spent three most agreeable days at Dbohah and experienced a kindness and wellcome that I shall never forget. As I had already seen most of the country and wishing to get back to Calcutta by Saturday, I did not delay much by staying to shoot, and nothing in particular occurred to me, except that on Thursday afternoon being somewhat flammegasted by a Bull running at me, I discharged two barrels full of shot into his rounds, which so infuriated the natives that I thought it high time to speed back to the Beauleah, where the boatmen who had witnessed the adventure and were highly delighted with it, soon put me out of their reach and power, advising me at the same time to shoot at their legs "for making bobbery with Master", which however I did not do, though fully convinced that I was more sinned against than sinning.⁵⁵ The heat and excitement of my run added to the effects of a snipe dinner sent me asleep, which continued uninterrupted till a bump of the boat awakened me to find that we had arrived at Chinsurah. At 2 o'clock next afternoon Wellington and I set out for Calcutta each with his gun, which after having gone a few miles we went on shore to use, intending to prosecute our journey in an hour or so, but our manifold adventures with Jackalls, Vultures, Dogs and a scolding old woman (Good Lord how she did blow us up) so beguiled

⁵⁵ 'more sinned against than sinning' — *King Lear*, Act 3, Sc.ii, line 60.

the time, that night had set in ere we got back to the boat. Little however did that signify to us at the time, our servants were set to cook, our appetites were good, and with our gun cases for a table, a beer bottle for a candlestick, and a ramrod for a corkscrew, few people have ever made a merrier or better dinner than we did that evening off hot Mutton chops, Pigeons and Snipe. Whilst throwing the last pigeon bone out of the window, I remarked that the surface of the water was covered with lights, which proved to be from little boats about a foot long, carrying small lamps of cocoa nut oil. I had often heard of this Hindoo custom and was particularly pleased at this opportunity of seeing it. I have seldom seen a prettier sight than these multitudes of little fire boats thus floating down the river in dark night, with the occasional disappearance of one as if by magic, like a falling star bright and luminous in its course at first, but still quenched in the atmosphere at last; You will find the ceremony further attended to in Moore's *Lalla Rookh*.⁵⁶

After a comfortable dinner and pleasant chat we had our beds made up in the boat, and both of us slept without waking till the mornings light shewed us close to the sides of the good ship *Hesperus*.

Saturday Jan^{ry} 6th

As I anticipated Wellington and I spent our time together in Calcutta very pleasantly, and the only regret was that he could not stay longer. The town is very gay at present all sorts of amusements and parties going on, and there is not an evening next week in which I am not engaged. I went the other night to a "Nautch" an entertainment given by a Native Rajah and very common in the warm season; its great attraction consists in the Nautch or dancing girls, whose performances are much admired by the natives. I cannot say I thought much of it, for it is not dancing but merely a series of postures which they go through to the music of their own voice and of little silver bells fastened about their persons, and when one party is tired another takes it up. Their dress was fantastic but picturesque, and some of them were exceedingly beautiful, for they are not veiled like the other native women. Every Rajah or Chief has several of these Nautch girls attached to his establishment, who are selected according

⁵⁶ *Lalla Rookh* (1817) a melodramatic poem by Thomas Moore (1779-1852).

to the excellence of their voice, face and figure. Most of those I saw were Georgian and Cashmere girls and their dancing assumed a very different aspect after the departure of the ladies. I was at a much pleasanter ball the next evening, it being one of the Reunions that take place monthly and are most numerous attended. I had a complete birds eye view of all the beauty in Calcutta, and verily there were not a few who might be the boast and ornament of any city or nation under the sun. I shall have a still better opportunity of seeing them next week, as there is to be a grand Fancy ball in honour of the Queen, and having been fortunate enough to get a ticket, I promise myself much amusement from witnessing the gay and brilliant scene that it will doubtless be. — The principal morning lounge for gentlemen here are the Auction rooms in which goods of every variety and description are constantly selling at amazingly low prices. Prudence however but seldom allows me to enter them, as I always find myself giving more nods to the Auctioneer than My profession brings Rupees to me. Nevertheless the other day acting on the hint of a friend I bid 140 Rupees for a horse and got it, and the next day sold him in the very same place for 160, so that after deducting 3 rupees Auction duty, and 1 for getting a man to go through the room and praise it up, I was a clear gainer of 16 Rupees, a sum not to be sneezed at here I assure you, however I don't mean to try the thing a second time lest perchance I might find no one to ride the horse but myself, and that would be decidedly inconvenient. — Among the cheapest things in Calcutta are books and prints, not got in the shops but carried about by natives in the street who shove them into your palanquin and will run after you for miles in hopes of selling them. I generally take one and read away till arrived at my place of destination and then give it back for him to try some other person; Sandal wood fans are also hawked about in the same manner, and tho' they ask 2 or 3 Rupees for one at first, I have always got them for half a one. Yesterday I bought a young jackal in the street, not larger than a kitten for 3d. — I went last evening to see a body burnt, having heard that it was to be performed in a superior manner. When I got there they were in the act of pouring Ghee (butter) and Cocoa Nut oil on the pile which was made chiefly of dry Bamboos, previous to setting it on fire. The corpse lay on the top naked as it was born, and my servant in the height of his zeal wanted me to mount and smell the Sandal

Wood Oil that it had been anointed with; This however I would by no means comply with and in a very short time after the flames had reached the body there was quite smell enough to send me off, tho' not till I had seen it bubbling and crackling like a young pig roasting before the fire. On leaving this spot I did rather a foolish thing, for wrapped up body and face in an immense robe of white cloth, in fact disguised as one of the Faithful, I went into a place of Mahomedan worship and sat down among 200 others, (keeping however precious near the door) to hear the Koran expounded, and it would have done your heart good, had you seen me bowing like a Mandarin and religiously repeating Bismillah, Allah il Allah &c. every half minute, and my servant (who would do anything for me) standing as close as possible in a mortal funk lest I should be discovered and whispering what I was to do when I found myself at fault. At last they all got up to kneel down, and not knowing but that I might be pitched on for an extempore prayer, I thought it best to bolt which I did uncommonly quick when I saw them begin to look round, and then went to D.'s to unrobe who could hardly credit his senses at my appearance and hearing my doings. - To give you some idea of Calcutta hospitality towards me I shall subjoin the programme of my next weeks engagements. Monday, a party to the Fancy Ball. Tuesday, Dine with Mr A Smith. Wednesday D° with Dr Nicholson. Thursday, Ball at M^r Dallas. Friday, Dine with M^r Charles. Saturday, D° with M^r Gladstone. In fact I never met anywhere with greater kindness than I have done in this city and I shall ever bear it in remembrance with gratitude and pleasure: If I should return again the friendships I have made, will be of great advantage.

Thursday — 18th

Since writing last I have paid a second though somewhat shorter visit to Chinsurah from which I returned last Sunday. I went there on Thursday Evening to be present at a ball that was given by the officers, and to which Well. had sent me an invite. It was very gay and agreeable, enlivened by several very pretty women and one or two very ugly ones, by first rate music and by an excellent cut and come again supper. At 3 o'clock A.M. Wellington, Lieut. C. and myself left the ball room, changed our dress and instead of getting into bed, got into the Beauleah in which every thing had been already prepared, and set off on a

shooting excursion to Sook Saugor. We commenced our sport almost at daylight, and after sundry adventures by field and flood got safe back again late in the evening, having passed a most delightful and mirthful day. — Last Monday the Calcutta Races began, and continue on alternate days for three weeks. They commence a little after 6 in the morning and are all over by 10, the heat after that hour being too intense for either man or horse to brave with impunity. The Race Course both on Monday and Yesterday was a gay and beautiful scene, being crowded with Equipages and equestrians of every kind and degree, whilst the Stand filled with ladies attired in all the varieties of garb and costume, the rose of early morning in their cheek and the sparkle of excitement in their eye, looked like a summer Parterre of bright and variegated flowers. The horses were all of them Arabians of the finest breed, and the most beautiful animals in action and symetry (sic) that could be possibly seen; their speed was more like that of the wind than anything else. One race in which there were 7 of them running side by side almost the whole way was worth going a hundred miles to look at, and I would not have missed it for anything; the Cup for which they run was particularly handsome and was presented by the ladies of Calcutta. I had the gratification of losing 10 Rupees the first day by betting upon a horse called Jem Crow, bad luck to the name, but was fortunate enough to win a gold Mohore (16 Rupees) on the second day, beside a pair of gloves from my pretty and musical friend Miss Ogilvie. — As I was returning from the races yesterday morning with Downing in whose house I am now residing, we saw a bullock cart containing two Tygers, one of them an enormous creature, who were roaring in the most horrible manner and beating against their cages which were only of wood, till I got into a perfect stew lest they should get out. The horse also began to rear as did several others, and could not be made to pass the cart, so we were at last obliged to go back a considerable way and get home by another road. The Tygers had arrived that morning from the interior of the country, and were almost mad from hunger; when I saw them in the evening they were crunching the arm of a native that they had torn off whilst he was cleaning out their den: Next week they set sail for England where I may perhaps have a second opportunity of claiming acquaintanceship with them. After breakfast I went to the Theatre to hear the rehearsal

of *Rienzi*,⁵⁷ but got so tired and hot that I did not wait long. They have but one theatre here, and with the exception of the female characters the Corps Dramatique is entirely composed of Amateurs, principally from among the Civilians and Military officers; their acting is for the most part very fair, and many of the dresses are really magnificent: the theatre is not often open and unless for some particular occasion is not very numerously attended. — Whilst taking a ride into the country this evening, I came to a Mahommedan burial ground and as it was the first I had seen, I got down to see it more nearly. It was enclosed all round by a low wall, and the tombs were remarkably clean and well kept. Several had a lamp burning before them which are lit every evening and their effect was striking and even solemn as they twinkled in the silence and loneliness of the place. There were no human beings but ourselves to be seen and the only sound to be heard beside the mournful whisperings of the breeze was the never ceasing chirp of the lizards, hundreds of which were glancing about in all directions, and appearing in the rays of the sinking sun as tho' clad in all the colours of the rainbow. I have seldom seen a spot more appropriate in all respects for the last repose of the dead, or one that was more fitted to afford subjects for reflection and meditation to one so inclined, which however I candidly confess I was not, more especially as my companion, having decapitated all the lizards he could get at and knocked a turban off a tombstone, began whipping my legs to hasten the speed of my departure. About a mile further we came to a Mosque almost hid in the shade of Mangoe and Tamarind trees, and whether tempted by the spirit of Satan or Mahomet I cannot tell, but I must needs go in and examine it. The inside was fitted up with forms for the evening worship which they commence at 8, but nobody was there then xcept an old Mussulman who was trimming an ancient looking lamp. On the raised place or pulpit where the priest stands lay that part of the Koran which was to be read that same evening, and immediately the desire of possessing it entered my head and prompted me to the following trick. Going up to the old man, who by the by was grumbling and looking excessively cross at my coming in, I made

⁵⁷ "rehearsal of *Rienzi*" — Bulwer-Lytton's novel on the eponymous 14th Century populist Italian leader was published in 1835; Wagner's opera which it inspired was written 1837-1840 and premiered in 1842. So it looks as if Richmond saw a play or another opera with this title.

a low Salaam and uttered the words Pawnee Munctur, which means I want some water, and he no doubt thinking thus to get rid of me, immediately took up a brass drinking pot and went out to get some, whilst I very wickedly I acknowledge lost no time in taking up the Koran, jumping into the buggy and driving off as quick as possible. I would have given something to see the old man's face when he came back, and still more to have heard the Unbelievers storm and swear when they found that they'd had their walk for nothing. This I am afraid will be among the last of my Indian adventures as I have this morning heard that we are appointed to sail the end of next week, and that my services are required tomorrow to examine the Coolies who are now all in readiness for their embarkation.

Tuesday — 30th

My time has been fully occupied for the last week in making farewell visits, which by the by are only made between 11 and 1 o'clock, nobody being "at home" after tiffin, with sundry other preparations and arrangements previous to our departure which took place early this morning. Last Monday I was much surprized at seeing Wellington, who having obtained his leave was thus far on his road to England, to which place he goes by the overland route, which I think a vastly preferable plan to the Over Sea ditto, which I must perform, and I would accompany him with the greatest pleasure but that the Gods forbid it and Man refuses. On Tuesday I dined at Spence's Hotel with a party of merry souls some of whom I had been acquainted with in England, and which event I mention here for the purpose of giving you some choice piscatory information that I obtained from them. Among the numerous dishes at dinner was a curry of remarkably fine Prawns, and after I had laid pretty well into it, I happened casually to ask whereabouts they were found and was immediately entertained with the following narrative: About 20 miles up the river is a small bay or inlet formed by a projecting part of the bank, and anything carried up or down by the tide naturally strikes against this point and is arrested in its progress. Among other natural curiosities two or three dead bodies are always to be found here, and the water being still and they consequently stationary, it only requires a few hours for them to be covered with a thick layer of fine fat prawns, which are carefully removed by the fishermen and taken to

Calcutta. This wholesale fishery is continued for a considerable time on the same body, it being found that the more rotten and decomposed it gets, so much the fatter also do the prawns grow, but when it has fully answered the purpose for which they suppose it was sent into this world, they throw the remains on shore to the tender mercies of the dogs and Jackals, and look out for another in its place. Such was the kind information liberally dealt out to me at the very time that my stomach was embracing a dozen or so of these said delicacies, and it was only by a mighty effort that I could prevail on it to continue so doing, tho' pretty well convinced that there was a considerable degree of humbug in the story. I am glad to say that the enquiries which I did not fail to make the next day, satisfactorily confirmed my suspicions, altho' I was positively assured by several persons that the thing was common at one time, and was still thought nothing of by the natives. So much for Indian curries and cookery. = It is a subject of some regret to me that I am obliged to leave Calcutta without having seen the Company's Botanical gardens, tho' I have intended to do so day after day, and at last when Mrs Charles had formed a party to go, not knowing we were to sail so soon she fixed upon to day; and it was too late when she told me to alter it; I must therefore rest content with my outside view, and wait to visit the interior till I return again: The gardens are considered one of the principal lions to be seen here. = The least agreeable part of my P.P.C. duties was that of paying bills, which were coming in all the week as if impelled by steam and having in more instances than one a most wicked capacity of longitude. By far the most moderate was the Dhubie's and indeed the cheapness of washing here is most beatific, especially to one who has lived in London. The highest charge is only 3 rupees (6/) per hundred pieces, which includes every thing from a stocking to a counterpane, and they are beautifully washed, tho' in a manner rather detrimental to linen &c. as they are first wetted and then beat upon flat stones till quite clean; it is not done so however by all.= Among the Zoological curiosities that I am bringing with me is a young Bear not much larger than a kitten and a beautiful little Leopard both as tame as possible, and in excellent health; I had also bargained for a juvenile Hyena but the difficulty of finding food for it during the voyage prevented me getting it, or else I think it would have proved a very good article of spec. = Having completed all my arrangements

yesterday afternoon and bade farewell to my friends I went to dine with Downing where I also found the Captain, and after spending a last and pleasant evening in Calcutta, we all three set off for the ship which lay then at a little distance down the river and got on board about 12 o'clock, where from the universal stillness that prevailed, we could hardly believe (sic) that there were above 200 people on board, which however was the case. Soon after daylight the Anchor was weighed and ere the hour of breakfast had arrived, I had taken my last look and leave of fair Calcutta, a place which I part from with regret, a place where for the whole of my visit I have met with nothing but kindness and hospitality, a place which tho' entered by me as a perfect stranger I now leave surrounded by friends, a place endeared to me by the recollection of many a pleasant scene and happy day, and lastly a place which I look upon as one that may peradventure be my home for many years to come, or at any rate the one to which my inclinations would naturally lead me, should it be my lot again to tread the sunny shores of Hindostan. In thus bidding adieu to India I cannot but mention that the only alloy to the pleasure of my visit has been that of not hearing from home, a circumstance that I had so completely relied on that I looked for letters on my arrival with as much certainty as I looked for my daily bread, and disappointment was consequently the greater when I found none: still there was hope that they might yet come, and it was not till the last London ship had anchored in the river and the last overland mail had arrived that I gave up all expectations and began to employ myself in making the most charitable excuses I could for what was really nothing else but forgetfulness or neglect.

Voyage to the West Indies

Sunday — Feb^{ry} 4th

Far removed from the busy haunts of men we are again pursuing our solitary course along the "dark blue sea", its waves our companions, its billows our playmates and its bosom our resting place, whether to be lulled in the repose of calm and sunshine or tossed in the darkness and power of the storm. Tho' there is a feeling of melancholy attached to quitting any place to which we have habituated our hopes and feelings or even our thoughts, still in now leaving the shores of the Eastern for those of the Western world, I look forward with far greater pleasure to our arrival there than I did to the long looked for termination of our outward voyage at the metropolis of Bengal. It is not that I expect to like the country better or its inhabitants more, for I feel well assured that it will not be so, but it is the knowledge that every breeze which fills our sails is wafting us so much nearer to that home which however distant it may be is yet the loadstone towards which our affections move, the beacon held out by hope to cheer the solitude of the wanderer and gladden him by anticipation, as the beams of the morning sun in preceding his arrival serve to dispel the darkness and gloom that his absence had created. No where can the pleasures of Home be more fully appreciated or their value more justly estimated than when traversing the wide and pathless waves, where every thing around tends only to point out the difference between the present and the past, the reality of what now is and the memory of what has been, and where the unvaried prospect of sky and sea possesses little to engage the eye, except that in gazing on it the mind is insensibly carried back to the green fields and leafy trees of our far distant country where the summer days of childhood glided joyously away, whilst in the presence of those we loved and the absence of aught that could sorrow, the Future seemed to be as bright and smiling as the sun that shone in its beauty

above us. And when perchance on some foreign shore the solitude of the sea is exchanged for the busy hum of the city and the novelty and loveliness of all around cannot but delight and please, still a blank is in the prospect as we feel that others are not with us to share it, and in the midst of kindest and dearest friends the thought that we are not of them will yet be uppermost, for the firm affection of the brother is wanting, the stedfast love of a sister is not there. — Pleasant is the name of Home as whispered o'er the ocean in the soft breathings of the evening breeze, and sweetest music is there in its "still small voice"⁵⁸ as heard above the howlings of the midnight tempest or the dashing of its crested billow.

Oh! what can sanctify the joys of Home,
Like Hopes gay glance from Ocean's troubled foam.

Monday — 5th

You would be amused my dear Mother could you but see the variegated appearance that our ship displays on all sides from the wholesale additions that have been made to its accustomed population. Besides the regular crew there are now 170 Coolies including 7 women and 11 children, one of the latter tribe being only a fortnight old: The men are all dressed uniformly in Coloured jackets and red caps and are with but few exceptions very handsome well formed fellows and as happy and contented as possible, having apparently but little of the Mal de Pays in their composition. The whole of the space between the Main and Fore masts has been fitted up for their accommodation and it is far more roomy and comfortable than I ever thought it could have been made; it is a most amusing sight to see them at dinner or Conna as they call it, when they all sit in the peculiar manner that I have already described in two long double rows, each with his brass dish and drinking cup before him and busily employed in shovelling an extensive and recherche Olla Podrida of Rice, Salt fish, Peas, Turmeric, Chili's, Tamarinds &c. into their unbelieving stomachs. It is their custom to make only one meal a day, but that one is most voluminous, a "tria juncta in uno" and it would make you laugh to see the difference in the comparative bulk of their corporations before and after their midday repast, and the bold

⁵⁸ "still small voice" — from 1 Kings 19:11.

relief in which their pinguitudinous and inflated balloons stand out, which is principally owing to the vast quantity of rice they eat. = The sea yesterday was as calm and unruffled as a mirror, and had we but been in S' George's Channel instead of the Bay of Bengal I could have made my fortune in a few hours: all round the ship and as far as the eye could reach the water was literally speckled with enormous Turtle who were basking in the sun or lying fast asleep. A boat was soon dispatched to get some and in less than two hours there were 15 on board, all most furiously alive and all but one weighing from 1 to 200 weight and much larger ones were left behind on account of their size alone. We hit several with bullets, but tho' they expressed the most unqualified disgust at the reception of these little bulletins, none were killed but one unlucky wight whose shell and carcass were completely perforated by a blood thirsty ball. The delight of the Coolies who had never seen such animals before was most ridiculous, and no fat paunched alderman ever regarded a tureen full of his favourite soup with greater signs of admiration than they, one and all, expressed, whenever an unfortunate turtle thought proper to flap its fin as it lay on the deck taking its last gaze of the sky.

Sunday — 18th

From the first morning that we left the shores of India to the date of my last writing, the continued fineness of the weather and various other favouring circumstances had all tended to make us congratulate ourselves on the fortunate auspices under which we had commenced our voyage and to look forward to a prosperous termination of the passage, little thinking how soon a change was to come over the spirit of our dream and that even then Death in its most terrible and appalling form was hovering around us, and only awaiting the appointed moment to strike and destroy its unwary prey; such however was the case and seldom has it appeared in a more sudden and unlooked manner or in a way that more fearfully bid us remember how near we are to death even in the midst of life. On the Tuesday morning of last week as we were sitting at breakfast I was called out to see one of the Coolies who had been suddenly taken ill and as the Interpreter said in a very peculiar manner, for he fell down whilst walking about the deck. I went immediately and soon discovered to my horror and consternation that I was

looking on a case of genuine Indian Cholera, and cholera in one of its most aggravated shapes. The state of the poor creature tho' so recently seized was dreadful and his sufferings beyond all description: he was first attacked with violent and unceasing vomitings which were rapidly followed by spasms and cramps so powerful that they literally seemed to bind up his muscles into a continuous string of knots and threatened to kill him at once from excess of agony alone. Altho' his body was cold as ice from head to foot, he was continually crying out from the overpowering sensation of internal heat (a symptom always observed in Cholera) the intense violence of which was but too clearly indicated by the parched lips and blackened tongue with their miserable concomitant of raging thirst; though every remedy that I could command was instantly and assiduously employed, they were totally useless and ere long the stiffening limbs and glazed eye followed by the unerring death rattle of peculiar loudness, told me how vain were all my attempts and that I ought now rather to turn my attention from the senseless dead to the care and preservation of the living. The virulence of the disease in this man may be judged of from the duration of his illness; at 8 o'clock he was in good health walking and talking with his companions and at 1 o'clock he was a corpse, a lapse of scarcely 5 hours. Hardly had I completed a Post Mortem examination of the body and directed it to be immediately thrown overboard, than I was summoned to attend a similar scene followed alike in such rapid succession by others through that night and the next day, that when, completely wearied out, I went to take my first hours rest on Wednesday evening it was to dream of the deaths of 7 persons and to be awakened by the intelligence that another had been attacked. From the very commencement of its breaking out I had a place set apart, into which no one but myself and the sick were permitted to enter, and by thus cutting off all communication and using strong fumigations, I was so far successful in checking infection that on Thursday there were only 4 seizures and 2 deaths. As yet it had been entirely confined to the Coolies but on Friday morning one of the seamen a fine healthy young man of 26, was attacked with all the worst symptoms, and after lingering on for 17 hours died in one of the most horrible spasms that it is possible to conceive, his body being bent double to the very feet and his muscles knotted in all directions like a twisted piece of

whipcord. Two hours after death being sewn up in a hammock and covered with the Union flag he was brought to the gangway, where supported by the Captain and officers and surrounded by all the sailors who with uncovered heads and moistened eyes stood for the last time before their late shipmate, I performed the mournful office of reading the funeral service over the body of him who at that same hour the day before was one of the gayest and healthiest among us. In truth it was a solemn scene, and well knowing as we all did in what danger we ourselves stood and how soon one of us might be called to follow, it could hardly fail to strike deep into the hearts of each one as an affecting and terrible memento of death.

It is needless to enter further or describe more minutely the progress of this fatal disease, except to mention that by the precautions used and the blessed mercy of God, it gradually abated in violence tho' 6 more fell victims before the following Sunday; as the history of the last fatal case may interest you I shall relate it; it was that of a young child only 5 years old, whose Mother and a younger sister were lying ill at the same time; the mother had also a baby not yet a month old, and the poor little thing being thus prevented from suckling its life was preserved by feeding it on Sago, tho' I expected every hour to find it tainted with infection, more especially as its Mother would not for an instant allow it to be removed from her side and even when lying in a state of insensibility kept fast hold of its little body. It would be difficult to find a more piteous and mournful sight than this family exhibited during the afternoon of Sunday, and it was one that to the latest day of my life I shall never forget. The Mother lying nearly in a state of insensibility with sunken cheeks and lustreless eyes, shewing no sign of life, except as she occasionally opened her parched and burning mouth for a little water, and yet clasping her infant to that chill and almost pulseless bosom, that was no longer able to give the nourishment it was crying for, on each side of her two other children, one in the same condition as herself and the other already stiffening in the embrace of death, whilst to complete the picture the affectionate and wretched husband, whom neither threats or endeavours could keep away from those he loved so well, watched over them unceasingly, his sorrow speaking in his tears, and engaged with unremitting solicitude in fanning their

feverish brows or moistening their pale and shrivelled lips with the cooling water they had not strength to ask for — There is no exaggeration or romance in the above scene, except as it is a romance of real life, melancholy indeed but no less true, for I have described but what I saw, and seldom have I experienced more sincere pleasure than I did at the moment when I was first able to assure myself that the crisis in both mother and child was past and that I was to be the means of gladdening the Father's heart with the intelligence that they were out of danger: his grief for the loss of his other child seemed quite forgotten in his joy that the others had survived, and when he first heard his wife's voice as she asked him for water it had such an effect on him, that I was glad to escape from his overwhelming expressions of gratitude and delight. I may mention as an example of one of the remedies that I employed successfully, that the above mentioned child who survived and who is not yet 4 years old, took within the space of 16 hours, the entire contents of a teacup full of strong Rum; she is now with the exception of weakness quite recovered, as is also her mother. Tho' several cases have occurred since then, yet as they were much milder in their symptoms, and as there has been no new case for the last three days, I have every reason to think that the disease has been checked and every hope that it is no more to appear amongst us.

Such then is my mournful diary of events, the first that I have ever written of its kind, and God willing not the first only but also the last.

Monday — March 5th

The last week has been one of uninterrupted storm and rain, rendered the more uncomfortable as I have been confined the whole time by severe illness, from which I am yet but partially recovered. The strong winds have however been of most essential service in purifying our atmosphere and removing any traces of infection that might still be lurking among us, and the remembrance of the cholera is now almost obliterated in the appearance of health and strength that has succeeded its brief but fatal visitation. One untoward event occurred a few days since in the suicide of an unfortunate Coolie, the effect of the principles of fatalism in which all the native inhabitants of India

are such blind and bigoted believers. The father and brother of this man were among the first who died of the cholera, and he himself had a very narrow escape from death also, which was greatly increased by his unwillingness to take the remedies or follow any direction that I gave him, because as he said it was never meant by his God that he was to live longer than his father and brother, and that I had committed sin and wickedness in thus preventing him from dying by making him take medicines. So infatuated was he in this belief that he several times asked me to cut his throat, and was continually begging the others to throw him over board, he being then too weak to do it himself. Of course a good look out was kept over his movements after these and similar demonstrations, but tho' every precaution was used he succeeded in accomplishing his purpose; last Friday night in the middle watch, when the attention of all on deck were engaged from the violence of the storm and wind which were sending the ship through the water at the rate of 11 knots an hour, under bare poles, he contrived to gain the gangway and throw himself into the sea ere there was the smallest chance of preventing his design: The darkness precluded any further view of him, and the violence and size of the waves that were rolling around must have destroyed him almost immediately, even though he had used every endeavour to save himself by attempting to seize the ropes that were thrown out, or by answering the loud and repeated hails of the seamen, efforts that in his morbid state of mind were paramount to impossibility or at any rate many degrees less than probable.

Requiescat in pace.⁵⁹

April – 10th

We have been visited by another severe storm since I last wrote, which came on us as we approached the Cape and was again fated to be the messenger of death. In spite of the tossing and motion of the ship I had slept soundly through the night of Saturday the 17th, when I was awakened early in the morning by the trampling of many feet overhead and the ominous cry of

⁵⁹ "*Requiescat in pace*" – "Rest In Peace". The Latin (in the plural form, "*Requiescant in pace*", i.e., "May they rest in peace") is part of the Mass for the Dead in the Roman Missal.

Man overboard. I immediately jumped out of bed and went upon deck where I found every body collected in attempting to save an unfortunate man who had been washed off the gangway by an immense wave. The instant it happened the course of the vessel was stopped and her head turned towards him for it would have been madness to think of sending out a boat as it must have inevitably swamped in the raging state the sea was in at the time. The poor fellow swam beautifully but it was evident that nothing short of a miracle could save him, for at one instant he was lifted by a wave above the mast heads and the next sunk in an abyss that seemed all but fathomless: at one time indeed I thought there was hope for we were so close to him that he was within arms reach of a rope that was thrown out, but at the very moment that he grasped at it in all the terror of despair an enormous wave bore him aloft as if in very mockery of his weakness and the next instant we saw him many hundred feet astern of us struggling in his dying agonies and then his final disappearance in the billowy gulf from which he had not strength again to rise. It was a dreadful thing to see his expiring efforts as they became weaker and weaker, and the awful expression of his countenance as he made his last ineffectual grasp at the rope, has haunted me ever since so fearfully were horror and hopeless despair imprinted on his working features = On the [lacuna] we passed within five miles of the Cape of Good Hope and had a most exquisite view of the Table Mountain and the surrounding hills by moonlight; a moon such as cannot be seen out of the tropics, and which in size and brilliancy was I think unsurpassed by the many glorious ones that I have now had opportunities of beholding at different times.

Not a cloud was before her
To dim her pure light,
Not a shadow came o'er her
Her beauty to blight.
But she shone in soft lustre
One star by her side,
From her throne in the azure,
Earth's beautiful bride.

It was intended at first that we should go into the Cape to get water, but it was afterwards decided to call at St Helena instead

as being less likely to delay us. In this however I was also doomed to be disappointed, for deceived during last night by what appeared to be the land we found at day break that we had left, some 30 miles behind, the real Island, and that it would take nearly three days to beat back again; our destination is accordingly changed for the Island of Ascension which we expect to reach some time on Saturday.

The last member of my Zoological collection died lately in the shape of a lovely little Paroquet which I had bought soon after I arrived at Calcutta and which had accompanied me in my excursion to Chinsurah and Dhobah, it was the prettiest little thing for a lady's pet that I ever saw and I was excessively mortified to see it die. Since leaving India I have now lost by different casualties no less than a dozen animals, quadrupedal and bipedal, namely A Bear, A Jackal, a Nepaul Squirrel, An Eagle, a pair of Bulbuls, two pair of Cinnamon birds and a pair of Paroquets; The Bear died of a milk fever, the Jackal of eating tar, the Squirrel of Cholera, the Eagle of Sulkiness, the Bulbuls of Diarrhoea, the Cinnamon birds of bathing in the sea and the Paroquets of the Staggers. "*Sic itur ad astra.*"⁶⁰ My dog and the Mauritius Monkey alone survive and I have lost all interest in the latter since he fell into a pot of hot water and destroyed beyond redemption and Macassar oil the Capillary honours of more than three fourths of his very ugly behind.

Monday — 17th

We reached the Island of Ascension last Saturday morning and was immediately boarded by a Quarantine officer with the information that the Yellow fever was at present raging there; this was most disagreeable and unlooked for intelligence and altogether prevented me from executing my intention of visiting the interior of the island to get some sport among the Rabbits and Guinea fowls, no communication being allowed from the shore with the few inhabitants there. Ascension is the most mournful dreary looking place that can be conceived, being a volcanic island and composed entirely of bleak sterile rocks without the slightest vestige of vegetation. Its appearance from a distance is picturesque enough, the mountains (of which some

⁶⁰ "*Sic itur ad astra*" — More or less: "Thus is the path to the stars". Virgil *Aeneid* IX, 641.

are very high) seeming to be piled one above another in every variety of form and contortion, and descending almost perpendicularly into the sea mingled with a confused assemblage of black and jagged rocks whose sides are perpetually encountering the foam and violence of the waves. There are a few houses near the landing place inhabited chiefly by marines who with the Governor are the only resident inhabitants of the island, and the latter made an exchange of localities in the evening of Saturday by dying, having been attacked with the yellow fever in the very midst of his preparations for returning to England with his family. The only place where there is any vegetation is Green Mountain about 7 miles in the interior where cattle are kept for the supply of Ships of War, and where a few cabbages raise their diminished heads to grace the Governors table; with these exceptions not a green thing is to be seen through the whole island save the painted window blinds of the mens barracks and the fertile looking fat of gigantic Turtles which are killed for food twice a week. These turtles are the principal attraction for homeward bound vessels and are kept in large ponds by Government who sell them at £2 -10^s each large or small; some I saw there were of a monstrous size exceeding 700 weight, and their shells as they lay basking in the sun resembled a vast phalanx of convex shields, such as is figured in Potter's Grecian Antiquities⁶¹ and which was forcibly brought to my remembrance

I took a walk of one or two miles along the shore in search of some particular kinds of shells that are found here, but the heat was so tremendous from being reflected by the volcanic rocks all around that if I had not bathed my head in the sea I should have fainted; I never experienced such a sensation before either in the Mauritius or India. The rocks were so hot that it was actually painful to touch them, and at one time when I was so exhausted as to be compelled to sit down and had with some difficulty selected a smooth portion for that purpose, it was so terribly warm that I roared out with pain and was glad to plump myself, pantaloons and all, into the sea and sit there till somewhat cooled. A brig of war commanded by an old shipmate of the Captains was in the harbour and as we breakfasted with him on

⁶¹ "Potter's Grecian Antiquities" — 1715 monograph by English Archbishop.

Sunday morning I had the gratification of hearing the latest news from England and of seeing some newspapers. After breakfast I left the two Captains to talk over old days together, and went to the gunroom where I found the officers all assembled to give me their news and hear mine and time passed quickly and pleasantly in their company; the senior midshipman had served in the Britannia with Wellington Powell on the Mediterranean station. Whilst thus employed it was suddenly announced that the Admiral's ship was coming in, and all hands were immediately ordered on deck to fire a salute; no sooner was this done and answered than, having learned that the Admiral would not stay more than an hour on account of the fever, we all set to work at writing home, which being happily accomplished in time we sat down to dinner joined by the Captain of the Frigate, and two hours before sunset we were again speeding merrily on our voyage, smiled on by a bright and cloudless sky and favoured by a wind that soon removed from view the loftiest peak and the highest mountain of the charmless Island of Ascension.

Thursday — April 26th

My birthday! What a different sound
That word had in my youthful ears
And how each time the day comes round
Less and less white its mark appears.

Scenes in Demerara

APPENDIX I

Illustrations to Richmond's Diary

Theophilus Richmond's images, though few, are the very first images of East Indians to be transported into the West during the indenture period. While these images are not specifically about the West Indies, their composition frames the ways in which East Indians would eventually be evaluated and positioned within nineteenth-century creole society. Richmond's images are therefore part of a historically-constructed visual contract between East and West signalling the intimacy as well as difference between these two categories. As he is not merely concerned with demarcating East Indians as labouring subjects his visual representations seem to suggest that as a young traveller he might have been more curious about experiencing cultural difference.

Richmond's opening image of 'A Mahomedan, A Parsee and A Hindoo' all sitting on a bit of ground (possibly symbolic of India), above which is depicted an arch flanked by 'The Cocoa Nut' is however typical of sketches done by travellers of the period. The arched coconut palms not only create an entrance, thereby inviting Richmond to explore the strange but familiar, but also convey an expectation of the leisure and luxuriance of the tropicalized colonial landscape. Throughout his travelogue these palms act as naturalizing signatures of an ordered and leisurely tropical paradise that not only justified continued colonial intervention but also fuelled the colonial tourist industry. It is within this frame of consciousness that the three male figures below are entered as anthropological exhibits or cultural types, designated by socio-religious labels. The Mahomedan is holding the 'Alcoran' while the Hindoo is accompanied by 'The Shastre' (religious scripture). Dressed in traditional garments, these types symbolise not only difference from British and Western cultures, but also cultural differences

within India. This gesture to acknowledge the diversity within India disturbs any simplistic attempts to homogenise the new category 'East Indian'. In fact, the seated Mahomedan and Hindoo contrast with the standing Parsee, possibly illuminating the social hierarchy in Indian society.

The desire to experience and capture cultural difference is also evident in Richmond's second sketch: an 'Indian Goddess' which he copied from a painting on the wall of a Pagoda and which deeply "enchanted" him. The 'Indian Goddess' represents his curiosity about the strangeness of Indian culture, especially given his Christian family background. This image and the "dog on a horse" deity that he steals from the Pagoda both stand in for India as a site of radical difference (and inferiority). As a young traveller he is enchanted and in awe of a place and civilisation that he can only comprehend by drawing or taking. He ventures no words to describe these cultural artefacts or understand them in relation to his own culture. They are incomprehensible souvenirs that record his journey into the strange Orient. This ambiguity stamps Richmond as a lay colonial anthropologist.

The three charts in the journal can also be evaluated in terms of their cartographic relevance, informing us about the ways in which Richmond experienced his travels and viewed the places he visited. His 'Chart of the Mauritius or Isle of France' includes the names of towns and villages, mountain ranges, ports, military stations, rivers and roads—a sort of micromapping that was conducted by many travellers of the period who mapped places while travelling through them. While these components on the map enabled Richmond to travel through the Mauritian landscape as a colonial, experiencing the more paradisiacal components of the landscape, the map begs a question about the extent and location of the exploitative plantations which Richmond did see as "the only blot upon the harmony of this fair and lovely prospect." Where in this chart that records the fruit-filled gardens at Pousse or the military station at Flacq, might we also locate the "considerable numbers from India, and their dismal appearance working in irons"?

Richmond's hemispheric 'Chart of the West Indies and part of America' is valuable in that it identifies Demerara in British Guiana, the final destination of his transoceanic journey—the final point in the journey of Indian indentured labourers. This

chart must be connected to his final 'Chart Shewing the Course of the Ship Hesperus to the Mauritius and Calcutta, 1837' as it represents the differing travel segments in Richmond's journey: Liverpool to Mauritius, Mauritius to Calcutta and Calcutta to Demerara. Unfortunately there was no return journey for Richmond to complete the map. However, together these three charts connect sites across the Indian and Atlantic oceans, revealing the journey that Indian indentured labourers themselves undertook. Like Richmond, many of them would never return home. Connecting the charts places readers of the *Journal* in an ideal position to make comparative statements about the Indian diasporas that were created in the context of nineteenth-century indentureship across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.



Plate 1: A Mohamedan, A Parsee, A Hindoo



Plate 2: Indian Goddess

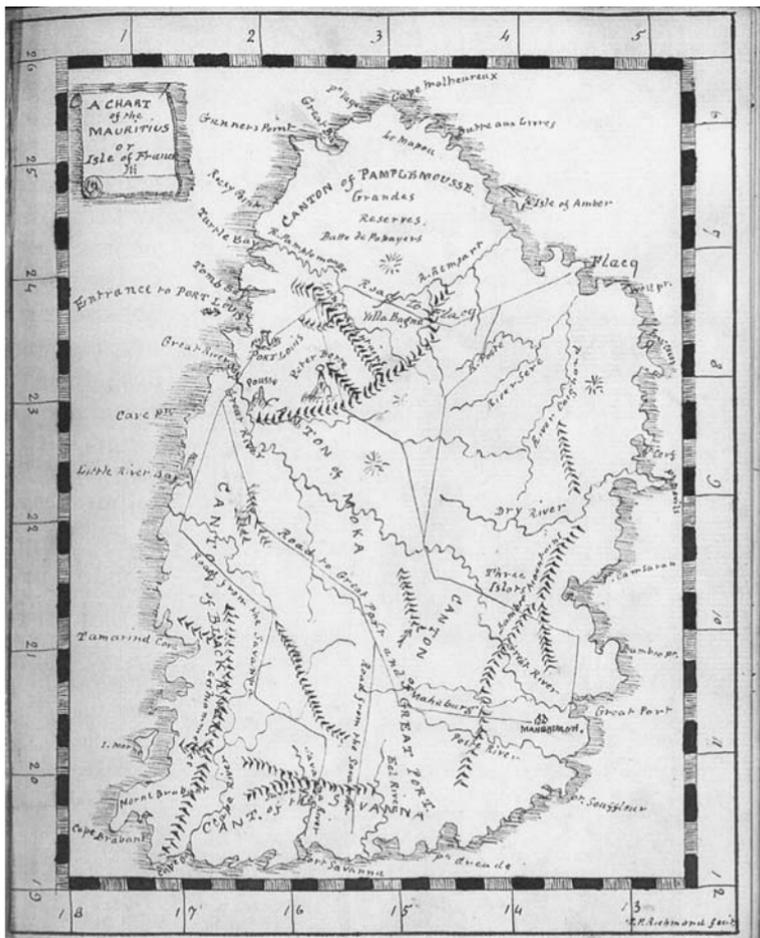
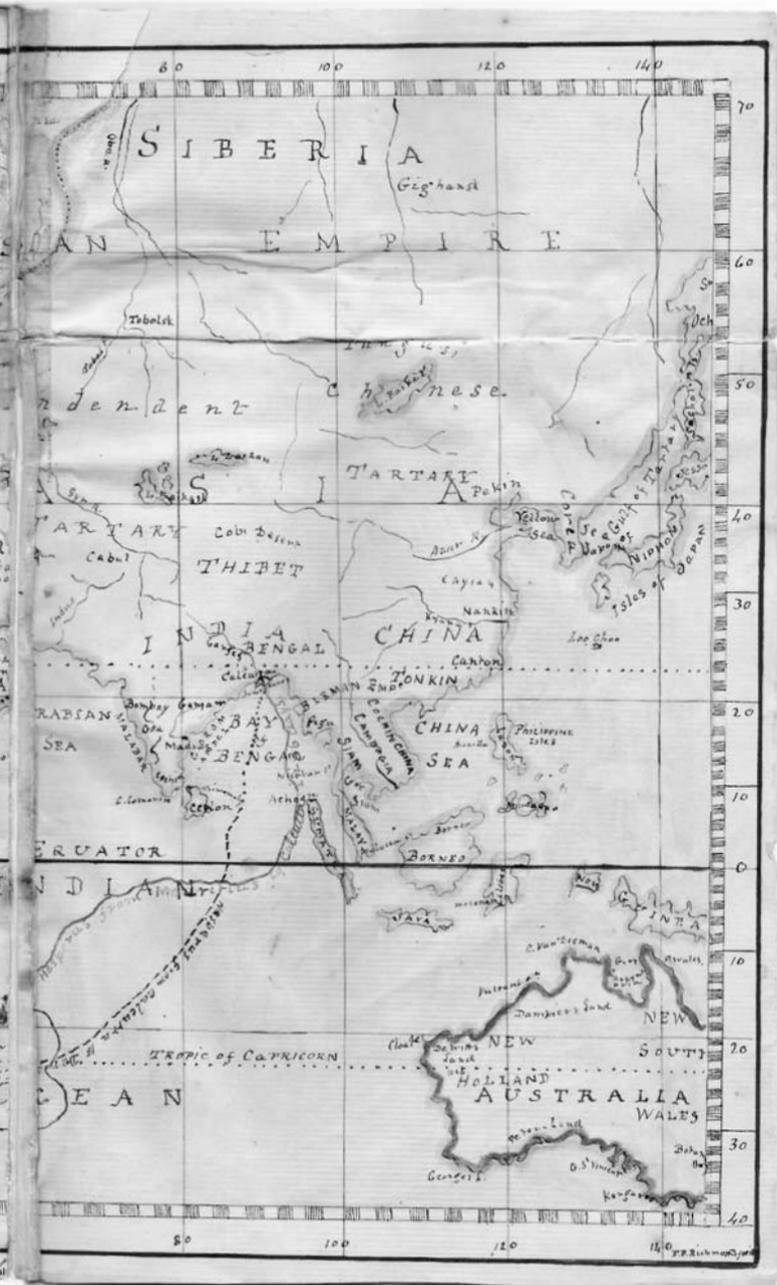


Plate 3: CHART of the MAURITIUS or Isle of France



to the MAURITIUS and CALCUTTA, 1837

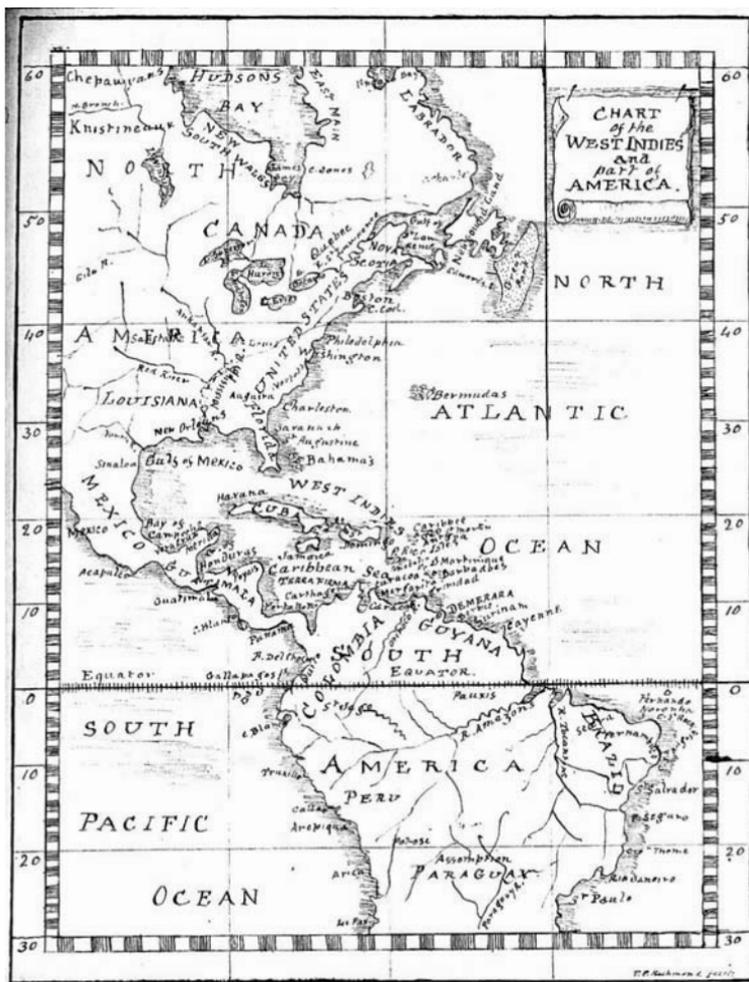


Plate 5: CHART of the WEST INDIES and part of AMERICA

deck to fire a salute; no sooner was this done and answered than, having learnt that the Admiral would not stay more than an hour on account of the fever, we all set to work at writing home, which being happily accomplished in time we sat down to dinner joined by the Captain of the Frigate, and two hours before sunset we were again speeding merrily on our voyage, smiled on by a bright and cloudless sky and favoured by a wind that soon removed from view the loftiest peak and the highest mountain of the charming Island of Ascension.

Thursday, April 26th

"my birthday"; what a different sound
That word had in my youthful ears
And how each time the day comes round
Lips and lips white its mark appears."

Plate 6: A page from the Journal



Plate 7: Portrait of Theophilus Pellat Richmond

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