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INDIAN LOCAL SHIPPING

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survival on the quay-boys tongue to-day, of the old Celtic names, firstly of his boat, which he calls a *cok-an-baba*, boy's boat, and secondly, of the slate centreboard, which he calls the *leu*, the old Cornish for "rudder." In the old tongue a sailing boat was a *cok*, Welsh *cwch*, distinguished from the *scath* and the *scath-roos*, or seine-boat, which were rowed; but, except in the name of the Cock Bank, a sandspit outside the harbour, it is doubtful if the word has been used at St. Ives for two centuries, while the time that has passed since the full-grown St. Ives fisherman called his rudder *leu*, may be judged by the fact that he now names it, in mediæval English, the "rother."

These are the sea-stones and killicks of Cornwall. Scandinavia, Russia, Normandy, Brittany and our own "Celtic fringe" may still have these or others. The Chinese anchor is still a wooden "jinny-lin," and Jal illustrates a stone anchor from the Far East that, he says, resembles those of Iceland and Norway. This, with a double "yoke" is, unless my memory is at fault, very similar to one sketched by Callow in the Channel Islands long ago, and now enshrined in the pages of a school copy-book of the *Verc Foster* series. Much more of such sea-lumber must have gone, unrecorded, into Davy Jones' locker.

INDIAN LOCAL SHIPPING.

BY COMMANDER W. H. COATES, R.N.R.

AT the extremity of Bombay Harbour, anchored far from the usual haunts of shipping, lays now an antiquated wooden barque, her sides weather worn, her rigging in disorder, her yards a cockbill.

This vessel, the *Shah Jehan*, though now unnoticed, yet carries an unusual interest as being the last of the fine old fleet of "country wallahs" which formerly carried on the local Eastern trade.

At the time of her inception in 1857 steam in the East was but in its infancy, and trade was carried on by sailing vessels of many descriptions. Old Blackwall liners, formerly of Green or Somes, ended their days in these pleasant waters of the East;

erstwhile crack China clippers, ex auxiliary steamers, former men-o'-war, many of such were to be found in the trade between India, China, Arabia, Persian Gulf, &c., &c.

But the larger number were built locally in the yards of Damaun, Bombay, Surat, Cochin, Maulmain, &c., and, being of teak, attained great longevity.

The opium clippers were second to none under the red ensign.

The personnel was generally excellent. Commanded and officered by Europeans, they were manned by an excellent class of Lascar, and were worked and kept, during their golden days, more as men-o'-war than merchant ships.

But the advent of steam into the local Indian trade by the rise of the British India and other companies, proved the knell of these old country wallahs, and they gradually disappeared.

Even as late as five and twenty years ago it was no uncommon thing to see twenty or thirty of them, ships and barques, in the Hooghly, in addition to a fleet of brigs, schooners, and nondescripts to be met with on the coast.

The subject of my sketch was built at Cochin by one Guiselar in 1857 entirely of teak. In her day she ranked among the best, being even selected on occasion for the transport of troops.

Her age alone proves the excellence of her material and construction. Her career of late, however, has been one of retrogression, her closing years under the Arabs having been spent between the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

In build she resembled somewhat the smaller frigates and East Indiamen of the earlier part of last century, having no sheer, a square stern, and carrying heavy quarter galleries; the placing of her masts and the disposition of her rigging being, however, more modern.

Some few of these country sailing ships had square ports in the 'tween decks, sufficient for the smooth bore guns of their period; indeed in the China war of '42 they bore themselves well, the *Mermaid* and the *Hercules* taking their share in the defence of the British residents.

Those days are now past. The disappearance of this vessel from the arena of modern shipping gives us sharply to realise that the era of the "country wallah" an era of romantic interest, has closed now for all time.

SHIP "SHAH JEHAN."
Built 1857 by Guiselar of Cochín.

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