

ANIMALS AS DESPOTS

TYRANNY OF THE PAMPERED SACRED BEASTS OF ASIA.

In Benares the Person Who Ill Treats a Monkey Runs the Risk of Being Torn to Pieces—How the Holy Bull Victimizes the Poor Man.

Readers of Kipling's "Kim," which gives a better picture of Indian life than anything else in print, may recall how the hero first begged on behalf of the Tibetan yogi. The bazaar woman to whom he gave the begging bowl cried:

"That bowl, indeed! That cow belled basket! Thou hast as much grace as the holy bull of Shiv. He has taken the best of a basket of onions already this morn, and, foomooth, I must fill thy bowl. He comes here again."

"The huge, mouse-colored Brahmin bull of the ward was shouldering his way through the many colored crowd, a stolen plantain hanging out of his mouth. He headed straight for the shop, well knowing his privileges as a sacred beast, lowered his head, and puffed heavily along the line of baskets ere making his choice. Up drew Kim's hard little heel and caught him on his moist blue nose. He snorted indignantly and walked away across the tram rails, his hump quivering with indignation.

"See! I have saved more than the bowl will cost twice over. Now, mother, a little rice and some dried fish stop—yes, and some vegetable curry."

"A growl came out of the back of the shop, where a man lay.

"He drove away the bell," said the woman in an undertone. "It is good to give to the poor."

"Kim looked at the food lovingly. "That is good. When I am in the bazaar the bull shall not come to this house. He is a bold beggarman!"

Indeed, he is, and he is only one of many. The people of India, like those of other Asiatic countries, are the slaves of their sacred animals. There is no tyranny more outrageous than that of the animal despots of Asia.

An English globe trotter of my acquaintance was being shown the sights of Benares, the most sacred city in all India, some years ago. As he passed through one of the narrow, crowded streets of the bazaar he met a huge white Brahmin bull strolling along as if the whole city belonged to him, brushing people aside right and left, and pushing his nose unheeded into the baskets of grain, rice and country produce which were displayed outside the little native shops.

It was exactly the kind of scene described so well in "Kim."

The bull and the Englishman met in the narrow "pathway-sidewalk," it would be called here, but in India sidewalk and road are usually indistinguishable. Neither would give way, for both belonged to an obstinate, self-assertive race. The bull tried to push past. The Englishman hit him a smart rap on the nose.

"Get up, you brute!" he cried with an enforcing oath.

In a moment the bazaar was in an uproar. The natives, who, a moment before, had cringed servilely to the sahib, now crowded around him, with the passion of murder in their hearts. They pelted him with dirt and stones, called him all manner of vile names (more numerous, surely, in India than anywhere else on earth) and threatened most plainly to kill him. Was he not an infidel dog who had struck the sacred bull? Death by torture was surely too good for him. He would bring a curse on the city. The famine and the plague would come. Their wives would be childless.

So the talk ran excitedly from man to man. The tumult grew. The angry mob increased to thousands. Had it not been for the opportune arrival of a police patrol of stalwart Sikhs—regally scornful of Hindu gods, and ever on the watch for such incidents as this—the globe trotter would certainly have paid with his life for his ignorance of Hindu ideas as to the sacredness of sacred animals.

Such riots as this are common enough in India during the winter tourist season, and it is indeed marvelous that many Americans and Englishmen are not slain. The trouble occurs especially in Benares, the most fanatical city in the empire, and possibly in the whole world. The Hindu Mecca, as it has been called, is the headquarters of Brahmanism and the chief stronghold of the animal worship which distinguishes that cult. There are sacred animals all over India, but nowhere else are there so many of them as in Benares, and nowhere else are they held in so much reverence and allowed so much license.

Anglo-Indians are often contemptuous of natives and native superstitions, but no Anglo-Indian would care to strike a sacred bull in Benares. Kim did it in Lahore. In Benares it would be exceedingly unwise even to swear at the holy beast in the presence of natives who might understand the oaths.

"The bulls are especially sacred," wrote Professor James Rinalton in a letter to the author of this article, after he had just returned from a tour of India, in which he secured some extremely interesting photographs of various sacred animals. "They like the walks of the city, enter sweetmeat and grocery stores and help themselves to the choicest articles without hindrance. They enjoy the freedom of every city. If a bullock chooses to lie down in a narrow lane where he fills the entire space, no pious Hindu will pass that way while the sacred beast is taking his rest.

"The indulgence extended to these rein bovines is wonderful. They enter the most sacred precincts of the temples. They are so pampered with

dainties and luxuries that they become burdened with fat."

Although the Brahmin bull is the most sacred animal in India, he has many competitors. There are more gods than worshippers in India. Beast worship seems to be natural to the Hindu, and it is certainly one of the foundation stones of Brahmanism. Followers of the purer forms of that faith may say that the sacred beasts are only symbols and not gods, but a religion must be judged by the effect which it has on the times of its devotees. The monkey, the crocodile, the crane, the his, the cobra and other serpents are among the creatures that share with the bull the reverence of the people, if not their worship. Benares is the headquarters of all the numerous cults of Brahmanism that especially worship one or other of these sacred beasts.

One of the holiest places in Benares is the Doorga Khond, or monkey temple. The monkey comes next to the Brahmin bull in order of sanctity. An English resident in the city assured the writer that anybody who killed or even ill-treated a monkey would run a very good chance of being torn to pieces by the fanatical natives. That is not generally true of India, for I have seen monkeys killed there without any trouble resulting, but I believe it is true of Benares.

At the Doorga Khond hundreds of monkeys are kept as pets by the priests. They run about all over the place just as they please and are never caged or restrained in any way. As a consequence they are jolly, good tempered little fellows, quite unlike the savage, sulky brutes you see in an American zoo. It is a mistake to suppose that a monkey's nature is essentially vicious.

The temple is simply a large paved yard surrounded by high walls on which there are a lot of wooden boxes and houses in which the monkeys live. There is a big tank for the monkeys to drink from and swim in, if they choose to do so, and a huge banyan tree gives them all the gymnastic exercise they want. Visitors are welcomed, but they are expected to buy food for the monkeys from the priests at an exorbitant price. As soon as they get inside the monkeys mob them, climbing all over them, snatching the food from their hands and then scampering off to eat it in the banyan tree.

These monkeys and all of their kind—the grayish brown, short-tailed common monkey of northern India—are supposed to be the descendants of Humman, the monkey god of southern India. According to the myth of the Brahmans, Humman aided Rama to conquer Ceylon by building a bridge of rocks from India to that island. His image is to be seen in most Hindu temples in the form of a man with a black monkey's face and tail.

Sacred monkeys scamper along the streets and over the housetops in most Indian cities and villages. The shopkeepers are constantly worried by their foraging escapades, but they dare not resent them any more than those of the sacred bull. These monkeys are often the companions of the hermits and fakirs with which India swarms, and they are the chief part of the congregation in many temples where they are fed and protected.

Tanks in which sacred crocodiles are kept are attached to some temples in Benares. In former days they were fed with children and other human sacrifices, but the British government, though very indulgent toward native superstitions, will, of course, not allow that now. Some Anglo-Indians assert, however, that such sacrifices are still made on the sly. Whether this is true or not, it is a fact that many fanatical Hindus would not kill a crocodile which had killed their wife or child.

Some Hindus are unspeakably cruel to animals that are not sacred, but in general the faiths of India enjoin kindness to dumb animals as a religious duty. Buddhism does so most emphatically, for the whole tendency of its teaching, rightly given, is to make a man gentle and mild. The Parsees are noted for their kindness to all creatures, man and beast, and they give largely out of their boundless wealth to the support of the Jain temples, which are perhaps the most delightful places in all India.

All the best elements in Brahmanism flock to the Jain cult as the needle flies to the magnet. The Jains recognize all the gods of the Hindu creed, venerate the Brahmanical thread and adhere to Hindu caste law. Yet they are utterly unlike the average Brahman. They have agreed to ignore all that is vile in Brahmanism and to devote themselves to all that is noble. They reverence the sacred animals, but they give to the worship a practical twist by adoring all animals, all living creatures, and by making veterinary surgery at once their vocation and their religion.

Every Jain temple is a hospital for the lame, the blind, the sick and the maimed among animals. The priests go around the streets of the crowded city picking up dogs with broken legs, cats that have been nearly starved to death and birds with broken wings. If they see an ass or a horse that is overworked and cruelly beaten, they will buy it from the brutal owner. All the animals thus rescued are taken to the temple grounds and tenderly and patiently treated and nursed back to health.

India is, of course, not the only oriental country in which animals are regarded as sacred. In almost all eastern lands, save those which are tightly in the grip of Islam, certain dumb creatures are the objects of reverence or of superstition, if not of actual worship. Siam's sacred white elephant—a curious superstition grafted upon a debased form of Buddhism—is the best known example, but dozens of others could be given.—William Thorp in New York Post.

THE GEISHA GIRL.

It Takes Severe Training to Develop This Japanese Artist.

There are many geisha training schools in Japan, but the best of them all is, I think, the one in Kioto to which I, with some difficulty, gained admittance. It is apparently a delightful place, but it is a place of unremitting toil. The girls are apprenticed to these schools by their parents or guardians at the age oftentimes of six years, and for ten years at least they are put through such a course of training as would break the spirits of girls less inured to unquestioning obedience to authority. Their physical training is of great importance, of course, and each little girl must go through such exercises every day as will keep her little body flexible as rubber, and after that is finished she must devote her time to tasks that far exceed in difficulty any schoolgirl work imaginable to one of us.

No woman of ordinary mind can possibly become a successful geisha, because she must be able to acquire and make use of every kind of worldly knowledge which will lend to her conversation a vivacity and charm that will lead men to seek her society. The dancing and the music are the least of a geisha's attainments as it is understood by a Japanese. These are merely an accompaniment to the feast which is served by small apprentices, such little girls, indeed, as met us at the door of the wine red and iris purple tea house in Kioto, but after the feast the men must be entertained by interesting stories and bright repartee, and in this the girls are trained rigidly.—Eleanor Franklin in Leslie's Weekly.

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LIFE BUOY AND OAR.

How to Get Into the One and to Support Yourself With the Other.

Very few persons know how to get into a life buoy, and, as in this uncertain world one never knows when one may need to make use of a buoy in real earnest, a little practice might prove of great value in an emergency.

Now, when the buoy is thrown into the water the temptation is to try to lift it over one's head and shoulders or to dive through it. This, however, is impossible. The correct thing is to grasp the two sides of the buoy, with fingers of the hands uppermost, lower yourself under the buoy and come up through the center, then rest your arms upon the sides, and you will be comfortably supported as long as it is necessary.

More often than otherwise, in case of accident, a life buoy is not at hand. In such event an oar may be used as a substitute. Now, there is some little art in saving oneself by this means, for an average eared scull is not buoyant enough to support a person if grasped as the first impulse would direct.

There is only one way in which the oar will support a human being. It must be ridden like a hobby horse. The haft is put between the legs and the blade allowed to project above the surface of the water in front of one. By this means the head is kept well above the water.—Pearson's Magazine.

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WHAT SHE PLAYED.

The Last Music That Theodore Thomas Heard on Earth.

During the last illness of Theodore Thomas, although he was not at any time unconscious or delirious, he hardly noticed the members of his family as they came and went at the bedside. But one morning he seemed to be better.

He made little jokes with the doctors and his sons and talked about his White Mountain home. At 12 o'clock he seemed tired. The editor of his autobiography says that he sank into a dreamy state, and then roused himself to say to his wife in a lingering, ecstatic voice:

"I have had a beautiful vision—a beautiful vision!"

Then he drifted off into silence. His wife thought he was tired and went downstairs to luncheon, but chiefly with the purpose of leaving him to rest. He had given her a chime of bells, to be used in summoning the family to meals, and because of his illness they had never been rung in the house. Now, because he seemed so much better, she played on them a little bugle call that came into her head.

"Do you know what you have played?" asked one of the family. "Yes," she called that is sounded over the graves of dead soldiers."

She rushed back to the bells and played the call engraved on a metal plate above them. Afterward she found that this was revellie, the soldier's signal to rise.

So it had chanced that the last music Theodore Thomas heard on earth had been symbolic of death and the resurrection.—Youth's Companion.

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COLORED SKIN.

A Theory That It Is an Intermediary Stage of Development.

The origin of colored skin, or white either, is still unknown. If the sun is really the active agent in its evolution, the power of sunlight must have been curtailed when people took to wearing clothes.

The slightest protection, as seen in the use of ladies' veils, keeps the white skin pure. Therefore, if there is any protection afforded by natural dark skin, an equivalent is obtained for white people by the use of clothes. Until white people begin to discard clothing in the tropics their skin will remain white.

Sunburn must not be confounded with pigmentation of the skin. Sunburn is merely a tanning of the epidermal cells on the surface of the skin, whereas pigmentation is caused by a deposit of dark matter within the deeper layers of the true skin.

Summing the whole evidence up, considering all arguments derived from history, anthropology, ethnology and general evolution, it seems to me that the colored skin is an intermediary stage of development between our primate ancestors and the pure white or Caucasian skin. My general contention is that white skinned peoples come from the oldest stocks of humanity and that in the process of evolution they became white by the use of clothes.—Dr. T. F. Macdonald.

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Each of these solutions gives its own peculiar color to the writing—gold, a deep violet; silver, slate; lead and copper, brown; but all possess the common disadvantage—that in time they eat away the paper, leaving the letters in the form of perforations. There are a vast number of other solutions that become visible on exposure to heat or on having a heated iron passed over them, the explanation being that the matter is readily burned to a sort of charcoal, simplest among which we may mention lemon juice or milk, but the one that produces the best result is made by dissolving a scruple of sal ammoniac in two ounces of water.

Writing with rice water, to be rendered visible by the application of iodine, was practiced successfully in the correspondence with Jalahabad in the first Afghan war.

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Let them written with a solution of gold, silver, copper, tin or mercury dissolved in aqua fortis, or simpler still, of iron or lead in vinegar, with water added until the liquor does not stain a white paper, will remain invisible for two or three months if kept shut