

securely. God grant that this may be our happy lot is my prayer in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

JENSON'S TRAVELS.

LETTER NO. LXII.

At 1:40 p. m. on Wednesday, May 27th, 1896, I continued my voyage from Colombo, Ceylon, still a passenger on the steamship Oroya, and we were now bound direct for Suez, our next port of call. The voyage over the upper part of the Indian ocean, the Arabian sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Red sea and the gulf of Suez, was uneventful; the weather was exceptionally good, and we only encountered one monsoon in the Indian ocean, and that was of a mild character and only lasted two days.

Our general course from Colombo to the mouth of the Red sea was west northwest; up the Red sea we went in a more northerly direction.

The first land we sighted after leaving Colombo was the island of Sokotra which lies off the African coast about 150 miles from Cape Guardafui—also called Ras Asser, which is the extreme northeastern point of Africa. Sokotra is a mountainous island eighty-two miles long and about twenty miles wide, with an Arabian population under British protection. We passed this island on the 1st of June. Two days later (June 3rd) we passed Aden, in Arabia, within a distance of about ten miles. Formerly the Orient steamers called at Aden, but there being only a very little business to do, the ships now steam proudly by. Aden is 2094 miles from Colombo and 1308 miles from Suez. This British seaport is sometimes called the Indian Gibraltar and consists of a peninsula situated on the southeast coast of Arabia, about ninety miles from the entrance to the Red sea at Babu 'l Mandib, in latitude $12^{\circ} 47'$ north and longitude $54^{\circ} 10'$ east. Originally it formed part of the large province of Yemen, in Arabia Felix; but for nearly half a century it has been included in British territory under the immediate control of the government of Bombay. The whole area is estimated at thirty-five square miles and the population at least not less than 20,000 souls, exclusive of the garrison. Aden is further described as a large crater formed of lofty precipitous hills, of which the highest peak is reckoned at 1,775 feet. The peninsula is connected with the Arabian continent on the north side by a narrow neck of land which is partially covered, at high spring tides, by the sea. But a causeway and aqueduct, which supplement as it were, the natural isthmus, are always above water. The town of Aden and part of the military cantonment are within the crater. Stone and mud buildings, of which some are double-storied, constitute the former. During the first quarter of the present century, England had occasion to demand from the Arab authorities of the day satisfaction for injuries to her Indian subjects; but owing to the failure of negotiations and treacherous behaviour on the part of the Sultan's son, the port was bombarded and seized by a combined naval and military force and in January, 1839, it became a possession of the British crown. As a military station Aden is not popular. Its local attractions are rather for the visitor than for the resident, and its climate is trying to Europeans.

About noon on June 3rd, the coast of Africa was in plain sight on our left, and about 1 p. m. we passed through the Straits of Babu 'l Mandib (the Gate of Tears) into the Red sea, with the island of Perim on our right. This little island lies in the Straits of Babu 'l Mandib (the Gate of Tears) a mile and a half from the Arabian, and eleven miles from the African coast, and forty miles south of Jabel Zukur. It is in latitude $12^{\circ} 42\frac{1}{2}'$ north, longitude $43^{\circ} 23'$ east, and its area is about seven square miles. It contains barely 250 inhabitants including the garrison. Long low ranges of hills and salt sandy flats are the distinguishing physical features. Altamont, the highest point of the island, selected for the display of a flagstaff, is 214 feet above the sea level. Perim was taken possession of by the British in 1799, but was soon abandoned as strategically unfit for protection purposes; but it was re occupied again by the English in 1857, since which it has been in British possession. In 1861 a lighthouse was erected on it for facilitating the navigation of the Straits by the many steamers passing to and fro between Suez and the sea to the eastward. In 1885 it was made a signal and telegraph station.

We had been led to believe that we would suffer awfully with the heat in passing through the Red sea, but such was not to be our experience; as we were favored with a cool north wind, which blew almost continuously while we passed over that historic body of water. Our vessel being a large one, it kept pretty well in the middle of the sea, and consequently neither the African nor the Arabian coasts were seen by us. This was somewhat disappointing to me, as I had hoped to get a glimpse of those particular parts of Arabia where the sacred cities of the Mahommedan, Mecca and Medina, are situated. All the way from Aden to Suez we met and passed steamers every day, this being the great highway from Europe to India and Australia.

On the 5th of June we crossed the geographical line known as the tropic of Cancer, and I for one was much pleased to get back into the North temperate zone once more. The next day (June 6th) we passed on our right two little rocky islets called the Brothers which rise from a depth of 250 fathoms to a few feet above sea level. There is a lighthouse on one of them. In passing these islets on our right we were abreast of Kossair, an Egyptian port on our left, where the great Nile in its windings most closely approaches the Red sea, the distance between the sea and the river at this point being only 120 miles.

Early in the afternoon the mountains and desert sands of Africa were seen on our left, and soon afterwards the heights of the Sinai peninsula showed themselves to our view ahead on our starboard side. At 4 p. m., we were sailing abreast of Shadwan island on our left. This is a large and very picturesque island, lying off the African or Egyptian coast. On its southern point there is a lighthouse, 120 feet above the level of the sea. The fine mountain behind is supposed, in the imaginations of some, to take the shape of a giant's head and shoulders and is called Montenegro. About sundown we sailed through the Straits of Jubal, which is the entrance from the Red sea proper to the gulf of Suez. The Straits are named from the island of Jubal, which lies immediately

north of Shadwan. Later in the evening we were sailing close to African coast, which at this point is quite mountainous.

The mountains nearest to the entrance of the Gulf of Suez, consist of a mass of hematite of a deep ruddy hue, rising abruptly to a height of 1,530 feet. This is Jabel Zeyt, and the region is famous in fable as well as in modern history. It is so powerfully magnetic that it effects the compass of a ship passing near, and the sea in its neighborhood is often marked with oily patches from the exudation of petroleum. Great hopes were once entertained and great sums spent on borings at this place that the revenues of Egypt might profit; but though a considerable quantity of oil was found the quality was too poor to make it a profitable article of commerce. The red mountain probably communicated its name to the whole sea, of which it forms the portal, and perhaps some of the wonders of the Arabian Nights were exaggerations of the powers of the mountain of loadstone, and of the oily waves. The old Arab name of the Red sea is Bahr Melch, or the Salt sea, but Bahr al Ahmar, or the Red, also occurs. Yam Suf, the "Sea of Weeds" is the Hebrew name. The Gulf of Suez was called by the Arab geographers the sea of Colzoum, a corruption of Clysma, the Greek name of Suez. The Red sea proper is about 1,200 miles long, with an average width of perhaps 250 or 300 miles. Aside from its historical importance, this sea has a number of peculiarities, one of which is that not a single permanent stream of any size puts into it, the lands on either side being sandy deserts.

As we sailed up the Gulf of Suez, which is only about twenty miles wide on an average, land was in plain view on both sides, but that on the right, though farther away from us than that on the left, was most interesting, as the landscape there included the Sinaitic mountains and the wilderness of Sin of Bible fame.

The Sinaitic mountains, comprising the triangular peninsula between the two arms of the Red sea, consist of an innumerable multitude of sharp rocky summits thrown together in wild confusion, rising to different heights, leafless and barren without the least trace of verdure to relieve the stern and awful features of the prospect. The rocks which bound the deep, narrow, tortuous ravines between the mountains, are basalt sandstone and granite variegated with an endless variety of hues from the brightest yellow to the deepest green. The view from one of these summits is said to present a perfect sea of desolation without a parallel on the face of the earth. The valleys or gorges between the summits sink into deep and narrow revines with almost perpendicular sides of several hundred feet in height, forming a mass of irregular defiles, which can be safely traversed only by the wild Arab, who has his habitation in the cliffs of the valleys amid these eternal solitudes. Toward the north the wilderness of mountains slopes down in an irregular curvilinear line which turns outward like a crescent, and runs off on the one hand toward the head of the eastern gulf of the Red sea, and in the other northwest toward the western extremity of the sea itself, near the gulf of Suez at the head of which is the modern town and