THE PIONEERS

The pioneers include a host of great empire builders, eminent scholars, and dreamers seeking the vast spaces of the earth and wide horizons of the mind. It is the age of the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon soul, her love of foreign lands and foreign people; some of the most eminent sons of England go to serve in the foreign lands, and become great administrators, lawgivers, soldiers, and writers. In the first flush of the imperial glory they praise these lands, admire the beauties of hills and plains, marvel at the native architecture and seem to patronise whole heartedly every thing foreign.

Their language has in it the hard fibre of truth and authenticity; every page has in it the smells and odours of these lands; and colours and shadows come to life with a startling resemblance to the reality. Calm and composure, the attitude of repose and serenity in these books reflect the age of confidence, national vigour, and the heroic spirit of adventure—both physical and intellectual. Kinglake and Doughty stride like giants across vast deserts; even Gertrude Bell looks like some lady-crusader marching across the continent from Amurath to Amurath. Francis younghusband in a light hearted manner crosses in one stride both the Gobi and the Himalayas. Hearn discovers the soul of Japan and garners all that is best in the Buddha fields. The prose of these men has dignity, power, force, and originality. The only man that shows some qualms of doubt is Kipling; he has great skill, perfect mastery of words, but his soul is uncertain; his aggressive emphasis on imperialism shows his inner doubts; he alone is not a true imperialist.
'Eothen' in Greek means the early dawn—and this title is the most appropriate, for Eothen is verily the early dawn of the Asian literature of travel. The days of exploration and mere collection of information (important in its own way) are over, and the dawn of a personal and feelingful, poetic and beautiful description of Asia begins. It was some thing new, and he himself was apprehensive about it.

"My notion of dwelling precisely upon those matters which happen to interest me and upon none other would of course be intolerable in a regular book of travels. If I had been passing through countries not previously explored, it would have been sadly perverse to withhold careful descriptions of admirable objects merely because my own feelings of interest in them may have happened to flag; but where the countries which one visits have been thoroughly and ably described and even artistically illustrated by others, one is fully at liberty to say as little (though not quite as much) as one chooses". 1.

His is the true spirit of modern literature of travel, he is not concerned with facts but the facts as seen and reflected upon, moulded imaginatively and conceived artistically. His amiable self centrness, his habit of referring the whole external world to his own innerself, compels him as it were in his writings, to observe the laws of perspective. He tells you of objects, not as he knows them to be, but as they appear to him.

The book has all the ingredients of an Asian book of travel; exotic scenes and sights, the homes of the Pashas and the Arabs of the desert, all are described with elegance and dignity, and with the vigorous imagination of a youngman which he was at that time. The appeal of Asian books of travel lies both in the matter and the method, and the lines set by Kinglake are still followed. He was a trail blazer, a modernist born before his time, a dreamer and lover of the East with little. 1. Eothen—London Thomas Nelson & Preface, IV.
or no European snobbery and vanity of the later day colonists, and with no pet theories of imperialism or antagonism of the East and the West. His description of the desert is still unexcelled; Gertrude Bell and Freya Stark, Bertam Thomas and Philby, Lawrence and Wilfred Thesiger (In our own days) have nothing to equal his brilliant chapter on the 'Desert'.

"Time labours on, your skin glows, your shoulders ache, your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, and you see the same pattern in the silk, and the same glare of light beyond, but conquering time marches on, and by and by the descending sun has compassed the heaven, and now softly touches your right arm, and throws your lank shadow over the sand right along the way for Persia. Then again you look upon his face for his power is all veiled in his beauty, and the redness of flames has become the redness of roses; the fair wavy cloud that fled in the morning now comes to his sight once more, comes flushing, yet still comes on, comes burning with blushes, yet comes and clings to his side". 1.

In one other respect he foreshadowed a future trend in the Asian literature of travel. He gives a mystical touch, a touch that lends a new charm to the whole subject.

And near the Pyramids more wondrous and more awful than all else in the land of Egypt, there sits the lovely Sphinx. Comely the creature is, but the comeliness is not of the world; the once worshiped beast is a deformity and a monster to this generation, and yet you can see that those lips so thick and heavy were fashioned according to some ancient mould of beauty .......Laugh and mock if you will at the worship of stone idols, but mark ye this, ye breakers of images that in one regard the stone idol bears awful semblance of Deity—unchangeableness in the midst of change— the same seeming will and intent for ever, and for ever inexorable. Upon ancient dynasties of Ethiopian and Egyptian Kings—upon the Greek and Roman, upon Arab and Ottoman conquerors—upon Napoleon dreaming of an eastern Empire—upon battle and pestilence—Upon the ceaseless misery of the Egyptian—upon keen eyed traveller Herodotus yesterday and Warburton today) upon all, and more this unworldly Sphinx has watched and watched like a providence with the same earnest eyes, and the same sad tranquil mien". 2.

He is a master of an original style; sentences and clauses follow in succession to each other, drawing themselves

2. Ibid, p. 223.
out or shutting themselves up, like the slides of a
telescope, and presenting a profile like a flight of steps
ascending or descending! There is variety in the prose
rhythms; the beginning of the sentence is slow, the middle is
well sustained, and the end is emphatic and satisfying.

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY (1843-1926) - TRAVELS IN ARABIA DESERTA (1888).

"The book is not milk for babes; it might be likened to
a mirror, where in is set forth faithfully some parcel of the
soil of Arabia smelling of Samu and camels. And such I trust
for the persons, that if the words written all day from their
mouths were rehearsed to them in Arabic, there might every one,
whose life is remembered there in, hear, as it were, his
proper voice, and many fide bystander, smiting his thigh,
should bear witness and cry: Ay Wllah, the sooth indeed".1.

Arabia Deserta is a unique master piece in the modern
literature of travel; it stands like a rock in the heart
of the desert; it is rugged and weather beaten, it is of
earth earthy; it smells of the camels and goats, and it
breathes the air of the lonely oases, there is no artifice
and no special trick of style, and yet it is most stylish, it
is a matter of fact description, and yet it is most poetic;
it is a book of travel for the sake of travel, and has no
economic or political connections of any type. Herbert Read
gives high praise to Doughty, but his way of comparing Doughty
with T.E. Lawrence, at the cost of the latter, is rather
disappointing; they stand apart, and move in two different
worlds though on the same Arabian sands.

"But if I am expected to pay the book the lip service
I willingly pay to Arabia Deserta, then, I revolt. The Seven
Pillars of Wisdom is not in the same category. Doughty
fills me with wonder, with reverence, and gives me unfailing
enjoyment. Who touches this book touches a man, and at every
page a man who was a great mind, a great patriarch among men,
a great enduring character, pensive but self possessed,
inquiring but full of certainty". 2.

1. Arabia Deserta - London-1928 Preface VI
T.E. Lawrence was asked to write an introduction to the 1928 edition of the Arabia Deserta, and the excellent judgement which he gives speaks volumes for his understanding of Arabia, and his genuine admiration for Doughty; They have much in common, and inspite of all differences the secret silence of the sands speaks to them, and not to the aestheticians with foggy London air around them.

"For his own strength of character the book stands unconscious witness. He has revealed himself to us in his pages indirectly (the book is never morbid, never introspective) for the way of telling is detached, making no parade of good or evil. He refused to be the hero of his story. Yet he was very really the hero of his journey, and the Arabs knew how great he was". 1.

In the Foreward to Arabia Felix by Bertram Thomas, he pays an affectionate tribute to Doughty. 2.

"You see in my day there were real Arabian veterans. Upon each return from the East I would repair to Doughty, a looming giant, white with eighty years, headed and bearded like some Renaissance Isaiah. Doughty seemed a past world in himself, and after him I would visit Wilfrid Blunt......Doughty's voice was a caress, his nature sweetness, Blunt was a fire yet flickering over the ashes of old fury". 2.

Arabia Deserta is a bible of its own kind; it is a classic; it is dateless and it can never grow old. It is true Arabia, the land with its smells and dirt, its nobility and freedom- but there is nothing merely picturesque. His completeness is devastating, he left nothing me for other writers. The realism of the book is complete. Doughty tries to tell the full and exact truth of all he saw. In his two years wanderings as a poor medicine man he carried away the richest booty in his notebook, he captured the soul of this country. New men with

1. Arabia Deserta n Introduction by T.E. Lawrence, p.XIX.
cars, cameras and aeroplanes have invaded the sleeping sands, they have added a little to the information and dry facts, but none can surpass the insight, judgement, and artistry of this author. He had difficulties to surmount; the Wahabis and their fanaticism was an ever present danger; he was poor and travelled on foot; he had bad health and lived on the poor food he got from the Arab huts. But probably there lay his superiority, his intimate study of life is not possible from an aeroplane crossing the Rub-Al-Khali within hours instead of years.

The book is an epic; Man stands against the Desert, and in the end Man comes out victorious, and that man Doughty. The path that the Hajjis follow is the path of a conqueror; when the Hajjis sleep he alone is wakeful to all the impressions of the desert, and whispering airs of heaven.

"But what marvellous indifference of the weary Hajjis, I saw none of them set forth to view the monuments (of Medain Salih), though as much renowned in their religion as Sodom and Gomorrah, and where of such strange fables are told in the Koran. Pity Mohammad had not seen Petra, he might have drawn another long bow shot in Wady Musa. Yet hardly from their camp is any of these wonders of faith plainly visible. The pilgrims who are besides greatly addaed of the Aarah, durst not adventure forth, unless there go a score of them together". 1.

Medain Salih, Kasr el Bint, rocks of Behan, El Alley, Teyma, the desert, Har'a, Wady Thirba, El Hejr, The Jebel, Hayil, Kheybara, (and the journey back) are landmarks on his European pilgrim's road. Like Bunyan's Christian he is often in danger of losing his life, but is delivered in time.

"I thought if in the next few days, I should be fugitive upon the vast lava field, without shelter from sun, without known landmarks, with water for less than three days and infirm in body, what hope had I to live". 2.

Much more important than the interest of the story is the charm of style. He wrote naturally, and the style was polished by the sands of the desert, and yet it appears the

the old sane made it perforce the language of the ancient messiahs and patriarchs.

"Beduins soon came in who had seen our Dervish slowly travelling upon the lower Haj Road; clean was the weather, the winter's sun made hot mid days; but the season was too chill for such a weary man to lie abroad by night. Weeks after other Beduins arrived from Medina, and we inquired if they had seen aught of our Dervish". 1.

"A new voice hailed me of an old friend when I first returned from the Peninsula, I paced again in that long street of Damascus which is called Staright and suddenly taking me wondering by the hand, "Tell me (said he) since thou art here again in peace and assurance of Allah, and whilst we walk, as in the former years, towards the new blossoming orchards full of the sweet spring as the garden of God, what moved thee of how could'st thou take such journeys into the fanatic Arabia".

Here is the style of Sir Thomas Browne and the Authorised Version, Donne and Taylor- an ancient style, used for describing an ancient land, but this ornate prose is used sparingly, the rhythm rising and falling with the occasion and mood as the life in the desert happened to be. There is a leisurely solemnity, and rhythmical flow; the clauses seem to soar and stoop according to an old pattern. It is the very life rhythm of Arabia, Only Coleridge would level against him the charge of disorderly syntax which he did against Sir Thomas Browne. 3.

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The spirit of the orient breathes through their books and they open like the true children of the East with a ‘fal’on a book of poetry on with a quotation from some bards of Faras or Al-Arab.

He who travels becomes popular; his greatness shines in the mirror of light. Water is the purest thing, but when it stands it becomes dirty. (Translation from Persian.)

Sketches of Persia is a simple clear account; its object is mainly to impart information; but he has penetrating discernment and wide culture, he is modern by the breadth of his perspective and careful planning of the whole; his narrative is long and full, and yet never dull and insipid. He submits to the requirements of his diplomatic mission, the pictures, narratives, and portraits are broadly planned. He is a writer of the transitional period; he does not pay much attention to style; and the prose which flows along easily most of the time, appears some what disjointed here and there.

This man whose name was Peterson, was what he appeared to be, a blunt sailor; his experience in the Indian seas recommended him to the situation he now occupied as acting master of a frigate; he was a figure to play Falstaff, being very stout, and nearly six feet high. He wore his clothes loose and when he came abroad, a sailor struck with his appearance, turning his quid as he eyed him, exclaimed, "He shall never be in distress for canvas; our new master wears a spare set of sails". 2.

There are stories of the Wahabis and the Arab love of horses, particularly the amusing story of a man who steals a Sheikh's swiftest mare to elope with his beautiful daughter. 3. There is the charming character Mons. Tollecmaeh, masquerading as Dervish Abdullah, and many scenes and sights of Persian cities.

2. Ibid., p. 1.
Almost a century separates Sir John Malcolm from his successor Gertrude Bell; the method and approach underwent a complete change within this time. Gertrude Lowthian Bell daughter of Sir Hugh Bell and granddaughter of Sir Lowthian Bell went to Persia when her uncle Sir Frank Lascelles was appointed British Minister in Teheran in 1891. Her brilliant university career, her excellent translations of Persian poets—especially Poems from Diwan-I-Hafiz—1897, and her successful role as a diplomat and preserver of the ancient Syrian relics—and these travel books, won her an immortal name.

Persian Pictures - 1894 — The Persian Pictures is a work of youthful imagination and enthusiasm, it is steeped in a wholly romantic grace, and the gifted writer is already revealed by a sureness of prose periods and an aptness of phrasing, a witty delicacy, and a discreet snobbery, and it is nothing short of the extraordinary. The book first appeared in 1894 without her name under the title 'Safar Namah — Persian Pictures - A Book of Travel', and it was again printed by Ernest Benn in 1926 as Persian Pictures with a preface by Sir Denison Ross — her political boss in Mesopotamia.

The living Eastern City of Teheran, and Rages the City of silence, the gardens of Persia and her dreadful epidemics, her Merchant kings and tent dwellers, diamonds, bottles and brushes of the Shah of Persia, her ancient dead and her new dead — all move her sensitive heart.
She already foreshadows her future style—the appeal of history and the Eastern mystery, the sublime echoes of life and death, and above all the head-long flow of her phrases which ascend and descend with an unusual force and power. It is reminiscent of the best passages in the Gothen.

"The wind races through the desolate valley, and finding nothing to resist it but the bridge, whose strong piers stand firmly in the foaming water, it wreaks its vengeance on the storm clouds, which it collects and scatters at its pleasure, tearing them apart, and driving them headlong in front of it, till the valley is flicked with their dark shadows and with glints of brilliant sunshine between".  

The appeal of history and reminiscence is a prominent feature of her travel books, but this element is kept within bounds; her vision here is that of a poet and not a historian; she builds an edifice of prose the architectural idea of which is the cult of the beautiful.

"The Jews knew her well; in Rages dwelt that Gabelus to whom the pious Tobit entrusted his ten talents of silver in the days of the Captivity; there Tobias was journeying when the angel Raphael met him and instructed him in the healing properties of fishes; there, relates the author of the book of Judith, reigned Pharaorites whom Nebuchad-Nessar smote through with his darts, and utterly destroyed".  

The love of the past envelops it all, and contains the mystery of her decision to devote her life to the Ancient East; the dead share as much of her interest as the living.

"The experience of those who have passed before him along the well trodden road will not hold him back or turn aside; to each new comer - the way is new and still to be enjoyed, new and exciting the danger, and the difficulties, new the pleasant sensation of rest by the fountain at mid-day, new and terrible the hunger and footsoreness, new, with a grim unexpectedness the forbidding aspect of that last caravanserai where he lays himself down to sleep out the eternal night".

2. Ibid, p.20.  
3. Ibid, p.121.
She has drunken the cup of the old Omer Khayyam, and yet below this poetic grace, and the delicate changeful shades, one feels the robust make of her British character.

"It must be confessed that inspite of its size, the square makes no favourable impression upon the mind of the sophisticated European. The gates leading into it are adorned with ugly modern tiles, the buildings around it all have no trace of architectural merit. Their stucco face is questionably embellished by a fresco of lions, exceedingly ill drawn, each animal looking nervously, round at the sun disc with its spiked circle of rays, which rises from behind its shoulders".

The Desert and the Sown - 1907

The Desert and the Sown carries us into quite a different world. This magic world of the past seen through the eyes of the present is best described in the opening words.

"The gates of the enclosed garden are thrown open, the chain at the entrance of the Sanctuary is lowered, with wary glance to right and left you step forth and behold, the immeasurable world, the world of adventure and of enterprise, dark with hurrying storms, glittering in raw sunlight, an answered question, and an unanswerable doubt hidden in the fold of every hill. Into it you must go alone, separated from the troops of friends that walk the rose alleys, stripped of the purple and fine linen that impede the fighting arm, roofless, defenceless, without possession. The voice of the wind shall be heard instead of the persuasive voices of counsellors, the touch of the rain and the prick of the frost shall be spurs sharper than praise or blame and necessity shall speak with an authority unknown to that borrowed wisdom which men obey or discard at will".

Jerusalem and Judaea; Khureibet us Suk and Tneib, Bosra - Eskî, Sham and Habran, Kalat El Beide and Damascus, Barada and Baalbek, Kalat El Hsan and Husn us Suleiman, Hamal and Aleppo, Antioch and Gariz - are the stages of her journey through time; her pictures of the cities that do not exist reveal her own creative powers.

1. Persian Pictures - London-1947, p.16;
2. The Desert and the Sown - London-1928, p.1,
"Here I paused to recapture the impression, which no familiarity can blunt, of the walled City on the hill, grey in a grey and stony landscape under the heavy sky, but illuminated by the hope and the unquenchable longings of generations of pilgrims. Human aspiration, the blind reaching out of the fettered spirit towards a goal where all desire shall be satisfied and the soul find peace, these things surround the city like a halo, half glorious, half pitiful, shining with tears and blurred by many a disillusion".1

"No life, no flowers, the bare stalks of last year's thistle, the bare hills, and the stony road. And yet the Wilderness of Judaea has been nurse to the fiery spirit of man. Out of it strode grim prophets, menacing with doom a world of which they had had neither part nor understanding the valleys are full of caves that held them, nay, some are peopled to this day by a race of starved and gaunt ascetics, clinging to a tradition of piety that commonsense has found hard to discredit". 2

The Desert and the Sown is a fruit of the mature years; the intense colours of the Persian pictures, are subdued; and the sprightly vivacity is replaced by a sober intensity. It is a book based on no model, western or eastern, but taken from life fresh with dewy dew drops of nature. She complies with the needs and curiosity of western taste; the easy and varied prose rhythm is much different from the rushing flow of the earlier book. But the story of too many places and persons seems to over-burden the structure as a whole and there is a solemnity which impairs its sweetness, and a ponderous pre-occupation with history that spoils the precise neatness of form. Perhaps she was aware of this weakness, and her awkwardness was due to this consciousness of her problem of apportionment of ingredients. This is why in her next book "Amurath to Amurath" she hits upon a new plan, a new form, and a new arrangement of facts within a fixed form.

2. Ibid, p.10.
Amurath to Amurath is a truly philosophical book, the philosophy of Jaquas and Touchstone is put together to form the Travellers' philosophy - a traveller who wonders and weeps at the past and laughs at the present, and it is prefaced with Arabic words that portray its spirit.

(Translation from Arabic)

 Said by Lahid son of Rabiah:

We wither away but they wane not, the stars that above us rise.
The Mountains remain after us and the strong towers when are gone.

'Amurath to Amurath' means 'from one immortal to immortal', and yet nobody is immortal; but there is no destructive fear in it; there is no scepticism and unrelieved pessimism, nor disillusioned wisdom, nor complete darkness. Life still continues by the side of death; and in the shadow of the tombs the nomads tell their tales of love and laughter.

"Dear Lord Cromer - when I was pursuing along the banks of the Euphrates the leisurely course of oriental travel, I would sometimes wonder, sitting at night before my tent door, whether it would be possible to cast into shape the experiences that assailed me. And in that spacious hour when the silence of the wilderness was enhanced rather than broken by the sound of the river, and by the sounds scarcely less primeval, that wavered round the campfire of my nomad hosts, the task broadened out into a shape which was in keeping with the surroundings, nor would I set myself to trace the story that was scored upon the face of the earth by mouldering wall or half choked dyke, by the thousand vestiges of former culture which were scattered around my path but I would attempt to record the daily life and speech of those who had inherited the empty ground where on empires had risen and expired. . . . Conqueror follows upon the heels of Conqueror, nations are overthrown and cities toppled down into the dust, but conditions of existence are unaltered and irresistibly they fashion the new age in the likeness of the old*. Amurath an Amurath succeeds and the tale is told again."

The book has a design, a pattern, a form fashioned out of experience and the mature artistic sense. There is a judicious arrangement of humorous anecdotes, and solemn studies of the past, there is a tenderness and a love of the ignorant humanity; she takes the past and the present, the paupers and princes all in one stride. A new insight curbs the over-effusive expression of feeling; and a certain fine and subtle element dispels the darkness of the past.

Here are incomparable resources, and the stuff out of which great romances are woven; here is the soul of the classical age laid bare on the surface of the hillocks and sands. It wells up in a mind which carries with it every where an inexhaustible interest in the variety of the past, and the simplicity of the present.

"I lingered on the mound, making acquaintance with a world which was new to me, but immeasurably old to fame. The beautiful empty desert stretched away east and north and south, bathed in the soft splendour of February, long gentle slopes and low bare hills, and the noble curves of the Euphrates bordering the waste. Near the river and scattered over the first two or three miles of the country to the east of it, there are a number of isolated mounds which represent the site of very ancient settlements." 1.

Our road took up a ridge and when we came to its crest I drew bridle, for the history of Asia was spread out before my eyes. Below us the great Zab flowed into the Tigris, here Tissaphernes murdered the Greek generals, here at a higher point, turned and drove back the archers of Mithridates. To the north the mound of Nimrud, where the Greeks saw the ruins of Calah, stood out among the cornfields; eastward lay the plain of Arbela, where Alexander over-threw Darius, the whole world shone like a jewel, green corn, blue waters and the gleaming snows that bound Mesopotamia to the north; but to my ears the smiling landscape cried out a warning, the people of the west can conquer, but they can never hold Asia, no, not even when they go out under the banner of Alexander himself." 2.

But in this book her wisdom has reached the altitude of humour, she is bent upon refreshing the chilly account of

1. *Amurath to Amurath* - London-1911*, p.28*
the dead through constant unexpectedness of anecdotes and silly remarks of the present day Amurath. The movement and the tricks of this style are a visible effect of an inner decision. The subject not only demands but deserves them.

"From the deep embrasure of her window I looked out upon Aleppo citadel, and congratulated her upon her secluded house set in the thickness of ancient walls.

"Yes", she replied, eagerly detailing the benefits of providence", and we have a carpet for winter time, and there is no mother-in-law." 1.

"In this wilderness we came upon some Arabs who were ploughing up a desolate spot in search of locust's eggs in sand.

"No", they answered - 'there are none here; but, as God is exalted, there are thousands lower down."

"Then why do you plough here? I asked, with the tiresome persistence of the European."

"The government ordered it", said they, and resumed their work." 2.

"Affendum", said he, "we do not care what Sultan we have, so long as he is a just ruler. But as for Abdul Hamid he keeps three hundred women in his palace, and look you they have eaten our money". 3.

"The maidens of Kabaisah are fair but wilful. There is one among them, her name is Shemsah-Wallah, a picture; a picture she is - she has had seven husbands". 4.

But the old romantic, flame again flickers up, and the keen sensibility for landscape mingles, with the clear-sightedness of irony.

"Euphrates is a good travelling companion, "There is no road", said Fattuh, "like the road to Baghdad: the desert on one hand and the water on the other." 5.

It is a journey like the flights of Ariel, through the sand and water, air and underground caves. It is truly the land of the Arabian Nights.

2. Ibid., p.80.
3. Ibid., p.81.
4. Ibid., p.117.
5. Ibid., p.35.
Persia Past and Present, A book of travel and research, truly deserves both the titles, and there lies its charm. Jackson’s thought is historical, and his vision is that of a poet; but his intellectual power is concentrated in the desire to understand. His work is almost of the same quality as that of Gertrude Bell towards her mature years, and his point of view is also the same.

A benign and enlightened mind sheds a soft glow over the classical world sleeping on the fields of victory and defeat; he has no misgivings, no inward torment of thought; pure intellect provides a serenity, the true reward of a life of worthy and wise endeavour. He went there in 1903, getting leave of absence from his American University, and journeyed thither via Berlin and Moscow. The impressions were recorded when yet fresh, and they smell of the rose gardens of Saadi and Hafiz, and have the everlasting charm of the fields where Proserpine gathered flowers.

"I could hear (when in the Caucasus) faint echoes of the dialogue with Io, and the mutterings of the Titan’s curse against the wrath of Zeus. Little did I dream when I read Prometheus in college that I should ever see the place where Aeschylus had laid his tragic scene." 1.

The journey led him through Nakhjavan, Julfa, Tabriz, Urumiah, Takhti, Suleiman, Hamdan, Ganjnamah, Tak-i-Bostan, Isfahan, Naksh-i-Rustum, Persipolis, Shiraz, Yezd, Kashan, Tehran, and the ruins of Rej. At the tomb of Cyrus the Great he lives again the experiences of the past; it sheds a flood of light on the self-sufficient power of imagination; and through this function of the soaring fancy the world of the past, the life in the distant

lands is better understood and appreciated. The realm of
the elusive past is conquered by this pious falsification.

"I still could hear the trampings of the horses that
led the funeral train; the measured tread of the soldiers
in clanking armour ran dully on my ear; the smoke of
imagined incense rose heavenward to Auramazda from the huge
urn holding the sacred fire; and the chanting voice of the
Magian priest intoning perchance the Zorostrian psalm
Kam Nemoi Zam (to what land am I going) - beat rhythmically
through my brain. The Great King Cyrus was no more. The
shroud of darkness fell like a pall upon the plain, and
moon rose slowly over the distant hills". 1.

The historical content, and the ideological content
enhance artistic value, because it corroborates several
important artistic values, it adds to complexity and
coherence.


Harry Charles Lukach is mainly concerned with the
past, but it is more of a necessity than a choice; the
monastery at Mount Athos, Rhodes of the Knights, Cyprus
and Famagusta, Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and Galilee,
Hermon Homs, and Aleppo are names to conjure with, and he is
not to blame if his interest is quickened in the persons
and places of antiquity. He is neither a philosopher nor
a poet; but there is lucidity about his book which savours
of a system. It is a tour inspired by Curzon's Monasties
of the Levant(1847), and he owes to it a wistfulness for the
past, and a taste for intellectuality; with his well
balanced temperament and clear intelligence he displays a
faculty for clear narrative which almost matches that of the
writers of today, particularly Toynbee.

Humour, history and landscape - are the ingredients
with which he rebuilds the ancient lands of the Bible and
Turkey comes in as a comedian to relieve the serious and

solemn effect. In fact the book opens with the humorous anecdotes associated with the name of Khoja Nasir-ud-Din Effendi of Aqshehir, and goes on to make fun of the abbots, and the Turkish navy.

"The Abbot poured it out in tumblers, and in an instant the All Sacred, the All Saintly and All Erudite were roaring Klephtic ballads at the tops of their voices, but not for long. _Man cannot fast for forty days, and then drink rum with impunity_. 1.

He makes fun of the Turkish navy as it was before the revolution. They were given orders to start in half an hour.

"Reply: "we have no rudder. Order: "Start; it will be sent by post". 2.

But he is at his best when describing the atmosphere of places and sites, cities, and buildings.

"In appearance Nazareth resembles some Tuscan or Umberian hill town, in character, it is a small Jerusalem. With its many buildings of Italian aspect, white walled, red roofed, with its companili, its fig trees and cypresses and its back-ground of hills, it is not unlike, Assisi, although, lacking Assisi's charm; but the countless sacred sights, the colonies of the many sects who live here in their quarters of the town, the monasteries and churches, hospitals and orphanages, make it in truth a detached fragment of Jerusalem_. 3.

The book is slightly burdened with facts, but its happy unconsciousness lends scope for animation, oratorial, delights, and a warmth of historical narration. His mind is concerned with the general impression which a place makes, and here and there he teaches the lessons which he finds in stones; but that is an endearing habit. His mind is awake to the value of concrete testimony; he shows familiarity with the atmosphere the intimate life, the picturesque setting of the epoch; he knows how to review what is dead.

2. Ibid., p.5.
3. Ibid., p.134.
7. Edmund O. Donovan - The Merve Oasis (1882)

O’Donovan’s name reflects the lustre that belongs to the fabled cities of Bokhara and Samarkand, he did not tread the Golden Road of Elory Flecker, but the Bloodred road which Dr. Wolff followed when he went to rescue Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly. 1. He represents the travails of the expansion of the British Empire, the stage when intellectuals were coming into the field, were leaving the sheltered corners of home, and wandered forth to all the lands on the Earth. The horizons were widened, curiosity was inexhaustible, and a generation of poets and novelists, writers and thinkers were let loose over the globe. It is a phenomenon common to the rise of all empires of the past and the present; it is a process of making rootless and mobile the men who are supposed to give thought for greater integration of life.

The Merve Oasis, is an excellent account of his journeys in Central Asia undertaken in the years 1879, 1880, 1881. It is full of adventures; and escapes, places and persons all etched with a clarity and facility that comes natural to a journalist of experience. The shadow of General Skobelev and the Russian masters was already falling on the tents of Merve and the mud walls of the citadel of Geok Tepe. Days in Meshad, the sight of the severed heads of Turcomans stuffed with hay and kicked like balls, the ruins of ancient cities the empty city of Khivahad, the poor Russian prisoner Kidaeff all are described with an agonising clarity, with details of sights and scenes, and a true understanding of the situation; and all this time he was only a free-lance with no political backing, and no diplomatic status.

On the death of Nadir Shah, about one hundred and thirty years ago, the inhabitants of Khivabad having no longer the fear of the blood thirsty monster before their eyes, went off en masse to their former homes. The place has been ever since, I am told, entirely un-inhabited. Standing on one of the towers, and gazing over the ample space within walls, so utterly silent and deserted, the enchanted cities of Eastern story come to mind, and one might well imagine the great flock of blue pigeons perched along the battlements, to be the bewitched inhabitants. 1.

He catches the very spirit of the places through which he passes.

"Far and wide were scattered countless towns and villages - all deserted, their lonely walls and towers standing out, grimly desolate, in the white mid-day blaze. Scores of ancient mounds, dotted the plain. The vast expanse marked with all these traces of vanished life quivering and dancing in the mirage, had about it something weird, and unearthly, that filled the mind with a sense of desolation and loneliness." 2

Professor Glufson has a style full of sweetness and charm, a trick of giving an imaginative touch to dry details, a method similar to that of Sir Francis Younghusband, but his vigour is replaced by a softness born of the slowness of Amu Darya, and his egoism is substituted by the objective detachment of a scientist. The Emir of Bokhara and his Country is based on his journey in the years 1896 to 1899; and has around it an old world charm, a charm that had disappeared by the time of Earl of Ronaldshay's visit; Bokhara literally died soon after his visit; here is the last confession of the grand old city of romance.

He passes through Tadjik villages with well kept gardens, Kala Vamar, Darvas the city of rude men, Kalai Khuma Khinjan valley, Childarra, the salt desert near Bokhara, Amu Darya, Khiva and reaches Bokhara. This account of the journey has about it the fanciful flavour of Tozki-Timuri and

2. Ibid. p.90 Vol.11.
Tozki-Babri (The Memoirs of Tamburlaine and Emperor Babur); perhaps that land inspires all to think, feel and write in that old Persian style of describing all towns and villages and huts on the way with a childlike interest.

"As the Serfshan(river) creates such magnificent oases as Samarkand and Bokhara in the midst of barren deserts, poor steppes and naked mountains, oases which have always been centres of culture in Mid Asia, it is no wonder that the story of these regions is associated with the river, that the scenery of legends, traditions, myths, fairy tales and fables is laid about such a miraculous stream on whose banks thousands and thousands of people have found their food, rested in the shade of huge elms, and mulberry trees, founded kingdoms, raised thrones and over-thrown them". 1.

Somehow, even when dealing with a certain barren region, he gives the impression of the sweetness of human existence, and vastness and variety of life, and the grandeur of the human soul that surveys it all.

"The desert has its own peculiar charm, such delicate tones of colour, so gracefully undulating surfaces, as those formed by the fine yellowish grey desert sand. But as the desert is desolate and terrible when water and food is lacking, and when burning desert wind heats gun barrels, and all metallic objects, so much so that one cannot touch them. The head becomes heavy, the brain wanders and hallucinations reduce the traveller into a desperate state of mind, but if one is mounted on a good camel with well filled waterbags, and sufficient provisions, duly sheltered from the heat, of the summer season or the icy cold of winter and sure of one's position, desert affords a beauty of scenery of highest order". 2.


The Earl of Ronaldshay, moves on a vaster stage, and has a broader vision; he has more facilities at his command and less of the risks and dangers of O' Donovan's time; he is not bound by any duty save that of a voluntary wanderer, he has more leisure to indulge in reveries and meditations, flights of imagination, and whimsical observations.

1. The Emir of Bokhara and his Country - London, 1911, Heineman, p. 141,
2. Ibid., p.164.
He represents the great proconsuls of the Empire, the dreamers and builders, the wanderers and visionaries; he is not as erudite as Gertrude Bell, but he dabbles in history, he is not a poet like Doughty but he has moments of romantic ecstasy, he is not a stylist like Kinglake but his narrative is charming, and has no purple patches; there is no monotony, the sources of the beauty of his prose are not too easily visible. He has not the ear of a good prose stylist, but he is not altogether deaf.

He journeys from the lands of the Bible to the Siberian Altai and Mongolia; Constantinople, Tarsus, Aleppo, Deir, Mosul, Baghdad, Kasri-Shirin, Kermanshah, Hamdan, Bisitun, Geok Tepe, Merve, Bokhara, Samarkand, Tashkent are names that are surrounded by the thick golden mist of legend, and history. He has tears for the dismal wastes and dead cities, reverence for the ruins of the Biblical sites, respect for robbers and brigands, contempt for tyrants and renegades, love for the open hunting grounds of Siberia, and pride for the British Empire. It is a journey through life and death, through the dead and the dying, the past and the present, the real and the mythical, the outskirts of the Empire in Asia - touch the outskirts of the Empire beyond this Empire.

"On the contrary there is a grim reality about the limitless and forbidding expanse of an Asian desert which inspires feelings of anything but merriment. The vastness of its hills fills you with awe, the silence and absence of life weigh heavily upon you, the hovering vulture and the staring white skeleton of pony or camel speak only of death. Everything is so real and so stern, you feel that to smile or to laugh would be impossible in these surroundings; the inexorable reality of life and death is on all sides forced upon you". 1

1. The Outskirts of Empire in Asia - London-1904, Blackwood, pp.4, 5.
"But there is still another note which is struck by a sojourn in the East - the note of pathos. The sight of failing vitality where once was power and strength is always a sad one, and here in the lands of the Near East time broods heavily over her cities. They look back with the dimmed sight of old-age, at a youth which has long since fled, and as they peer drowsily into the future they see nought but death hovering near, attendant on life which is all but spent". 1.

"And now we wandered among the mounds of Ninevah and Babylon, and trod in the courts of Esarhaddon and Nebuchadnezzar, I dreamed dreams of the glory of their day, reconstructed the places and temples of their monarchs, and their Gods, and pictured dimly to myself how the world looked when it looked fresh and young, and the great deluge still had left it green. And when I returned to earth and gazed on the great piles of debris where stood great cities, the pathos of decay swept over me, and I bowed before the inexorable power of destroyer Time". 2.

The romantic association with the past 3, his love for mustiness of musty old cities 4, and his happy hunting grounds 5 do not blind him to the reality of life, he is always John Bull with his love of truth and bluntness, and has no illusions.

"Truth to tell, he would have to be of a peculiar disposition who could see in the barren stony wastes that constitute so large a portion of Tibet the land of any one's desire; nor indeed can it be said that in the religion of that country is to be found any foundation for the weird tales of the supernatural to which it has given rise. Lamaism provides something of interest, it is true; but it provides much that is sordid as well as inevitable in any form of demonology". 6.

The Outskirts of the Empire in Asia is a personal story, the whole is gently interesting, with no excess of colour. His other books are "A Wandering student in the Far East"(1908) and "An Eastern Miscellany"(1911). "The Lands of Thunderbolt" comes in the part concerning India; "The Heart of Arya Varia" (1925) is another study of India.

2. Ibid.,p.72.
3. Ibid.,p.47.
4. Ibid.,p.179.
5. Ibid.,Chapters XX, XXI, XXII.
6. Ibid.,p.345.
A Vision of India by Sidney Low is really a vision seen during the Indian tour of the Prince and the Princess of Wales. It is old India, still possessing its fairy-land beauty, captured by the pen of a man alive to colours and sights, smells and sounds; his description has fresh beauty of expression and beauty of thought that is truly inspired, there are poetic out-bursts kept within bounds with apparent difficulty. Every page breathes an effusion of an exulting soul; he is drunk with the sweet wine of Imperial Glory, - but he is never crude, never shocking, and he never dangles the sword of Kipling.

"You cannot make statistical observations in Fairy-land. Conceive a rugged mountain country, of brown, bare, jagged peaks and scarpaded serrated hills, and in a broad valley or basin of this desolate place a chain of still and silvery lakes, with palms and plantains, and blossoming wisteria, and cactus and spiny jungle grass, breaking the sandy hummock in a belt of verdure at the edges of the pools. And plant by the margin of the largest lake, and on the lowest ridges of the upland, a city of snowy palaces and gleaming towers, and fretted minarets, and the great carved blunt pyramids of temples, a city which leans over the flood in long stretches of crenellated ramparts, and jutting bastion, or opens from it in arabesqued gateways which reveal narrow streets, gay with many hued life, and backed by a sheet of turquoise sky". 1.

He is a romanticist of the Empire, an inveterate lover of India as seen in the native states, it was the dream land of every British child.

"Illuminations are as a rule, rather vulgar affairs, but I think all illuminations henceforth must seem cheap and tawdry to those who remember that November evening on the terraces of Udaipur . . . Those humble night lights were set by thousands, outlining everything with a tender palpitating glow, as if streams and runlets of lambent flame were slowly trickling along every wall and pinnacle and projection, by sides of buildings, and down shafts of columns. The islands mirrored themselves in the lake in temples and palaces of softened fire, the forts flickered like giant fire-flies on the distant hills. It was fairy land - with the elfin lamps alight". 2.

2. Ibid., P. 98.
The appeal of history is an appeal that cannot be denied; it is a wild call, a call of time over vast stretches of centuries, a search for the tragic in the end of empires; and it affords an intellectual — delight in tracing causes and courses of events, present and remote.

"In the cool of the evening you may see many people walking upon the flat roofs of the houses, even as King David walked when his eye-lighted upon the wife of Uriah the Hittite; you may perchance light upon Jasebel, with her head tied, looking upon the upper widow. After all we are on familiar soil. We have come far from the world of the twentieth century". 1

"Rome herself has scarcely a stronger appeal to offer, to the imagination than some of these storied cities of Northern India. The view over the Campagna with its halting legions of broken arches, and riven columns - is little more impressive than that which lies before the watcher from the minarets of Jamma Masjid Delhi, The history of many ages is in that wide prospect". 2

The self respecting and proud Rajputs, the desert dwellers of Bikaner, the Pilgrims at Allahabad - all find a sympathetic delineator in Sidney Low. In fact at times, the tone is patronising; it is his empire and he must defend it.

"One has seen it (The Taj) travestied a thousand times, in feable photograph and libelous postcard, and clumsy process print, and utterly inadequate water colour oils... It has been described to death and the late Sir Edwin Arnold assailed it with blank verse. Tourists travel half round the globe to look at it, and go home to gush . . . . . . But it comes victorious through it all". 6

2. Ibid., p.163.
3. Ibid., p. 90.
5. Ibid., p.193.
6. Ibid., p.176.
Ian Malcolm's travel account belongs to that group of serene sketches of British India which never for a moment doubt the permanent prevalence of pax Britannica. He has the temperament of imperialism, the magnetism of its presence is always upon him. His days in the foreign office, where the dirty linen of the empire is washed and pressed, have given him no bitterness; he carries within him emotions and desires which are virtually the stimulating doctrines of the new religion; he is not a high priest of the religion, but a silent devotee who murmurs now and then with eyes dimmed with faith.

"There is considerable truth in the phrase that an Englishman can make himself at home anywhere upon the habitable globe. In his upbringing there is an element of self-sufficiency, which, although it does not always smile upon our European neighbours is the salvation of the noble army of exiles who labour for their living in high ways, and byways of a scattered empire. Early in life he learns that if home is within the heart surroundings matter but little. 1.

The account of the tour of India and Burma, has much in common with Sidney Low's Vision of India; both love Indian India on the native States; both give a romantic account of the Indian palaces and temples, and both are blind to the terrible poverty of the people and the servile degradation of a whole continent.

"When I first saw Bikaner, I thought it was either a miracle or a miracle. We were travelling in a somewhat leisurely train over the rolling sandy waste, with no green thing in sight to repose the eye, no human being or live animal to quicken the interest, when suddenly in the far, far distance, there came into sight a noble pile whose whiteness shivered in the morning light. Still closer we came, and we could distinguish walls and towers and bastions; it seemed like an enchanted castle, a Fairy King's palace set in a sea of gold. 2.

2. Ibid. p. 33.
"And as I draw nearer, the atmosphere became rose coloured, the sky brightened from sapphire to turquoise, and in the distance I saw the city of my childhood's dream. There was the great boundary wall looming beyond the trees; its straight line broken by turret and bastion and noble gateway; there the tall minaret piercing the sky; and there rising in oriental splendour the seven storied palace of the prince and the Temple of the winds. And the colour of the distant vision was coral—soft as the pink heart of a sea shell, tender as the blush of the first spring rose". 1.

Ian Malcolm writes sweetly and naturally, there is no apparent effort on his part; his prose flows onward gently, glimmers in the light of the morning sun in the Indian desert, and splashes with the waters of the Ganges. He is not a critic but an enthusiastic admirer; he has more of the heart than the head in matters of appreciation; he is not interested in queer characters, like Maugham, or in history like Gertrude Bell; he prefers the living to the dead, the general to the particular; he is concerned with the broad and general lie of the land. The intrusion of the writer's personality in a travel book is inevitable, but Malcolm never intrudes, and this he does without sacrificing anything. His happy unconsciousness of his own self is due to his absorption in the imperialistic ideal, that he presents with a great sense of the dramatic. The Durbar held by Lord Curzon in Burma had a theatrical setting.

"No spot could have been more appropriate or beautiful than that selected for the audience. A mile outside Mandalay, at the foot of the mountains, stood the famous 450 pagodas, a limitless collection of gleaming white spires, beneath each of which is inscribed a Table of the Law. In the midst of these rises a golden dome, and this was the site of the meeting". 2.

1. Indian Pictures and Problem - London - 1907, p.42.
2. Ibid. p. 258.
A travel book about a mysterious land is expected to have about it some beauty of style and language, some literary appeal, some exotic charm, but it is astonishing that English travel books about Tibet have rarely any literary beauty. Tibet has no history, no culture worth the name, no art, no literature; nothing which a western man may easily grasp and share with them. Literature cannot exist in a vacuum, great books must have great themes. Tibet is still a medieval land and the best form of expression in that land is still the story told by the monk or the magician; only a great genius like Chaucer could have penetrated the mind of the Tibetans. At least S.T. Coleridge would have scented the mystery, and followed it through caverns measureless to man.

Henry Savage Landor is neither a great traveller nor a good travel writer. He possesses neither the grand imaginative powers of Sven Hedin nor the inquiring mind of Father Huc; and it is not possible to tell when he is giving pure fiction. He is fond of telling stories of personal prowess, and of theatrical presentation of risks and dangers, and hairbreadth escapes—none of which would be necessary in real life.

"I was gaily kicking my feet about when my man shouted that the ice and rock were giving way from under me. Before I had time to get up from my unpleasant position the fellow had pluck and sense enough to try and reach over, seizing me firmly by the wrist, and as the rock and ice and snow went from under, not only were my legs dangling over the precipice, but my whole body was suspended in the air." 1.

1. Tibet and Nepal—London-1905,
A.C. Black, p. 95.
He lifted and placed upon a wall a heavy stone which none had ever been able to lift.

"But when brute strength fails, ruse is often easily successful, and so being somewhat versed in the laws of leverage, balance and impetus, I succeeded, much to the amazement of everybody, in placing that stone upon the wall. It was an effort though I can tell you." 1.

His book is a typical example of travel books which are platitudinous, in harmoniously rude in style, and of doubtful value even as pieces of information. His book 'Across unknown South America, 1913' is also not much better.

It is a fact worth while the consideration of critics that the best accounts of the Poles, and Himalayan wildlands are given by Nansen and Arundson, and Sven Hedin; where the English fail the Swedish mind comes out victorious. The Swedish warmth of feelings, and the pathetic touch, the philosophic attitude and the sense of the proud dignity of man makes their accounts far superior to those of the Anglo Saxon rivals even when the latter are equally heroic.

"A dead horse lies on the way, without its eyes- the wicked ravens must always have the eyes while they are still warm and soft. The wind had driven snow over his back and neck, as though to make him a nice and comfortable couch. He lay as on a bed of state, exposed to all the winds of heaven, with clear white pall, and the black ravens as a guard of honour- the only thanks he got for his services". 2.

"And all this company which the sport of fortune had collected around me was to be scattered again one after the other, like chaff before the wind, I was the only one who, six and twenty months later reached Simla again, and the last of all men and animals who now lay in deep sleep under the planes of Gadarbal". 3.

This Swedish genius for the uncommon and the cruel, the rudimentary forms of Nature, and her most violent forces is shared also by the Icelandic writers (especially Laxness) and the Russian Writers in particular Chekhov and Gorky; if they all had been exiled to Tibet- the literature of travel would have been much enriched.

Rudyard Kipling is the most representative figure of the imperialistic tradition in the literature of travel, and yet it must be conceded that From Sea to Sea shows the great master at his best; the prose in these travel sketches beats everything else that came from his pen. Kipling needs reconsideration; the good and bad associations of imperialism that weigh down all judgements must be discarded, and then a hard resistant strain of realism, a vigorous originality and a powerful grasp of the literary skill and technique are seen at work. Here he is the natural man in his element, uncouth and blunt, but refreshingly free of the ties that characterisation and rhyme scheme put on a novelist and poet. Here he need not take a certain attitude of a certain point of view; life is seen and sifted, analysed and criticised with briskness and brilliance, a raciness not found anywhere else. In truth in these letters the East does not fare worse than the West; his American sketches are simply brutal; he laughs at the East, but he weeps at the West; his account of India is critical, his description of America is cruel. It is no toy with the pet theories of his cult of virility and superiority, the gospel of Manhood and Imperialism, the doctrine of Duty and Dominion. He was a realist, a man facing facts; and in England the literary citadel was so feeble and decadent that one blunt joust of realism toppled it over. His travel sketches reveal his personality in its true colours; his concrete perception without any haze of theories, his intense and varied sensation, his gift of...
words and command of all resources of language, his love of primitive and earthy expression in preference to the subtle and abstract language of the intellectuals— all these are revealed in these letters of travel. He marches on with force and enthusiasm; he takes delight in sonorous and suggestive syllables, and flings around colours of the jungle and odour of the human settlements. There is intensity and also irony, serenity and restlessness, conciseness and prolixity; there is poetry and prosaic hardness; there is lightness of touch and density.

But he has no respect for Globe trotters and travel writers, the breed of unobservant holiday makers who 'do' countries in days and write books about them in weeks.

"It is good to escape for a time from the House of Rimon, be it office or cutchery and to go abroad under no more exacting master than personal inclination, and with no more definite plan of travel than has the horse escaped from pasture, free upon the countryside. The first result of such freedom is extreme bewilderness, and the second reduces the freed to a state of mind which for his time must be normal position of the Globe Trotter— the man who does Kingdoms in days and writes books upon them in weeks". 1.

"Then came by the person that I most hate, a Globe Trotter. He sitting in my chair discussed India with unbridled arrogance of five weeks on a Cook's ticket. He was from England, and had demeaned his manners in Suez Canal. I assure you", said he, that you who live so close to the actual facts of things cannot form dispassionate judgements of their merits. You are too near, Now I ......", he waved his hand modestly and left me to fill the gap. 2.

These Globe trotters pick up bits of information and vocabulary and flourish it with pride.

"It was not until they had opened their young hearts with infantile abandon that the listener could guess from the infantile incidental argot where these pocket Ulysses had travelled. South African, Norwegian, and Arabian words were used to help out the slang of shipboard, and a copious vocabulary of shipboard terms, complicated with modern Greek". 3.

He is a romantic traveller inspite of all the irony and sarcasm that he pours into even the simplest subject under the sun; he cannot help it, just as Chesterton cannot help being nonserious even in his most serious moments.

"Every fair morning is a reprint, blurred perhaps of the First Day, but this splendour was a thing thing to be put aside from all other days and remembered. The stars had no fire in them, and the fish had stopped jumping, when the blackwater of the lake paled and grew grey, while he watched it seemed to the English man that viooses on the hills were intoning the first verses of Genesis". 1.

"The Taj took a hundred new shapes, each perfect and beyond description. It was the Ivory Gate through which all good dreams come; it was the realisation of the gleaming halls of dawn that Tennyson sings of; it was verily aspiration fixed, "the sigh made stone" of a lesser poet, and over and above concrete comparisons, it seemed the embodiment of all things pure, all things holy, and all things unhappy". 2.

Even his romantic spirit of travel must have in it a pinch of perverse irony, that strengthens the flavour and makes it more palatable.

"It is good to be free, a wanderer upon high ways knowing not what tomorrow will bring forth, whether the walled in niceties of an English household, rich in all that makes life fair and desirable, or a sleepless night in the society of goods cum booking clerk cum parcel clerk on fifteen rupees a month, who tells in stilted English the story of his official life, while the telegraph gobbles like a pariah dogs fight and howl over the cotton bales on the platform. Verily there is no life like the life on the Road, when skies are cool and all men are kind". 3.

The tone of superiority and frank pride in the greatness of the British Empire makes him a bitter critic of all human follies and weaknesses that he observes all along the journey from India to Burma, Malaya, China, Japan and America. His irony and sarcasm, his mockery and ridicule have Caliban like vigour and force, and pique like venomous clarity. The intimate and essential quality, the subtle shades

1. From Sea to Sea, and other Sketches- London- 1917, p.189, Vol. I.
2. Ibid. p.4.
3. Ibid. p.81.
that establish the differences between different cultures, the complexities and depths of life—completely escape him; but none can form more definite and clearer images of what he does grasp of this Eastern life. Thus his merit lies in the keen and luminous perceptions; he alone knows the briefest and most telling form for conveying the same. The pleasure which this description affords is of a joyous intellectuality which easily picks out and arranges ideas with a brilliant quickness; he seems to soar above the incertitude and confusion of thought; with a single blow he makes or mars the whole edifice. His sovereign ease in expression, his roaring speed and tempo, his terrifying effectiveness, the concentrated force of energy, the whipping lash of language—all have the sharpness of a rapier, and the cold gleam of polished steel. His bite is as good as his bark; he does not growl like Swift, and never hides like Butler. His novels and stories lack this direction of thrust which is hard to parry; these glittering shafts rain like the arrows of some furious god. He gives no quarter; the whites and the Yellows, the Browns and the Blacks—all come in for a good swanking.

"'Rome, Rome,Was not that the place where I got good cigars'.

"There is considerably too much guessing about this large nation. As one of them put it rather forcibly: "I a guess a trestle will stand for ever, and we guess we can patch up a wash out on the track, and we guess the road clear, and some times we guess ourselves into the depot and some time we guess ourselves into hell."

"You know the story of the miner who borrowed a dictionary, and returned with the remark that stories though interesting in the main, were too various. I have the same complaint to make about Japanese scenery."

2. Ibid. p. 24, Vol. II.
3. Ibid. p. 393, Vol.I.
The Other Side of the Lantern is an uncommon travel book about a common place tour; here are the unstudied impressions of an unprofessional writer with sweetness of originality and naivety about it. He presents a contrast with Kipling both in spirit and style. Medical training somehow prepares a man better for the observation of man than other professional studies; Somerset Maugham, A.J. Cronin, and Dr. Sir Thomas Browne, long ago are examples worth considering. Humour and romance, love of the medieval ruins and buildings, an outlook that extends to the past and future of mankind, a catholicity of interests—give a charm to this otherwise simple account of a journey from India to Japan. It is difficult to assign him a place in the imperialistic school of travel writers, but it is amply evident that he has greater love and liking for India than for China or Japan; yet he is not the disciple of Kipling or Henry Newbolt. He is ignorant of all technical tricks, but he achieves the desired effect by his authenticity, and fidelity to facts; at times this surgeon soars on the heights of poetry. He finds hillmen in the Himalayas carrying beams of wood on their heads like their own crosses.

"There along it steals, this patient line of groaning men, bending under the burden of the planks upon their backs. Behind them a rose tinted light is falling upon the spotless snow, and it needs only the pointing finger of Dante, on one of the barren peaks, to complete the picture of a circle in purgatory". 1.

The lakes and the little islands at Udaipur touch his imagination deeply.

"The islands are the realisation of the landscape of romance. Here may be the scene of the love story of all stories for this is the land of the Lotos Eaters where there is no last day to the month. These are assuredly the palaces of the fairy tale, where the prince and the princess came after."

they were married, and where they lived happily ever after'.

His approach is poetic; he feels directly and conveys it in terms which are not aware of being used by an earlier writer; this is why some of the best books of travel are written by amateurs, and professionals like Aldous Huxley, expect too much from foreign lands. Delhi and Agra, that disappoint Huxley are cities of romance for Sir Frederick Treves; history has an appeal for him which even an eminent historian would miss.

"The giant tower valiant in its girth no doubt frowned contemptuously upon the stripling pillar, and left it to cringe in the shadow of its ridicule. But the little iron shaft (of Ashoka the Great), like David, a smooth stone out of the brook in a shepherd's pouch and a sling, so that after many years of humiliation the pillar brought death to the column, as it were, by a stone from a sling, and as David slew Goliath. For the oppressed people of the Pillar became victors in the end, and the power that boasted of the column as its standard faded out of the land". 2.

"As far as eye can stretch, the scene is the same-dust and crumbling stone. Forgotten cities and forgotten dead. If there be a spot on earth upon which all the woes uttered by the prophet Jeremiah can have fallen, it is assuredly upon this tract of land, which lies to the south of Delhi". 3.

For centuries the annals of this Golgotha have varied: the prospering town, the rumbling of a savage storm, curling, howling, wave of rapine, murder and outrage, and after the wave a piteous swamp of ruin and dead things". 4.

His high praise for Jeypore, Chitor, and other places, his new and original views about the Taj, and the Japanese gardens make it an interesting study of the Orient, but he is not an imperialist nor a cosmopolitan of da stoic school who loved every place. Inspite of his admiration for the foreign lands, he has greatest admiration for his motherland.

"God gave all men all earth to love. But since our hearts are small. Ordained for each one spot should prove, Beloved over all". 7.

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2. Ibid, p. 122.
5. Ibid, p. 81.
Smiling Round the World is a humorist's tour of the East; he was a prince of entertainers in his day, and his book debunks much of the mistaken colonial lore and the imperial legend; he pricks every bubble, and he kicks every statue with legs of clay, and he shrieks with laughter when it topples over. He is not a satirist pure and simple, he is not cynical and snobbish; his Irish blood is not enough to make him as bitter as Dean Swift.

"So let me give you a little suggestion; when the reckless fit overtakes you (fit of getting married) start on a journey, if not round the world, then round the backyard. Never mind the expense; plunge, Remember you are going to get even with fate. Travel is the greatest educator. Travel opens the mind, and bottles of good cheer and hospitable doors, and the arms of friendship; it some times closes them too, but never mind that". 1.

He makes up his mind one day to start on his travels, and see what lies beyond the baffling horizons. The journey has something of "Alice in Wonderland, atmosphere and spirit about it; it is a trip of many moons and many miles, many jests and many smiles".

"We started for the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in Arizona; that was to have been our first stopping place. But we were like the Irish man who started out on a bat to shoot a certain bird; he missed the bird but killed a frog. He picked it up and looked at it in surprise, "Be gobs, he said, "I knocked the feathers off it, any way. "" 2.

Here and there he gets frivolous, and the Pickwickian strain of the narrative gives it an old worldly look; his account of a motor ride in U.S.A. is simply a new version of a similar incident in Dickens narrative.

"I said to my chauffeur" Let her go " , and he let her go. We went so fast the milestones looked like a cemetery; we simply flew through the air; when the car stopped short I was still flying. I flew eighty feet through the air, shot through a church window, and lit right in the middle of the congregation, just as the minister was saying", And the angel of the Lord descended", 3.

2. Ibid, p. 20.
3. Ibid, p. 58.
The sea too cuts a sorry figure in the presence of this wild and irreverent jester.

"I will never forget that I had not been feeling well, and was told that sea voyage would make another man of me. Imagine making another man of me, when there was hardly enough material for one ". 1.

The book gives in simple narrative form his original and entertaining impressions of men and places from Hawaii to Ceylon, Cairo, and Gibraltar. Like Chesterton he laughs at everything, but unlike him he has moments when he forgets his jester's patchgarment, and talks and dreams like a poet.

"Let not Ireland claim the exclusive distinction of being an emerald set in the bosom of the ocean blue; For never were such emeralded greeness, such ocean blueness imagined of Ireland's sons or daughters as adorn and encompass the beauteous isle of Ceylon, the door sill of India. Well if India is not proud of her threshold, the step over which one passes to her mighty and imperial domain, she ought to be". 2.

Marshal P. Wilder is a singular and lovable figure, the stamp of a wild and cheerful nature is upon his talent and his work. He is a belated Pickwickian, he is Pickwick and Sam in one.

16. Sir Francis Younghusband (1863-1942)- Among the Celestials 1898.

Captain Francis Younghusband is a gifted young writer (25 years old when he wrote this book) who imparts his own bubbling enthusiasm and energy to the literature of travel and adventure. Among the Celestials is an abridged form of the Heart of the Continent, (1895); it retains all the literary beauties of the original book, and is also relieved of the burden of geographical details and other statistics, and that in a way makes it more beautiful than the original book.

2. Ibid, p. 262.
The book has a primitive force and a refined perception of beauty; he deliberately lets his imagination keep within the range of the actual experience. He observes, enjoys, and assimilates concrete reality; physical features, the mountain scenes, and the desert vistas, outlines and colours of landscapes; men and morals form the web and woof of his description. There is already an ethical flavour discernible a flavour which blossomed forth into full-fledged mysticism; he is aware of the greater political issues at work, and seems to foreshadow his political and diplomatic activities in the Himalayan regions. A self absorption of a meditative type (right in the heart of the Gobi) remains an outstanding trait of his mind; the Great wall is mere rubbish in his eyes, and the open spaces in the desert inspire him with Changez like feeling of sovereignty. He has more repugnance for every day life of ease and comfort; he infused a new sap into the eastern literature of travel. He has no literary formulas and principles, he describes with a simplicity which goes direct to the heart of the matter; it it the beauty of theme, and the purity of narration that make it a great work.

The first part of the book deals with his journey through Manchuria in the company of Mr. James of the Indian Civil Service, author of the Long White Mountain, and Mr. H. Fulford of the Chinese Consular Service, who spoke very good Chinese; they started from the treaty port of Newchwang and reached the Ever White Mountain, and then returned to their place of departure. He has an eye for the beauties of nature, but he guards against the softness and mawkishness of nature lovers.
“Still here the mountain was and what it lacked in grandeur was made up for in beauty, for its sides were covered with the most exquisite meadows and copses. In Kashmir beautiful grassy slopes are found, but none to compare with these, the equal of which I at least have never seen. Masses of colour, flowers of every kind, whole meadows of irises, tiger-lilies and columbines, and graceful stately fir trees scattered about to relieve any excess of colour, and add to the beauty of the whole.” 1.

His humour has a colour of courage and virility, he laughs, like a true English man, in misery and hardship, he laughs when all things go wrong, he laughs when Col. Bell deserts him in the desert—because he has not observed punctuality in that trek of two thousand miles over unknown lands.

“It is said to be good to rise from a meal with an appetite. In these days we always rise from our meals with magnificent appetite. To have no longer to carry a load was unspeakable relief, and happiness being merely a relative quality, we felt thoroughly content on the following day as we trudged along beside the mules with no weight on our backs to crush the spirit out of us.” 2.

“We had had many trials on the journey, but this facing a ladies teaparty in a drawing room in our disreputable condition was the hardest of them all.” 3.

The maturity of thought in this very young writer is really astonishing; he dwells on meditative heights, quite unconsciously; his intellectual level, originality, intuition and reflection are worthy of the vision.

“Few men indeed have ever made a deeper impression on me than did these simple missionaries. They were standing transparent type of all that is best in man. They seemed to diffuse an atmosphere of pure genuine goodness which made itself felt at once. And we recognised immediately that we were not with good but with real men. What they possessed was no weak sentimentality or flashy enthusiasm but solid human worth”. 4.

“There are points however in which the Pyramids excel the Great Wall. The Pyramids are perfect throughout.... The Pyramids will remain when the great wall has run to ruin”. 5.

The second part of the book deals with his adventurous journey from Peking to India, over a route not followed before him by any one, and forced upon him by the hasty departure of Col. Bell, who had promised to meet him at Hami.

1. Among the Celestials—London—1898, p.23.
2. Ibid., p. 27. 3. Ibid., p. 58. 4. Ibid., p. 38. 5. Ibid., 63.
Here he reveals his unsophisticated emotions, his love of wild nature, and the sense of sublimity and grandeur that the stark ruggedness of rocks, and the boundless uniformity of sand dunes inspires in a lonely watcher of the far off horizons. The vividness of the exotic scenes is a merit in itself; the vigor of his enthusiasm is a psychological explanation of the British love of travel and the literature of travel.

"An extraordinary bounding sense of freedom came over me as I looked on that vast grassy plain extensive apparently without limit all round. There was no let or hindrance. I could go anywhere it seemed, and all nature looked bright as if enticing me on". 1

"But though these marches were very monotonous, yet the nights were often extremely beautiful, for the stars shone out with a magnificence I have never seen equalled even in the heights of the Himalayas. Venus was a resplendent object, and guided us over many a mile of that desert. The milky way too, was so bright that it looked like a phosphorescent cloud or as light cloud with the moon behind it. This clearness of the atmosphere was probably due to its remarkable dryness". 2

After crossing an extremely dangerous pass over the Himalayas, and with bruises on his body, and his feet torn with the sharp flints, he still has left the British hardiness and obstinacy to admire the scenes of nature.

Sir Francis Younghusband has a style natural and unsullied by any conscious ornamentation; he draws strength from a varied and wild vocabulary - he uses popular, technical, and local words. He is never worried about the choice of words, they come to him naturally; he has not time enough to waste on regulating the cadence; this brings about a restraint and a condensation that gives it the classical beauty of endurance and dignity. The book reaches an exceptional order of literary value in the story of modern travel. His other books don't qualify as literature of travel; even 'the Epic of Mount Everest' is a sort of history of mountain expeditions and not a personal narrative.

1. Among Celestials - London - 1898 p. 104*
2. Ibid., pp. 123, 124*
3. Ibid, p. 125*
Eliza Scidmore's travel account of China is in the tradition of Miss Gordon Cumming and Mrs. Bishop; it is an intimate study of the land and the people seen through the eyes of a woman, the atmosphere is one of provincial calm with a very limited outlook. In this little world of aristocratic women and the Manchu beauties the social intercourse is charming and dignified, and there are few incidents which may be called dramatic; so the traveller's eyes are always concentrated on shades of life, and delicacy of social relations. She saw the revolution under way, but her immediate intuition was that it was only an interlude in a long drawn out drama. Her clear sighted eyes read through events and acts of daily life, and look through the Great Wall and the Peking city wall and many old 'fus' as if they were transparent.

"The present break up will be more than a long running trilogy on the world's stage, and the audiences will go in and out many times before the curtain falls on even this Manchu Interlude in the empire drama". 1.

"More splendid than the red box of the bride was the red bodied cart of rank, carrying a palace beauty about the Imperial city, which I often met near the palace gates. The first such vision, and a young Manchu beauty in full ceremonial dress, with her hair piled high with gorgeous flower bunches and loops and chains and tassels of pearls pendent from the great gold bar balanced across her blue black hair—quitetook my breath away." 2.

"It is satisfaction for every day visitors to sit behind the parapet of the wall at Pa Ta Ling and let the association and the intensity of the Great constructions at that one point over power him. The day I went up the pass, the sky grew over cast towards the noon, the wind blew strong and cold through that funnel mouthed gorge, and the grey light and the gloomy clouds lent savage grandeur to the stupendous relic and its wild landscape setting". 3.

Eliza Scidmore somehow seizes the depths without claiming to do so; here and there we find slight tension in

2. Ibid, p.81.
her style, she appears to be using all her vigour to capture the right effect, but everything dissolves into smoothness. The spirit of sinologues and her feminine spirit seem to agree splendidly; there is a safe orderly harmony. China, the Long Lived Empire is transfused with the spirit of serenity born of the age old social stability; the intellect and the heart are equally balanced, nothing could improve on the neatness of the presentation.


Edwin J. Dingle "was merely a newspaper man at the time on holiday; but it is an original and truly British way of spending a holiday; trudging across the length of China he entered Burma, and then returned to Peking to live indefinitely". His attitude is that of a realist in observation as well as depiction; there is scarcely any aesthetic intention. The whole work is subservient to actual experiences and ideas born thereof; to be more precise he keeps down to the earth and warily lets his fancy, if ever at all, move and hover over the scene of his observation.

"I do not however intend to weary or to entertain the reader, as may be, by a long description of the Yangtze gorges. Time and time again they have fallen to the imaginative pens of travellers--mostly bad or indifferent description, few good, none better, perhaps than Mrs. Bishop's. But at the best they are imaginative, they lack reality. It has been said that the world of imagination is the world of eternity, and as of eternity, so of the gorges, they cannot be adequately described. As I write now in the Iching gorge, I seem veritably to have reached eternity. I seem to have arrived at the bosom of an after life, where one's body has ceased to vegetate, and where in an infinite and eternal world of imagination one's soul expands with fullest freedom." 3.

There is a cruel and rather crude study of the Chinese character, they are the greatest liars on earth, and they wallow in dirt and horrid squalor. He has no modesty

2. Ibid, p. 388.
and no moral scruples in defaming the whole nation; his regard for truth is too great to spare any one. His realism is not hostile but sympathetic; love of accuracy affords a pleasure inherent in such a search for truth. It is not a purely scientific study, feelings also play a part in it. His realism is allied to his idealism of the heart.

"Gladly did I quit the dust and din of western life, of the artificialities of dress and the un-numbered futile affectations of our own, may be not misnamed civilization, to go and breathe freely and peacefully in those far off nooks of the silent mountain tops where solitude was broken only by the lulling or the roaring of the winds of heaven. Thank God there are these uninvaded corners". 1.

These people were away from all mankind, living in life long loneliness, and all unconscious of the distinguished forefathers away up yonder, who wondered at their patient toiling, but who like them had his Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow. There they were perched high up on the bleak mountain sides, with their joys and sorrows, their pains and penalties, struggling along in domestic squalor, and rearing young rusticity and raw produce". 2.

As far as can be judged Dingle's style owes nothing to the influence of any system or school; the air he breathes makes him what he is, a sober observer of facts. He is in reaction against romantic literature of travel, its sentimental illusion, and the deceit of imagination. His language is that of journalists, but it is neither shatteringly sensational nor blankly obscure; his sentences move with an easy grace.

19. Mr Cormick- THE FLOWERY REPUBLIC - 1913.

Mc Cormick was a journalist, and his book gives first hand information about the crucial period of the revolution of 1911 when he happened to be travelling in Mongolia and saw the Chinese resident in Mongolia fleeing to Russia because Mongolia had declared herself an independent republic.

"If Ambans' flights are rare, rarer still are the opportunities of a war correspondent to witness one; such adventures belong to the dead centuries". 1.

He walked through the virgin regions of the ancient land, and saw the hungry heart of the country rising in revolt. It is a bare unembellished account of events which are still echoing and re-echoing in the Eastern corner of Asia; it is a valuable account of the rising of this wave, and breaking loose of the flood waters of disorder, inundating this flowery republic. The account is not the least flowery, here and there he employs humour to relieve the tedium of this simple narrative.

"He shaved me in more different directions than I had hither to believed to exist on the human face, even when younger than I am now. He shaved my face in different places than it had ever been shaved, for a Chinese barber is not satisfied with the way nature has shaped and placed the eye brows and the borders of the hair, both of which he trims discreetly. I cannot say that I appreciated all these little touches, but they were obviously necessary, as one could see by the dexterity with which they were performed". 2.

The book will continue to occupy an important place in political history; McCormick is a cultivated writer, attentive to form and animated by an artistic sense of order and elegance. However dull and dry the subject may be he is able to make it living and vivid, he is possessed of a clearness of mental vision; and can infuse in a quickening force into all he touches. The general style is made of simple yet ample sentences, but not excessively long, and the mental general flow of his prose is simple, easy, and natural; he seems to have passed on to paper every event as soon as observed, it still retains its freshness.

2. Ibid. p. 33.
20. Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904)

1. Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan - Two Volumes - 1894
2. Kokoro (1896)
3. Gleanings in Buddha Fields (1897)
4. The Romance of the Milky Way and other studies and stories (1905)
5. Kawaiden -1904
6. Karma - 1918

Nobushige Amenomori, a Japanese friend and writer, gives a touching picture of Lafcadio Hearn; it is Japan looking at Hearn, an unfamiliar and important aspect of the same old problem of the writer and his subject; it is a lovely compliment to this great wandering mystic.

"I shall ever retain the vivid remembrance of the sight I had when I stayed over right at his house for the first time. Being used myself also to sit up late, I read in bed that night. The clock struck one in the morning, but there was a light in Hearn's study. I heard some low hoarse coughing. I was afraid my friend might be ill; so I stepped out of my room and went to his study. Not wanting however to disturb him, if he was at work, I opened cautiously the door just a little and peeped in. I saw my friend intent in writing at his high desk, with his nose almost touching the paper. Leaf after leaf he wrote on. In a while he held his head, and what did I see. It was not the Hearn I was familiar with, it was another Hearn. His face was mysteriously white; his large eye gleamed. He appeared like one in touch with some unearthly presence."

Hearn stands for a psychological thirsting for variety, newness and mystery; he symbolises the European and Victorian attraction for foreign culture, and literature; it marks a stage when the cup of industrialism was filled, and men longed for a new philtre. The restlessness that culminated in Kipling and other writers of the Empire was at first a cultural dissatisfaction. Reason and Economics gave plenty but no peace, and fevers of the heart had no remedy in the new books of social magic men - Marxists and Fabians.

Syndicalists and Socialists who offered only complicated and obscure recipes. Hearn turned to the 'Budha fields' to make gleanings, he sought repose in the Kokoro (heart) of Japan. His advent was timely; as Dante captured the soul of Catholicism before it was shaken by Luther, as Shakespeare made a portrait of old England before the storm of the Renaissance swept it off, it was left to Hearn to capture the soul of Japan before the transformation and the industrialisation began. He laid bare the beauty of the Japanese heart, and the ethereal charm of their soul; he has captured the exquisite chivalry, chivalry and romance of that land; he loves her colours and landscapes, her sounds and scenes, her cherry trees, and old temples and natural gardens; his books are a revelation of a noble and beautiful way of life, a great civilisation, and a sweet religion.

To the religious instinct of India - Buddhism in particular - which history has engraved on the aesthetic sense of Japan, Hearn brings the interpreting spirit of occidental science; and these three traditions are fused by the peculiar sympathies of his mind into one rich and novel compound - a compound so rare, as to have introduced into literature a psychological sensation unknown before.

Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan - Two Volumes - 1894

The book is a spiritual diary, the chronicle of a pilgrim, the sketch book of an artist, a psychological study of the East; there is a sense sublime of things high and unknown, a grandeur of thought and serenity of expression a study of all that is beyond human study; it is the mirror kept in the holiest of the holy which he describes in one of his visits to an old temple.
"And I see only a mirror, a round pale disk of polished metal, and my own face there in, and behind this mockery of me, a phantom of the far sea. Only a mirror, symbolising what?" 1.

The book is a search for the meanings of this mirror, this mirror that is Japan, this book holds a mirror to this mirror; it is a reflection of a reflection. This illusion has a strange attraction, and witchery; and it spreads from end to end of this charming book. His first day in the orient is a day of conversion.

"And suddenly a singular sensation comes upon me as I stand before this weirdly sculptured portal - a sensation of dream and doubt. It seems to me that the steps, and the dragon swarming gate, and the blue sky arching over the roofs of the town and the ghostly beauty of Fuji, and the shadow of myself there stretching upon the gray masonry must all vanish presently. Why such a feeling? Doubtless because the forms before me, the curved roofs, the coiling dragons, the Chinese grotesqueries of carvings- do not really appear to me as things new, but as things dreamed; the sight of them must have stirred to life the forgotten memories of picture books". 2.

The beauty of nature makes a good setting for the beauty of soul, perhaps it is the one and the same beauty; the trees and rocks sunrise and sunset, gods and goddesses and temples all mix in one mysterious pattern of loveliness.

"There are no such sunsets in Japan as in the tropics; the light is gentle as a light of dreams; there are no furies of colour; there are no chromatic violences in nature in this Orient. All in Sea or sky is tint rather than colour and tint vapour toned". 3.

"But Oh, the charm of the vision- those first ghostly love colours of a morning, steeped in mist soft as sleep itself, resolved into a visible exhilaration. Long reaches of faintly tinted vapour cloud the far lake verge, long nebulous bands". 4.

"The first impression was almost uncanny. Rising sheer from the flood on either hand, the tall green silent hills stretched away before us, changing tint through the summer vapour, to form a fantastic vista of blue cliffs and peaks and promontories". 5.

2. Ibid., p.13, Vol.I.
3. Ibid., p.166, Vol.I.
5. Ibid., p.573, Vol.II.
It is a charming book describing gods and goddesses, temples and torii; at times he conveys a sensation of the supernatural, a haunting sense of a contact with the other world; the 'Dance of the Dead' is almost as eerie as 'Christabel' or the 'Ancient Mariner'.

"No; nothing I ever dreamed of could be likened to this. And with the consciousness of the ancient hakaba behind me, and the weird invitation of its lanterns and the ghostly beliefs of the hour and the place there creeps upon me a nameless tingling sense of being haunted. But no, these gracious silent, waving, weaving shapes are not of the Shadowy Folk for whose coming the white fires are kindled".

It is his first book and undoubtedly the best; in other books he has better language, but not that freshness of vision which he displays here. He is a delicate stylist, and his sentences move with a round unfolding quality; it has crispness and rhythm.

Kokoro is really the heart of Japan. The doctrine of impermanency, the idea of Nothingness, the idea of pre-existence and other truly Japanese spiritual concepts are described through charming incidents of real life. The noble conception of fatherhood makes a condemned criminal ask pardon of a little child whose father has murdered.

"Pardon, pardon, me, little one; that I did, not for hate was it done, but in mad fear only, in my desire to escape. Very very wicked I have been, great unspeakable wrong have I done you. But now for my sin I go to die, I wish to die, I am glad to die. Therefore O' little one, be pitiful, be pitiful, forgive me".

He reads restlessness, change and impermanence in the geology and the geography of the land; this fatalistic idea of Nothingness is grown by gardeners in their planned parks and temple terraces.

"A grand avenue leads to the court of a temple, and from the court a flight of steps fully fifty feet wide, massy, mossed, and magnificently balustraded leads to a walled terrace. The scene makes one think of the approach to some Italian pleasure garden of Decameron's days. But reaching the terrace you find only a gate opening into a cemetery. Did the Buddhist landscape gardener wish to tell us that all pomp and power and beauty lead only to such silence at last?"

But *Kokoro*, inspite of all its insight into a foreign culture, lacks, the force and power of the *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*. He seems to be in search of the exotic and the new; the bizarre and the lurid too find a place in it. His restless desire to discover the inmost secrets of Japanese heart leads him to obscure corners of oriental spirituality, and hence the brilliance of sun and rain and actual life is no more described. He is already a Buddhist monk in mind, and he has forgotten his western bearings.

**GLEANINGS IN BUDDHIST FIELDS** *(1897)*

*Gleanings in Buddhist Fields* is a study of Buddhist and Shinto beliefs and prayers, and an account of a trip to Kyoto. But he is already merged in mysticism, or rather lost in mysticism and is no more a travel writer. He now looks at life through the illusion of the Eastern Illusion, he is no more on the earth but in the Tent House of Oriental meditation.

"So perhaps it is with all that makes life beautiful in any land. To view man or nature with delight, we must see them through illusions, subjective or objective. How they appear to us depends upon the ethical conditions within us. Nevertheless the real and the unreal are equally illusive in themselves". 2.

**THE ROMANCE OF THE MILKY WAY AND OTHER STUDIES AND STORIES, NEW YORK, 1905.**

The *Romance of the Milky Way* has nothing to do with travels in Japan, but it contains an excellent introduction; and also Hearn's own prophecy about his own work.

"When the best result comes it ought to surprise you for our best work comes out of the unconscious". 1.


Kawaidon is a collection of old legendary stories of Japan. The stories like 'Diplomacy' and 'Yuki Onna' give insight into real Japanese culture.

KARMA - New York, 1918 - Boni and Livright

Karma gives stories like 'Karma', 'A Ghost Love', 'The First Muezzin' and a sketch 'China, India and the Western World'.

Lafcadio Hearn has left a great legacy, the legacy of cultural understanding and ethical unity; he envisaged the stupendous horror of western science and industry, and he evoked and revived the glamour of vanished suns, and cast it over the darkness of this Modern Abyss.