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LAND OF FRIENDSHIP

Life in a Compassionate Society

by

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To promote friendship is thought to be the special task of the art of government; and people say that it is on this account that goodness is a valuable thing, for persons wrongfully treated by one another cannot be each other's friends. Furthermore, we all say that justice and injustice are chiefly displayed toward friends; it is thought that a good man is a friendly man, and that friendship is a state of moral character; and if one wishes to make men not act unjustly, it is enough to make them friends, for true friends do not wrong one another. But neither will men act unjustly if they are just; therefore justice and friendship are either the same or nearly the same thing. In addition to this, we consider a friend to be one of the greatest goods, and friendlessness and solitude a very terrible thing, because the whole of life and voluntary association is with friends; for we pass our days with our family or relations or comrades, children, parents or wife. And our private right conduct towards our friends depends only on ourselves, whereas right actions in relation to the rest of men are established by law and do not depend on us.

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Therefore, since the primary sort of friendship is in accordance with goodness, friends of this sort will be absolutely good in themselves also, and this not because of being useful, but in another manner.

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book VII.

If possible, quote also Green, Antigone & Others, #245

p. 288-289.

see also p. 332, 362.

FOREWORD

This book might be described as a utopian romance. It belongs to a class of literature which is important because, at its best, it is an expression of our ideals, and our ideals are the most important things we have. When worthy of us, they spring from our inmost selves, revealing what we would be if perfectly free rather than trammelled by our past and external circumstances beyond our control. As is proper, an ideal is often personal, our improvement in character and conduct. But what our character becomes depends in large measure on how we treat the things, living and lifeless, which surround us; and our conduct is inevitably influenced by the kind of society in which we dwell. There is scarcely any ideal worthy of the name which is not more readily attained if we move among people who share it with us than if we are surrounded by those who mock or ignore it. All true idealism is in a sense social or utopian.

A utopia which deserves this designation is not a dream fantasy or a paradise where every wish automatically comes true. The framer of a utopia wrestles earnestly with the social and economic problems involved in the kind of life he intends his imaginary citizens to lead. He takes into account the realities of human nature, even when he hopes greatly to modify men's conduct by means of education and appropriate social arrangements. The magnitude of the problems that he faces can be appreciated only by one who studies a number of the more serious utopias or tries himself

to work out the details of an ideal commonwealth.

Any utopia may be criticised from two points of view. The first is simply that you do not like it and would not wish to live in it, because it is too regimented or too unorganized, too idealistic or too materialistic, too urban or too rural, too puritanical or too libertine, and so forth. To objections of this sort, the planner of the utopia may reply: "This is the way I would like to live, and I doubt not that many would join me if I could establish the society I have planned. But my little commonwealth will not cover the whole earth, and if it does not appeal to you, you are free to remain elsewhere. I would rather dwell with ten people who join me freely than with ten thousand who are constrained."

The second criticism is more penetrating. It is that the kind of society which the writer hopes to establish could not be supported by the customs and institutions he has provided for it, so that it would soon disintegrate, or perhaps turn into a society that he would abhor. For example, I [✓]should not care to live in either of the ideal states which Plato planned, neither that of The Republic, which he preferred, nor that which in his old age he described in his less known work, The Laws. I doubt whether a thinker so profound as Plato would approve of either of his two commonwealths if he could return and view them in the light of subsequent history and thought. But I must concede that Plato took great care to make arrangements that should support the kind of society which, in each case, he had in mind. At the

V

other extreme is William Morris's News from Nowhere. To me, it is one of the most attractive utopias that I know. But I would not apply for citizenship in Morris's "Nowhere" even if I could, because I ^would mistrust the stability of a society that treated education so lightly, that made so little effort to preserve the integrity of the family, that lacked a religion or a substitute for it.

The writer who supposed that he could avoid both of these objections to utopias would indeed be hopeful. Why, then, do I take the trouble to add another to the already long list of such works? Because I have enjoyed reading them, because I have often found a number of good and admirable features even in those I could not approve in their entirety, and finally, because I enjoyed writing this. In the present book, I have tried to imagine the course of development of a group of people, originally at a rather primitive level of culture, but of high intelligence and capable of producing a succession of wise, far-seeing leaders, and who, moreover, were so protected by natural ^{barriers} obstacles from invasion that they could dispense with arms and outgrow military habits and attitudes. This last point is of the utmost importance, for I am convinced that militarism is incompatible with the best society and the highest type of man. If the reader finds the setting of my ideal state rather improbable - it is certainly not impossible - I beg him to remember that the cliffs which encircle it are merely symbolic of peace.

Likewise, I thought it important to consider a mature community,

that has fully populated its territory, lacks means for industrial expansion, and has settled into a routine. So long as there is a frontier, opportunity for colonization, new industrial developments, or a fresh market to be exploited, the prospect of escape or improvement may divert attention from grave deficiencies in social arrangements. Only after the frontier has been closed and the population becomes static do the institutions of a society face the acid test of their adequacy to provide a good and satisfying life for its members.

Since every society is a historic development which inevitably bears traces of its past, I do not suppose that any contemporary society - certainly not those more advanced industrially - could ever be modified into just the form portrayed in the present book. Nor does it seem desirable for a society in a rigorous northern climate to reduce its industry to the same extent as these people in a benign tropical environment ^{have done}. Yet the simplicity in which my characters dwell is an expression of my faith - and actual experience - that a good life is possible with far fewer material supports than the more highly industrialized countries are coming to view as indispensable; and in those climates most favorable to human existence, this simple life may be very satisfactory indeed.

Although it would be folly to suppose that a Valanga, the flowering of a hundred generations of unruffled peace, could within the foreseeable future acquire material existence on this tortured planet, I am partial enough to its customs and institutions to suppose that some of them might with advantage

be adapted to actual societies. Yet even if, as I suspect, this expression of my social ideals will irritate rather than gratify those whose temperament and aspirations differ radically from mine, it will have a beneficial effect if it spurs them to give more definite shape to their own ideals. The Land of Friendship may, after all, prove to be no more than the grain of sand in the oyster shell that stimulates the secretion of a pearl of great price.

Nations all too frequently permit social maladjustments to grow until they become unbearable, then in frenzied haste legislate drastic changes which should be the slowly maturing fruit of years of education and preparation. Is it any wonder that they cause so much hardship, so much opposition, and so often fail? We who pretend to be able to control our destiny should look far ahead, define the kind of society we desire to see, even if it could not be realized in less than a thousand years, then patiently, calmly, and deliberately prepare for it. Doubtless the ideal itself will be modified by our descendants as they grow wiser and approach closer to its fulfillment, but none the less it will be of great value to have had it clearly outlined in the past.

To help give definite shape to our too often vague and formless aspirations is the true function of utopias. In the words of a great student of the sociology of knowledge, Karl Mannheim: "the complete disappearance of the utopian element from human thought and action would mean that human nature and human development would take on a totally new character. The disappearance of utopia brings about a static state of affairs in which man him-

self becomes no more than a thing. We would be faced ^{then} with the greatest paradox imaginable, namely, that man, who has achieved the highest degree of rational mastery of existence, left without any ideals, becomes a mere creature of impulses. Thus, after a long, tortuous, but heroic development, just at the highest stage of awareness, when history is ceasing to be blind fate, and is becoming more and more man's own creation, with the relinquishment of utopias man would lose his will to shape history and therewith his ability to understand it."

But perhaps I assign too high a mission to my book. If within Valanga's protecting cliffs the reader passes a few hours in pleasant forgetfulness of the perplexities and threats of total annihilation that oppress our actual lives, it will not have been written in vain.

CONTENTS

As in 1st copy

Chapter		Page
I	In Quest of Unknown Cultures	1
II	Captivity among Cannibals	8
III	Escape to Valanga	23
IV	Convalescence among Fruit Trees	36
V	Childhood in Valanga	56
VI	Valangan Government: Admission to Citizenship	65
VII	The Festival of Commemoration	83
VIII	The Founder and the Reformer	103
IX	Visit to the Outlet Chasm	127
X	Guarding the Cliffs	146
XI	An Excursion into the Mountains	170
XII	The Museum	191
XIII	The Dedication of Infants	205
XIV	My Betrothal to Yanoa	219
XV	Building a House	238
XVI	Our Robe-Making	250
XVII	A Subversive Poem	267
XVIII	The Wedding	278
XIX	Two Valangan Ceremonies	295
XX	The Religious Philosophy of Valanga	310
XXI	Happiness and Freedom in Valanga	331
XXII	An Accident and a Lingering Illness	344
XXIII	Valanga and the Outside World	358
XXIV	Preparations for a Journey	385

LAND OF FRIENDSHIP

CHAPTER I

IN QUEST OF UNKNOWN CULTURES

The name that I received from my parents was William Manning. I set it down here at the beginning of my history because it may afford some satisfaction to my family and boyhood friends, if this narrative finally reaches their hands, to know that I am still alive and have not failed in the quest on which I set forth with youth's hopefulness. Otherwise it is of little importance, since it is unknown to fame and has come to sound strange even to me. It has been years since I received a letter bearing this superscription, and to my present friends and neighbors I am known as Wilyo of Avráno, the first being their version of my given name, the second the designation of the family into which I was adopted soon after my arrival in Valánga.

Of the circumstances of my childhood and youth it seems necessary to give only enough to inform the reader how I happened to reach a country which, as far as I can learn, has never been visited by any other person speaking a European language, nor any other representative of the nations we are accustomed to call civilized. My father was a moderately successful manufacturer in a big northern city. A collector of books, he had accumulated a large library; and since at an early age I displayed a studious bent, he encouraged me to read extensively, above all in history and biography, which he deemed the most valuable classes of literature. To one who, like myself, was from boy-

hood unusually sensitive to the sufferings of men and animals, and extraordinarily resentful of injustice, whether in its contemporary instances or inflicted upon these long dead, the perusal of history is apt to be a painful no less than a thought-provoking exercise. The accounts of the endless wars, destruction of cities, selling into slavery, treacheries, usurpations, and social wrongs which fill the pages of history distressed a compassionate young reader; and I might have become a confirmed misanthrope even before I reached manhood, had I not here and there found a truly noble character: an Aristides, whom the Athenians sent into exile because they were tired of hearing him called "the Just"; an Asoka who, in an age when military conquest was held to be the chief glory of kings, renounced warfare and legislated for the benefit of all the inhabitants of his far-flung realm, its birds, quadrupeds, and fishes no less than his human subjects. To read about men of this stamp was recompense for the countless dreary pages through which I ploughed.

By the time I entered college, an insistent question had begun to take shape in my mind: How does it happen that ^{human} men, who are capable of becoming so noble and generous, should so often be petty, grasping, and cruel, and should pay so heavily for these defects of character? I selected courses which I suspected would throw light on this problem, especially psychology, political economy, and philosophy. I early discovered that I had a natural aptitude for languages, which I eagerly studied until I could read some half-dozen of them and converse in several. But these humanistic studies so occupied my time that I neglected

3

the natural sciences, even biology, which deals with that division of nature of which man is a part - an omission which I have often had cause to regret. My absorption in books while I was still growing might have converted me into a pale, round-shouldered, myopic scholar, had I not in the long summer vacations climbed mountains, paddled canoes, swam, and played outdoor games, until I returned to my studies in the autumn tanned and robust, with no trace of the bookworm's stoop and pallor. This development of a naturally vigorous constitution was indispensable to the explorations which I later undertook.

After graduation from college I decided to specialize in ethnology. Recalling the saying "Happy the people who have no history", I believed it might pay me to learn something of the customs and modes of thought of the more primitive tribes, who still lacked kings to lead them into wars of aggression, bards or chroniclers to relate their bloody exploits. I had already read enough in this field to know that the ethnologist must contemplate many fearsome and shocking practices and become familiar with the ways of people altogether disgusting in their brutal savagery. Yet here and there, often hidden away in inaccessible mountains, one finds gentler and apparently happier races, living in relative peace with their neighbors; and I wished to learn what external circumstances or innate dispositions were responsible for their milder cultures.

Sensitive as I am, and easily repelled by all the harsh, savage practices of men, I was fortunate in the choice of the professor with whom I studied. Believing, like Socrates, that men instinctively seek the good but go astray through ignorance,

4

he endeavored to demonstrate that many of the most cruel and abhorrent practices of early peoples arose from their earnest attempts to solve, with untrained minds prone to draw wrong inferences from imperfectly observed facts, the difficult problems of their developing societies. Thus, beneath human sacrifice, that rite most revolting to the civilized mind, lies the sublime notion of ^amen's responsibility for preserving the cosmic order, upon which all life depends, by nourishing and sustaining, even with their own blood, those supernatural beings who direct it.

My professor also insisted that each culture should be regarded as a more or less independent effort to work out a satisfactory pattern of human life and develop a society in which ^{people}men may live happily, fulfilling their own nature at the same time that they preserve equilibrium with the natural world on whose continued healthfulness their own prosperity rests. Of the many difficulties which must be overcome before this ideal state can be attained, some cultures have been more successful in one direction and some in another; but no known society has surmounted all the obstacles, hence all are liable to internal decay even if they escape destruction by aggressive neighbors. But the more experiments in developing a good society that men make, the greater the probability that one of them will be ultimately successful. Hence cultural diversity, at least until such time as the perfect civilization finally evolves, is of the greatest advantage to mankind; whereas cultural uniformity over vast areas or the whole globe would be lamentable, because it would retard the advance of humanity by reducing the number of independent

attempts to solve its persistent problems.

My professor held that the rapid expansion of Western Europe since the fifteenth century has done inestimable harm to mankind, and that Columbus's voyage to America was perhaps the most tragic single event in history; for it resulted in the obliteration of countless Indian cultures, many of which included something of worth while some showed great promise, by Europeans so ignorant and barbarous that with ruthless fanaticism they destroyed everything unfamiliar. Thereby much of inestimable value was irretrievably lost. The future of mankind would be far more promising had the peoples of the two hemispheres remained isolated from each other until at last the "discoverers", whether they came from the East or the West, had become sufficiently civilized to refrain from demolishing everything that they were ⁱⁿcapable of understanding. By a civilized nation he understood one whose moral development is such that it benefits rather than harms the other peoples with which it comes in contact, and he would admit no other definition of civilization.

My professor also stressed the urgency of seeking out and studying the few remaining autochthonous cultures before they were corrupted and destroyed by the relentless advance of mechanical ^{2ed} society. If these studies taught us nothing else, they would bring a vivid realization of the tremendous adaptability and fertility in expedients of mankind, which has worked out countless schemes for satisfying the same fundamental needs in an amazing diversity of environments. He held that the still unspoiled tribes were more likely to be found in remote mountain fastnesses than on islands in the sea, which can be reached with

6

comparative ease in ships. And since small mountain communities may be even more effectively isolated from foreign influences than insular societies, which nearly always have boats and traffic with their neighbors, their cultures might present greater originality and more richly repay investigation.

After studying for four years with this professor, I was filled with zeal to visit primitive tribes whose customs were still unknown to the larger world. I was then, at the age of twenty-four, at the height of my physical vigor and felt myself capable of crossing the most forbidding mountain barriers and facing the utmost rigors of travel in wild regions. After so many years of intensive study and the vicarious adventure of books, I yearned for real adventure in the far places of the earth. I should be lacking in candor if I failed to confess that the prospect of making discoveries that would bring me recognition and even fame was no small incentive. But a more compelling motive for setting forth on my travels was my hope of discovering some mode of life more satisfying than that which I saw around me - a hope so tenderly cherished that I dared not expose it to the raillery of colleagues whose chief concern was the amassing of scientific facts. They might have assailed me with tart remarks about "going native" and "nostalgia for the primitive" and "desire to escape the responsibilities of civilization."

But when I looked about me at the mechanical society which prided itself on being the highest achievement of mankind, its ever more destructive wars, its ugly and overcrowded cities, its cruel contrast between the extravagance of the rich and

7

the deprivations of the poor, its mad scramble for more and ever more material goods which fail to satisfy the spirit, its godlessness, its lip-service to ideals in which it does not believe, its merciless exploitation of humbler forms of life, its wholesale spoliation of the natural world which supports it - when I passed in review all these glaring defects of the society into which I happened to be born, I could not quench the hope that man, with the whole world at his disposal, had somewhere, at some time, worked out a happier and more satisfying mode of life. Could an animal endowed with divine reason, which holds itself proudly erect and deems itself but little inferior to the angels, everywhere and always fail to develop a society of which in its moments of coolest judgment it can approve? It seemed improbable that this should be so.

About this time I received from a maiden aunt a substantial legacy, which left me free to pursue my interests without troubling about the means to support them. And so with my professor's blessing and much valuable counsel from him, and a promise to keep him informed of my progress, I set forth on my travels.

CHAPTER II
CAPTIVITY AMONG CANNIBALS

For the next ~~three~~ four years I wandered on the verge of what we call civilization, or beyond it among isolated tribes which had scarcely felt its leveling influence. To them I made myself welcome by distributing the small useful or glittering objects which it was my custom to carry, and by practicing the healing art in a simple way; for on my professor's advice, I had learned enough of the rudiments of medicine to bind up wounds, lance boils, relieve upset stomachs, and cure malarial fevers with quinine. I visited hunting peoples, agriculturists, and herdsmen; ferocious head-hunters and half-naked forest-dwellers so candid and gentle that they would put the average "civilized" man to shame; tribes still in the Stone Age and others which had recently learned the use of iron.^q Although with any one of these tribes I might have stayed months or years gathering details of initiation rites, marriage customs, burial practices, economic arrangements, and all the other classes of facts that fill the learned volumes of ethnologists, with most I tarried just long enough to convince myself that they were not the people I sought; for they could not teach anything of fundamental importance that I did not already know. Still, had I never found Valanga, I should doubtless write a long book about my travels - a book which would lack neither the narrow escapes from death which appeal to the casual reader nor the solid observations which would make it valuable to serious students. But now that I have discovered a truly good and happy people, these obser-

9

vations on tribes still vainly groping toward a satisfactory mode of life, or which have wandered far astray, seem to have little importance.

A compelling reason for guarding silence on the course of my travels is that I could scarcely give a substantial account of them without revealing to an erudite reader, even in the absence of maps and geographical designations, the approximate location of Valanga. And if I did this it would soon be assailed by traders eager to distribute their tawdry wares at immense profits, missionaries agog to foist upon the people a faith wholly foreign to their temperament and modes of thought, ne'er-do-wells looking for a spot where they might dwell in slothful ease, gaping tourists, and perhaps even soldiers sent to subject the Valangans to a government and polity inferior to their own. Despite the excellent natural defenses of the country, this peaceful people could hardly withstand modern armaments and would be powerless against airborne troops. Perhaps, if Valanga can preserve its isolation long enough, there will come a day when the rest of the world is sufficiently advanced to communicate with it without overwhelming its inhabitants by sheer force of numbers; for it seems unlikely that Valanga could ever be persuaded that the modern mechanical civilization is preferable to its own. I am impelled to do what I can to bring this account of Valangan culture before the outside world, by the conviction that if studied and taken to heart it will hasten the advent of that longed-for day. The Council of Presidents has left me free to divulge everything about the country which

I consider to be of importance, except its geographical position.

I must, however, go into some detail concerning my sojourn among the Agarúnis, the last of the savage tribes which I visited; for these people were, indirectly, instrumental in my finding Valanga. They dwelt in a broad valley enclosed by high, forested ridges, with a magnificent, snow-capped, extinct volcano towering up at its head. A warlike people, their huts of upright poles, thatched with palm fronds, stood in small villages enclosed by palisades composed of stout trunks. Around the outside of the stockade was a deep ditch, its bottom bristling with sharp-pointed stakes set upright in the ground; and beyond these were pitfalls concealed beneath branches and loose soil, which would give way beneath the weight of a man and deposit him upon the poisoned points of spears. Winding paths, known to the inhabitants of these fortified places, led between the defensive works to gates in the walls. Spears, bows and arrows, ferocious facial masks, and other warlike accoutrements were much in evidence in the poorly lighted, smoky huts; and hideous, shrunken human heads hung in strings against the walls of those inhabited by successful warriors. Beyond the fortifications were fields where the nearly naked women of the tribe, along with some slaves, attended root crops and a few vegetables; while on the enclosing slopes were the forests where the men hunted monkeys, wild pigs, deer, birds, and other animals. For some days after they returned with the trophies of a particularly successful hunt, an overpowering stench of decaying flesh enveloped the village.

Despite the unmistakable evidences of their bellicose char-

11

acter, I found the Agarunis themselves not unpleasant. They often laughed and smiled, seemed animated by a true communal spirit, and quarrels were perhaps less frequent than they would be among civilized peoples who lived so much in common. Their treatment of their children, whom they fondled much but scarcely ever punished or even reprimanded, was especially pleasing to witness; and they were kind in their crude manner to the numerous quadrupeds and birds, taken when young from the forest, which shared their crowded quarters. ^H Even more amazing was the way these obvious head-hunters treated certain young men who, I learned, were prisoners taken in their periodic raids upon neighboring tribes, with whom the Agarunis had from time immemorial carried on a bitter and relentless feud. These captives lived almost like sons of the Agarunis themselves. They had married, or at least dwelt in concubinage with, some of the most attractive young women of the tribe, and in several instances known to me had children by them. They were obviously well fed. The only restrictions they suffered seemed to be those intended to prevent their escape and return to their own people. Thus instead of hunting in the distant forests along with the Agaruni braves, they engaged in domestic chores and agricultural tasks with the women, with whom they seemed to be on pleasantly intimate terms, often joking and laughing with them, and working no harder than the females themselves. Yet the latter, I understood, were held responsible for preventing their escape, and sometimes tied them to their beds at night.

After I had tarried among the Agarunis long enough to exchange ideas with them by means of the words of their language that I

had picked up, eked out by signs, I was impatient to push on to some less savage tribe. I was particularly eager to learn what was to be found on the far side of the range of snow-peaks, one of which loomed up at the head of the Agaruni valley. To the north of this imposing chain lay a terra incognita, a blank space on all the maps, unmentioned in any book of travel that I had read, and scarcely known even to the tribes south of the range. When I asked my hosts what sort of people were to be found over the mountains, they at first put me off with vague replies. Later, when my questioning grew more insistent, they admitted that they knew something of the tribe on the opposite side of the snowy volcano. They were a people, they said, savage in the extreme, who admitted no strangers, not even traders. They ate little children, sometimes their own, and they would surely throw me into the pot if they found me on their side of the mountains. These truculent transalpine folk were, I was told, far different from the Agarunis themselves, who were, in their own estimation, the gentlest and most urbane of people. But I did not take these reports too seriously, for I had observed that savage no less than civilized nations generally paint neighboring peoples far blacker than they are, themselves considerably whiter. My travels had also impressed me with the fact that tribes of the same ethnic stock, perhaps not far separated from each other, may differ profoundly in temperament and culture. Hence I did not despair, because the Agarunis were head-hunters, of stumbling upon a more amiable race in this region.

The Agarunis professed such dread of the people across the range that it seemed impossible to induce them to guide me to their villages, with which indeed they appeared to have no communication. But I hoped at least to persuade them to lead me to a convenient pass in the mountain chain, whereby I could gain the opposite slope and make some explorations on my own account. At first they put me off with stories of the difficulties and perils of the trip. Finally, by offering a liberal recompense in knives and beads, I persuaded a stalwart young warrior to show me the way. But after spending the greater part of a day in following obscure tracks up the forested slopes, he professed to be lost. When at nightfall we regained the cleared land surrounding the settlement, I was weary and thoroughly disheartened.

Convinced of the impracticability of making contact from the Agarunis' valley with the people over the range, if indeed human beings dwelt there, I finally resolved to leave my uncoöperative hosts by retracing my course. I needed two or three bearers to help me transport my clothing and other equipment, and as a rule it was not difficult to enlist men to serve as porters for a suitable reward. But when I requested the headman of the village to find bearers for me, he kept putting me off with more or less plausible excuses - the men were too busy building new huts and repairing the palisades around the village, they had to go hunting in the forest, etc., etc. Direct appeals to some of the younger men with whom I had become most familiar were no more successful.

Finally, despairing of receiving help from the Agarunis, I

14

made a single load of the least dispensable of my possessions, and one morning just as day was breaking I slipped forth from the village with my pack on my back, trusting to my sense of direction to avoid the pitfalls and to my good fortune to escape detection by the people. In the cool air of the early morning, I walked briskly down the valley, with an exhilarating sense of newly found freedom and relief from the vague, oppressive fears that had lately been growing upon me. [¶] Before I had made an hour's march, I stopped short at the sight of three of my erstwhile neighbors standing, fully armed, in the pathway before me. Dissimulating my alarm, I saluted them in the usual fashion and they returned my greeting with apparent amiability. The headman had learned of my departure before even I was beyond sight of the palisade and had sent them to beg me to return, as he wished to dismiss his guest with the customary exchange of compliments and presents, and to find men to help me carry the things I had left behind. Seeing through this palpable deception, I invented a story of my own, to stress the necessity of my prompt departure. They listened courteously enough, but when I attempted to push past them and continue down the trail, they showed quite plainly, by movements of their weapons, that if necessary they would employ force to detain me. Since it appeared useless to resist them, I turned about and trudged up the valley, affecting gaiety to mask my growing apprehension. I was now convinced that the Agarunis were holding me a prisoner, much as they did their war captives who worked with the women.

On entering the village I was led before the headman, who apologized profusely for not being present to bid me good-bye

that morning. He declared that all the Agarunis had grown very fond of me and would be grieved to lose me, and he urged me to choose a maiden of the tribe as my wife - one of his daughters, if I preferred - so that I might continue to dwell more contentedly among them. This was not the first time since my arrival that such an offer had been made, but in the past I had managed to brush it lightly aside. Now it was pressed with such insistence that, in my helpless situation, I did not dare to refuse. But I asked for a few days to look around and choose the dark-skinned maiden most agreeable to me. This seemed to the headman to be a reasonable request.

I now found it difficult to continue collecting ethnological information, knowing myself to be a prisoner who might not live to communicate his carefully gathered data to his scientific colleagues. I began even to suspect that I was being held to provide flesh for an anthropophagous feast; although the Agarunis, too obviously head-hunters to conceal this fact, had never admitted that they were cannibals. My fears increased when, a week or so after my forced return, the settlement began to bustle with unwonted activities. The women and girls of the tribe spent much time chewing cassava and spitting it out into large wooden vessels, where the enzymes in their saliva would convert some of the starch grains into sugar, which would then ferment to make the alcoholic beverage which these people called lisa. Added to this unmistakable sign of an approaching feast, the warriors were busy refurbishing their grinning ceremonial masks, barbarously brilliant in white, red, and black. Drums resounded through

much of the day and night, and messengers were dispatched to neighboring friendly settlements to invite the people to the forthcoming event, whatever its nature. [¶] I observed, too, that the war prisoners who worked with the women were more carefully watched and, losing their former joculariry, went around with a sullen, resigned air, as though conscious of impending doom. But I noticed with relief that the people now paid rather less than more attention to me, and in the press of other activities the headman seemed to have forgotten my promise to pick a bride. I reflected that, although I might be destined to be eaten, it was improbable that I was intended to furnish provender for the approaching feast; for in this case there would be little point in giving me a concubine.

A few days after these preparations began, I was attracted by singing in the open area in the center of the village which might be called its forum. Hastening to the spot, I found one of the war captives, an agreeable young savage with whom I had become rather friendly, standing in the middle of this space clad in the full war costume of his own tribe, which I had never before seen him wear. Although unarmed, he held himself proudly erect in what was obviously intended to be an imposing attitude. About him were gathered the women of the village, from toothless old hags to young mothers and even naked little girls far too young for marriage. When I arrived they were moving around him in a circle in what might be called a dance, to the accompaniment of a wild, plaintive song. [¶] After a while the chanting ceased, the circle stopped revolving; and facing the captive

17

in their midst, the females began to assail him with gibes, taunts and threats. Some called him a coward for allowing himself to be taken in battle; others declared that he was no more a warrior than the village girls whose tasks he had shared; still others reminded him of his impending fate, and loudly smacked their lips as they remarked upon the savory taste this or that part of his body would have when boiled. One beldame pointed shamelessly to his genitals, reminding him how good they would taste to the headman's wife, for whom apparently these choice morsels were reserved, ^{doubtless} apparently with the notion that they would increase her fecundity. Indeed, the older and more withered the women, the shriller and more cracked their voices, the more delight they seemed to find in insulting and tormenting the prisoner; as though, all sweetness having long since ebbed out of their own poor lives, they found consolation in intensifying the suffering of others. And in the midst of this circle of fiendish harpies, the captive stood like a speechless statue.

All day this pouring out of feminine malice went on, and I know not how far into the night, as sleep overpowered me while the women continued to vituperate their victim from an apparently inexhaustible well of hatred. All the following day the mad exhibition continued, the beldames' voices becoming shriller, their taunts more biting, their allusions more obscene, as the hours passed. Finally, after standing motionless for many hours, the captive suddenly dashed forward and broke through the ring of screaming females. Although warriors in full panoply were standing around the sides of the forum, they allowed the fugitive to get a good start before they dashed in pursuit of him. Followed

by a score of yelling braves, he flew through one of the openings in the palisade, along the causeway between the moats, and out into the surrounding fields. Here at last the fleetest of the Agaruni warriors overtook the fugitive and brought him to earth with a flying tackle. Then his hands were bound behind him with cords and he was led back into the village with shouts of triumph, in what was evidently a ceremonial dramatization of his original capture.

Now the festivities, if one may apply this term to so ghastly a procedure, entered a new phase. The captive, who had endured in silence the taunts and threats of the females, began to prance about in what I took to be the war dance of his tribe, at the same time chanting a vaunting battle song. In intermissions of the dance and song he hurled threats at his tormentors, calling them cowards and thieves, and predicting the dire vengeance his own compatriots would hasten to wreak upon the Agarunis. From time to time he stooped to pick a pebble, a clod of earth, or a bit of rubbish from the bare ground of the forum and hurl it at the bystanders, who usually managed to dodge the missile, although a few were struck.

Daylight had now faded, and bonfires burned brightly around the sides of the forum, imparting a pandemonial weirdness to a scene such as scarcely any literate man has witnessed in recent times, although it must have been common enough in earlier ages. Soon the moon, round and full, floated up above the high-peaked roofs of the surrounding huts and added its pale radiance to the firelight. The vats of fermenting lisa were now brought

19

forward and calabashes full of the frothy stuff circulated freely through the crowd, passing from hand to hand. Even the doomed captive was given his share of the liquid. As luck would have it, the headman happened to notice me as I stood obscurely in the darkest corner of the forum, torn between the ethnologist's curiosity to witness every detail of a ceremony known to his colleagues only from the descriptions of old travellers, and a natural revulsion which made me long to turn my back on the whole savage proceeding. When he thrust the gourd into my hand, I dared not refuse to drink. But with visions of some of the nearly toothless hags who had helped to masticate the mash for this beverage, I held it in my mouth until the headman had passed on, then, when nobody was watching, spat it all forth with a shudder.

Not the least amazing feature of the festivities of uncultivated people everywhere is the marvellous endurance of the human organism which they reveal. Merely as a spectator, I was already nearly exhausted by these strange proceedings; but as the night wore on and the alcohol in the lisa began to take effect, the captive's dancing became brisker and his singing louder; while the shouts, threats, and wild antics of the Agarunis grew more and more extravagant. Suddenly, when the moon's full orb stood at its zenith, a hush fell upon the crowd. All heads turned toward the northeastern corner of the forum, where a warrior entered through a gap in the throng. A sort of helmet, encrusted with shells and teeth, increased his already imposing height; while a magnificent robe, ornamented with the feathers of the most splendid of the birds of the surrounding forest, draped his slender figure from shoulders to knees. His face was

grotesquely painted with ochre and white clay. In his hands he bore a long, heavy club, elaborately carved and bedecked with colored streamers. A rope was now passed around the victim's waist and knotted behind, leaving two long ends, each of which was seized by Agaruni warriors, who thus held the captive midway between themselves. A club, less ornate than that of the advancing brave, was thrust into his hands; and he stood on the defensive.

It was easy to foresee the outcome of the single combat which now began. The captive was worn with facing his tormentors for two days and a night with scarcely any rest, and moreover he had drunk too much liga to have a clear head. The elaborately attired executioner gave no indication that he had been drinking. The prisoner, held by the cord around his waist, was given sufficient freedom to dodge the blows aimed at him; or sometimes he parried them with his own club, when hardwood clashed with hardwood with a ringing sound. Although this game went on for some time, it was obvious that for the amusement of the spectators the feathered warrior was playing with his victim as a cat with a mouse. Finally, when the spectacle had grown stale, he lifted his club high and brought it down on his opponent's skull with a sickening thud. As the victim rolled on the ground, a great shout arose from the surrounding throng.

No sooner had the prisoner fallen than the crowd rushed in with obsidian knives to hack the warm and quivering flesh. Some stuck their fingers into the gashes and licked the gore from them, others knelt to apply their lips directly to the streaming wounds. Little boys were pulled forward by their

fathers and made to taste the blood. Mothers smeared their nipples with it, so that even babes in arms might absorb with their milk the magical power of the slain warrior's blood. Among these was Matanee, the dead man's concubine, who thus gave their little son a taste of his father's blood.

I could endure no more. Now, if ever, was the time to escape from this hellish place, lest in due course I provide a similar spectacle and feast to these fiendish savages. While the whole village was engaged in sucking and licking warm human blood and finding it more intoxicating than strong spirits, I crept away through the black shadows cast by the huts standing tall and gaunt in the moonlight. Crossing the moat, I fled by narrow, winding paths through the provision fields. At a brook of clear water, I paused to wash my fevered face and catch my breath. Forgetting the danger of intestinal infections, I took a long, cooling drink. Then I trudged up the slope toward the primeval forest, which loomed like a high wall above me.

Pushing through the dense fringe of bushes and vines at the woodland's edge, I entered its less encumbered depths. Great trunks soared up above me to unseen heights. Here and there a moonbeam which found its way through the high, leafy canopy cast a bright spot upon the dark, fallen leaves that carpeted the ground. The clear tinkle of a little frog sounded here and there in the gloom. The mournful cry of a night bird came faintly from the distance. The ground litter rustled where some small animal nosed through it, hunting insects or other ^{delicious} small prey. A gust of wind swayed the tree-tops above me, causing the spots of light to dance over the forest floor. Exhausted,

I sank to the ground, hardly caring whether I lay beside one of the venomous snakes or great, hairy spiders which lurked in this woodland. Death might be here, but there was also peace, for which one sought in vain in the haunts of man. Humanity, I reflected wearily, had not risen from nature into heaven; it had fallen from nature into hell.

When I woke from a fitful sleep, I found myself thinking of the great war which had been fought while I was a boy. I remembered how men who called themselves civilized had mown each other down with machine guns and shrapnel, while from the air they dropped bombs upon the civilian population of cities. I cast my mind back along the dreary course of history, remembering St. Bartholomew's Day in Paris, the Papal Inquisition, the European conquest of America, the Roman Arena, the endless internecine wars of the brilliant Greeks. Were the Agarunis after all any worse than the rest of mankind? Was it not utter folly to expect to find a good or admirable nation or tribe in a world where a truly good and admirable individual is so rare? Why not cease this idiotic quest for a decent society and dwell in peace with nature? So musing, I fell asleep again beneath the silent and protecting trees.

CHAPTER III
ESCAPE TO VALANGA

At daybreak I awoke, tired, sore, and hungry. After lying a while to recollect where I was, I got stiffly up, brushed the fragments of dead leaves and other litter from my clothing, and looked around for something to break my fast. I found a few blue berries of a sort I knew to be edible, and was about to tear open the crown of a small palm to eat the soft, white tissue at its center; but it occurred to me that such a repast would leave revealing traces of my presence. For I was sure that I ^w should be pursued as soon as the tribesmen recovered from the effects of their horrible feast and became aware of my absence; and although I doubted my ability to pass through the forest without leaving a trail that such keen woodsmen could follow, it seemed imprudent to make the traces of my passage unnecessarily obvious. Since below me were the cleared lands of the Agarunis, my only hope of escape seemed to be by pushing upward and crossing the range. Perhaps the tribes on the other side were as implacably truculent as my late hosts made them out to be; perhaps there were only uninhabited deserts, where I ^w should find neither food nor shelter. No matter! Any fate seemed preferable to falling again into the clutches of the cannibal Agarunis, for whom I had developed an intense loathing. Indeed, I was now so disgusted with the whole of mankind that to live in an unpeopled wilderness, or even to die there, was the happiest destiny that I could imagine.

I set a course intended to avoid the central mass of the snow peak and lead me around its eastern flank. All morning I

climbed obliquely up the steep slope, forcing my way through dense tangles of bamboos and struggling over the wreckage of fallen trees. At intervals a deep ravine delayed my progress, obliging me to climb down its abrupt wall, then painfully to scramble out on the opposite side. But at least each of these obstacles to my advance rewarded me with a long, cool drink from the clear, unpolluted stream that cascaded down its rocky bed. There were few fruits in the undergrowth of that mountain forest, and since I doubted the edibility of most of them, I passed them by untouched. After I had put a number of miles of forest between the Agarunis and myself, I began to look out for the palms, whose tender young tissues, although only slightly nourishing, were the best and safest food that this woodland seemed to afford. But with no tool larger than my pocket knife, I could open only the smaller palms, which provided scant sustenance; and had I not been so desperately hungry, I ^would have been ashamed to destroy plants so beautiful for the sake of so little food.

About midday, I sank down on a ferny slope for a few hours of rest. The clear, sweet notes of a bird floated down from the high tree-tops and soothed my tense nerves until peace stole over me and I dozed. I seemed hardly to have fallen asleep when I was awakened by a rustling of foliage and snapping of twigs in the neighboring underwood. Imagining that the Agarunis were advancing to seize me, I jumped to my feet with pounding heart, only to frighten a small, reddish deer, who with a snort of alarm bounded gracefully off through the bushes. Smiling at my needless terror, I sank down again and lay for many minutes

gazing idly at the pattern which the tree-tops formed against the sky and trying to glimpse the songster whose notes continued to console me. Presently a troupe of long-armed monkeys advanced through the trees, taking prodigious leaps from bough to bough, pausing here and there to pluck apart an air plant in search of insects that hid amidst its leaves or to nibble its more succulent tissues. Before long one of the monkeys espied me amidst the ferns far below and raised an alarm which drew a half-dozen of its companions. Coughing, barking, and shaking the foliage as though to attract attention, they peered down at me with a troubled expression. Gazing up into their serious brown eyes, I could hardly doubt that, unlike other animals, these lithe people of the tree-tops were already searching for explanations, and were oppressed by the doubts to which such questionings invariably lead.

Refreshed by my midday pause, I arose and pushed doggedly upward. Long before evening the slope up which I toiled was in the shadow of the snowy peak. The thin air at this height rapidly cooled and its freshness braced me for renewed effort, so that before nightfall I reached the crest of the spur. Expecting a cold night at this altitude, I scraped some dry leaves together to make a sort of bed. But despite my fatigue I slept poorly and long before dawn I awoke shivering. As soon as there was light enough to see my way, I arose and attempted to warm myself by movement, for I lacked matches for kindling a fire. These high slopes provided nothing to break my fast.

With mixed emotions, I began to descend the northern face of the range. As far as I knew, this territory had never been

explored by civilized man, and certainly my maps were very vague about it. Since I was now nearly famished, my first thought was whether I ^Wshould find men who could provide me with food, or a wilderness in which I ^Wshould starve. And if men were to be found here, were they as savage as the Agarunis had depicted them, or perhaps people of gentler nature?

With these thoughts revolving in my mind, I hurried down a declivity so steep that I was constantly clutching at trunks and branches to keep from falling. After ~~thousands of feet~~ of this abrupt descent the slope became less steep, and before long I found myself wandering over a high table or plateau covered with magnificent forest. In this level area it was more difficult to hold my course, and I tried to preserve a northerly direction by observing the sun, as I could glimpse it through the tree-tops. But none the less, I found it scarcely possible to travel in a straight line, and again and again I had to pause and try to remember where at this latitude and season the sun would be at this time of day - a calculation simple enough when one's head is clear, but troublesome when one is oppressed by hunger and fatigue. In this forest grew a shrub with small black berries not unpleasant to taste; but I ate them sparingly, torn between fear of starving to death and fear of poisoning myself.

In the midst of this high, nearly level area, I found a bird's nest in a bush which blocked my way. To my surprise, the brown bird that sat on it - a kind of thrush, I thought - did not take fright when I almost bumped into her. She even sat steadfast while I pushed my fingers beneath her breast and lifted her high enough to glimpse two blue eggs beneath her

in the mossy cup. In my famished state, my first impulse was to devour them, and I did not greatly care how fresh they were. While the bird watched me with large, dark eyes, I removed one from beneath her and raised it toward my mouth. Of a sudden it occurred to me that it was a pity to deprive so devoted a parent of her offspring. If I were going to starve in this wilderness, two little eggs could not appreciably delay my death. Carefully I replaced the egg beneath the bird's downy breast, then gently smoothed the soft feathers of her back.

While I stood looking at the bird, something heavy fell at my feet. Glancing down, I beheld a yellow fruit, much the size and shape of a large pear; but when I picked it up it exhaled a delightful aroma unlike that of any fruit I knew. Eagerly I bit into it and found it delicious. But whence did it come, and was it good to eat? I scanned the boughs above me, hoping to find the tree from which it fell, but no other fruit of this sort was in sight. For perhaps a minute I stood fingering the strange object, impatient to devour it yet uncertain of the consequences.

While I stood in this quandry, a movement stirred the undergrowth to my right, and a human figure burst upon my astonished gaze. My heart beat wildly and, unarmed as I was, I should perhaps have bolted away if my weary legs had not refused to carry me at this juncture. A second glance assured me that the stranger was, like myself, weaponless. When I looked into his face my fear subsided almost as rapidly as it had sprung up. The countenance turned toward me was so open and intelligent, illuminated by so kindly a smile, that it was impossible to doubt the stranger's benevolent intentions. He was a young man in the

flower of youth, tall and lithe of limb, clad in a green tunic, gathered around his waist, and brown trousers. On his feet were light sandals. A haversack or traveller's bag hung loosely from one shoulder.

After ^{we had gazed} ~~gazing~~ at each other long enough to convince each of us that the other was not dangerous, the stranger advanced, took my hand lightly in his own, and led me to a fallen log on which he bade me sit. Then, taking my other hand, in which I still clutched the yellow fruit, he lifted it to my mouth, thereby plainly telling me that I was to eat it. While I enjoyed its delicious flesh he opened his sack and took out several fruits of other kinds, all unfamiliar to me, and a folded leaf filled with nuts, all of which he laid on the log beside me. Then while I ate he sat on the other end of the fallen trunk, obviously immersed in thought.

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Presently a whistle sounded in the distance, and my benefactor replied with a similar note. Soon a second youth, also with a pack on his back, appeared from among the trees and advanced toward his companion, but stopped in amazement when he saw me. The first young man beckoned him to come forward, and there followed a conversation in a language of which I understood no single word, yet which sounded most musical to my ears. After the two had exchanged a few sentences, the newcomer arose, took some food from his haversack, and with a smile placed it on the log beside me. Then the conversation was resumed; and I felt certain that they were discussing me, who I was, whence I had come, and probably also what they were to do with me. Without much doubt, before revealing himself to me the first of the young men had

kept me under observation long enough to convince himself that I was alone, lost, and starving.

As I was finishing my meal of strange foods, one of the youths walked off through the woods and soon returned with water in a large leaf folded into the shape of a cup, which he passed to me with a sign that I should drink. Then they allowed me to rest and draw strength from my repast, while they ~~per-~~ took from their haversacks certain flat packages which they opened, removing from them papers which they scrutinized with their heads together. They were close enough for me to see that the sheets were covered with drawings of birds, flowers, and other objects, which these young men had evidently been making here in the mountain forest. I came close enough to look over their shoulders and was amazed to find the paintings of so high a quality, although done in a style unfamiliar to me. I tried to express my admiration, but could not be sure that I was understood.

After a while, I looked at my watch and found that it had stopped. Aside from the clothes I wore, my penknife, a notebook, pencil, and a few coins that I happened to have in my pocket, this excellent chronometer was the only possession I carried away on my midnight flight from the Agarunis, and even the notebook had slipped from my pocket and been lost. Fearing that I had broken the watch on my rough journey, I wound it and was delighted to find that it still ran. Then I set it as accurately as I could by observing the position of the sun. The two young men regarded my timepiece so intently that I was certain that it was the first they had seen. I called their

attention to the moving seconds hand, and they listened to the ticking. Then, pointing to the sun and sweeping my arm from east to west passing through its position in the sky, I tried to make them understand that this was a device for measuring the divisions of the day; and the look of comprehension on their intelligent faces told me plainly that they had grasped my meaning.

Toward the middle of the afternoon the youths replaced their drawings in their haversacks, arose, and beckoned to me to follow. After a walk of perhaps half an hour through the unbroken forest, we reached its edge. Beneath us spread a vast depression encircled by stupendous cliffs. The bottom of this valley, which I estimated to be about thirty miles in length by twelve or fifteen in greatest width, was level or slightly undulating and nearly everywhere covered with trees, interrupted here and there by clearings or fields of no great extent. Spots of dull red, which I detected amidst the verdure, seemed to be the roofs of houses, perhaps tiles. The cliffs which walled in this lovely valley were of gray or reddish rock, ~~many~~ hundreds of yards in height, and everywhere so nearly vertical that it seemed impossible to climb down to their feet. At the southern end of the depression rose the magnificent peak upon which I had so often gazed from the territory of the Agarunis, its snowy summit now veiled in gathering clouds. At the base of this mountain, a stream of water plunged over the edge of the precipice and fell, a sparkling thread, a thousand feet in one sheer drop, to give birth to a river whose surface shone forth here and there among

the trees. Across the valley, a long succession of forested ridges, many of which swept up to towering snow peaks, led the eye into the purple distance.

"Valanga!" exclaimed one of the youths beside me, sweeping his arm over the vast depression.

Wearied as I was from the excitements and exertions of the past few days, I was uplifted by this superb panorama and stood rapt in admiration; while my companions, evidently understanding my sentiments, waited in silence beside me. When I signified my readiness to proceed, we turned northward along the brink of the precipice. At first I supposed that we should pass around this titanic rift in the earth's surface, to whose bottom no means of access was evident; and I was beginning to wonder how long the detour would take us, when the man who led dropped down over the edge of the cliff and turned to help me to follow. Now began a long, difficult descent of the almost vertical wall of rock. Although I had done a little mountain climbing, I was not a trained alpinist; and I doubt whether, in my present weakened state, I could have safely reached the bottom without the helping hands which my companions extended to me at the most perilous passes. At places we worked along narrow shelves on the face of the cliff, and at other points we scrambled down through narrow fissures in the rock.

When well over half-way to the bottom, we came to a spot where an obliquely descending ledge was interrupted by a smooth, vertical expanse of stone that offered no foothold. Our way seemed to be completely blocked, but on the farther

side of the gap stood two men, each bearing a long, slender pole. My companions hailed them, and there began a discussion which drew two other men, similarly equipped, from a sort of guard-house which had been carved into the side of the cliff. From the exchange of phrases in the musical unknown tongue, I inferred that the guards were reluctant to permit a stranger to pass, while my protectors tried to convince them that I was harmless. The argument lasted for several minutes, with the youth who had found me taking the leading part on our side, while the guard who appeared to be oldest was the chief spokesman on the other. Evidently there were strong doubts as to the permissibility of admitting a foreigner, and the discussion became animated; yet it seemed to be carried on with the most perfect courtesy, and I heard no harsh or angry tones. Finally, the men on the other side appeared to yield, and dragged out a sort of gangplank which they placed over the gap in the ledge. After we had crossed over in safety, they pulled it in again.

As we continued along the ledge, one of the guards called "Iretányo", and the youth who had first found me looked back to receive a parting injunction. Since I had heard the other young man repeat this word more than once in conversation with his friend, I inferred that this was my preserver's name. When we paused for breath on a wider platform of rock, I touched him, said "Iretányo", and he smiled. Then I pointed to myself and pronounced "William". When I touched the other youth he said "Órovan". Thus I learned my companions' names.

From the guardhouse to the bottom, the path down the cliff was easier to follow; and ^{before} long we were picking our way between

the tumbled blocks of the talus slope to the level ground at its foot. Soon we passed beneath the trees, between whose trunks the sun, sinking low over the western wall of the valley, sent oblique shafts of mellow light. We now followed smooth, raised paths which led for miles through what appeared to be one great orchard or carefully tended plantation of trees. Some were laden with fruits and some were in blossom, diffusing a delightful fragrance upon the evening air. At intervals we passed intersecting paths which wound off amidst the trees, as though inviting the traveller to follow through this delectable greenery. Brilliant birds flitted across the open spaces, while mingled trills and warbles saturated the grove. Here and there a large, substantial house, surrounded by flowering herbs and shrubs, stood in an opening between the trees; and the merry cries of playing children echoed around it. I looked in vain for the dried human heads and the weapons which had been so much in evidence on the walls of the Agaruni dwellings, but here were no signs of savagery or warfare. On the contrary, my eyes detected nothing which jarred with the atmosphere of perfect peace that pervaded the valley. Now and then we passed other pedestrians, with some of whom my companions exchanged greetings by laying the right hand upon the left shoulder, which seemed to be the usual form of salutation among these people. It was easy to see that I was an object of curiosity to everyone we met, yet they did not embarrass me by staring.

After a while, Orovan took leave of us and turned off on one of the intersecting paths. Although I had not understood a word he said, I was strongly attracted by his frank, sensitive

face and friendly smile, and I hoped to see more of him. Iretanyo and I then walked along in silence until we came to a long, low house set amidst flower-beds, much like those I had already seen. As we approached it, a half-grown boy ran up and with a cry of "Tanyo" threw himself into my companion's arms. His shout drew from within the dwelling a man and woman of middle age, whom I took to be my preserver's father and mother, and a lovely, dark-eyed girl, who might have been his younger sister. After embracing his parents, Iretanyo presented me to the members of his family and we exchanged shoulder-pats. You can fancy how awkward I felt, with my bristly face and dirty, torn clothes, in the presence of these ~~courteous~~ people whom I could not address with a single intelligible word; but with a fine courtesy that needed no speech, they soon put me at ease. [¶] While Iretanyo sat on the broad veranda talking to his parents and sister, doubtless telling them how he had found me, the lad led me to a room behind the house, where I washed and made myself as presentable as is possible for a traveller who has fled leaving all his baggage behind. ~~On my return~~ to the porch, I was presented to an elderly man and woman, apparently the grandparents; and then we all went inside and sat around a large table for supper. I noticed that the food consisted wholly of vegetable products, that it was all uncooked, and ^t that, with the exception of some avocados and oranges, it was all of kinds unfamiliar to me. But after my days of hardship, I found it delicious and satisfying.

Soon after supper Iretanyo, who saw how weary I was, led me to a room furnished with two wooden beds. As I lay in the darkness between the white sheets, thinking over the strange

events of the past few days, a feeling of ineffable peace stole over me. It seemed that I had at last come home. Never since I began to reflect upon life had I felt so much at ease and in my proper ambience. Here among people whose language was like no other tongue I knew, all of whose customs were strange to me, I had a sense of being at home which I lacked even among my own compatriots and kinsmen. Musing upon the queerness of it all, I fell into a profound and dreamless sleep.

CHAPTER IV
CONVALESCENCE AMONG FRUIT TREES

When I awoke, the birds were singing in many-voiced chorus in the surrounding fruit trees and the earliest sunbeams were stealing into my room through the window. For a while I lay motionless, enjoying the luxury of the most comfortable bed I had occupied for many months, while I cast my eyes about the pleasant, white-walled chamber. When finally I moved, I discovered that I ached in every limb. But I pulled myself together and got up, dressed, and went out into the hallway, and found Iretanyo's mother, who guided me to the dining room, where the family was already finishing early breakfast. Food was placed before me and I tried to eat, but my head ached and I had little appetite. Then I went out into the garden, intending to explore my immediate surroundings; but an increasing dizziness drove me back to the porch, where I slumped down on a bench. Apparently my appearance all too plainly revealed my illness; for when the mother came out she felt my head and pulse, and taking me by the arm, led me back to my bedroom, where I needed no urging to lie down.

During the months I spent among the Agarunis I had lost weight, for with the exception of boiled or baked plantains and cassava, I found their food most unappetizing. In the days of anxiety when I suspected, and then became certain, that they regarded me as a captive, I ate still less; and doubtless in this period my weakened constitution was prepared for the illness which was brought to a head by my two nights of exposure in the mountains. I now sank so low that those around me doubted whether I should

live. Through the long weeks of my sickness, Iretanyo's mother, grandmother, and sister nursed me as tenderly as though I were their own son, grandson, and brother. I did not fully appreciate the extent of their sacrifices on my behalf until later, when I learned that, suspecting that I was accustomed to cooked food, they kindled a fire twice daily to prepare my meals, although ordinarily they might not have cooked more than once or twice in a week.

At the height of my illness, when to care for me must have been most burdensome, some of the neighbors came to help the women of the family. Prominent among them was a motherly woman whose dark hair already showed strands of white. She would sit beside my bed for long periods, and once when I awoke from my fevered sleep I found her looking at me with tears in her eyes. She quickly turned her head away. Later, I learned that her name was Alcira, and that she had lost in boyhood a son, who, had he lived, would have been about my own age. From cloth she had herself woven, she made me a set of clothes, which I needed when I began to move around again.

When the crisis had passed and my mind recovered its clarity, the members of the household, and sometimes also neighbors, would come by turns to sit beside my bed and teach me their language. Thus gradually I became familiar with their names and characteristics. The homestead into which I had been received was called Nárdan, and this name was used to designate each of its permanent inhabitants. The head of the family was Elíndro, Iretanyo's grandfather, a white-haired man whose countenance

was so serene and benevolent that merely to be in his presence brought peace and hope for humanity. His wife, Calíntha, was equally beautiful in her declining years. Their son, Alvándris, was a grave and courteous man of about forty-five, whose dark hair showed the earliest streaks of gray. Iliníssa, his charming wife, was a year or two younger. Iretanyo, the oldest of their children, was twenty-one; his sister Yandá, eighteen; while Calpáni, their vivacious younger brother, was barely eleven years of age. These seven people composed the family of Nardan.

It is not easy to teach a language without a textbook nor any tongue known to both teacher and pupil, which may serve as a medium of communication. At first my instructor would point to some object and repeat its name until I could pronounce it correctly. When I had acquired a few dozen nouns in the Valangan tongue, my teachers acted some of the common verbs, such as to sit, to stand, to walk, and to write, at the same time pronouncing the corresponding word. Since most Valangans draw well, they would also make rapid sketches of objects not in view, and tell me their names. With my knack of learning languages, I was soon able to form simple sentences, much to my instructor's satisfaction. Before many weeks had passed, I knew the Valangan alphabet of twenty-four letters, and was beginning to read and write with it.

After more than a month of confinement to my bed, I was able to totter about the house and garden, dressed in new clothes which my kind hosts and neighbors had made for me. A convalescence without complications may be an experience so gratifying

that one would willingly undergo a moderately severe illness in order to enjoy it. One feels himself transported back to childhood or early youth, when the passing weeks brought increasing strength and height and new accomplishments, and the miracle of growth in body and mind prevented that feeling of stagnation, of days that pass emptily, which too often steals over us in maturity. If even in ordinary circumstances convalescence may recall to us some of the almost forgotten satisfactions of our formative years, in my present situation there were additional reasons why it should remind me of my lost boyhood. For I was not only regaining my strength; I was at the same time acquiring the ability to exchange thoughts with those around me, learning their customs, and extending my acquaintance with the surrounding world, all in the manner of a child. Few periods of my life live so warmly in memory as this of my convalescence and habituation among the friendly people of Valanga.

In these days which I perforce spent in or close to the house, I became familiar with the domestic arrangements of my hosts. Their dwelling, a single story in height, was built on a raised platform of hard-packed earth, held in place by a retaining wall of uncut stones carefully fitted together. This platform was covered with glazed tiles, bearing figures of flowers, fruits, insects, birds, and other natural objects, most of them beautifully executed, forming a floor on which the eyes rested with unending delight. I shall have more to say about these tiles in a later chapter. The roof was also of tiles, of course of a different form and color. The walls were of a sort of plaster, which

covered over split, interlaced bamboos or slats from the hard outer shell of palm trees, in the midst of which were the heavy timbers that upheld the roof. The windows, which could be closed with wooden shutters, were without glass, of which little is made in Valanga; but this was hardly necessary in a mild tropical region, near enough to the Equator to enjoy continuous summer, and high enough above sea level to convert this summer into the semblance of perpetual spring.

The plan of the house, which I later discovered was rather typical of Valangan dwellings, was simple. Across the front was a wide veranda enclosed by a railing. Behind this, occupying the forepart of the building from side to side, was a spacious room where by day the women sat at their looms or sewing and in the evening the family gathered to talk, play music and sing, or listen to the reading or recitation of poetry. ~~One corner of this large room was partitioned off to form a sort of shrine where the family guarded the mementoes and records of its ancestors.~~ From the middle of this main room, at the rear, led a hallway flanked on either side by five smaller rooms, which served as bedrooms, for storage, and other purposes. These rooms were all quite simply, although adequately, furnished; and there was no clutter of useless, and all too often ugly, ornaments and bric-a-brac such as I remember in my parents' house, and of which my mother complained each time she and her servants cleaned a room. Cooking was done in a small, detached building behind the house, an arrangement made necessary by the absence of a closed iron stove and chimney; and beside the kitchen was a bathroom, into which water was led through tubes of bamboo and pipes of baked clay.

41

The primitive cooking arrangements were no great inconvenience, for ordinarily a fire was kindled only at intervals of some days, when the women of the family prepared a kind of cake with sago from the trunk of a palm tree, or cooked certain roots and vegetables which could not be eaten raw. It was clear that these people tried to reduce cooking to a minimum, for they subsisted almost wholly on fruits, nuts, and a few garden vegetables which could be consumed in their natural state. They refused to be bound to endless drudgery to fill their stomachs, when life offers so many more instructive and delightful occupations; and as to assigning slaves or hirelings to the disagreeable tasks while their masters enjoy themselves, such invidious distinctions between human beings were inconceivable to them. When I reflected on the many hours which in other communities the women spend each day over the stove, the clutter of pots and vessels which they must clean when they have finished cooking, and all the labor which goes to provide firewood or other fuel, I appreciated the great advantages of the Valangans' dietary arrangements. Indeed, as I became more familiar with their economy and social structure, it became clear to me that a large share of that which was most admirable in them could be traced directly to their diet.

The trees which covered so ^{much} ~~large a~~ share of the valley were not permitted to press too closely about the houses, but kept at a slight distance to allow light and air to enter and reduce the dampness. In the sunny plot surrounding each dwelling a variety of flowering shrubs and herbs were planted, and those

about the Nardan home were particularly profuse and beautiful. They were attended chiefly by the women; and as Ilinissa and Yancoa, wearing gaily colored dresses, bent over their flowers in the mild morning sunshine, I found it difficult to decide which was lovelier, the mother with her mature, matronly fulness or the daughter with her lissome, girlish grace.

The trees which encircled the flower garden and covered most of the twenty acres of the homestead of Nardan were of a bewildering variety. They were not planted in blocks composed all of the same kind, but mingled together in apparent confusion, as in natural tropical woodland, a disposition that retards the spread of those fungal and insect pests which cause such great losses where many trees of the same sort are set in a continuous stand. I recognized the orange, the mandarin, the avocado, the mango, the cashew, and a few other familiar kinds, and at first I was puzzled to find plants ^{native to} ~~from~~ both hemispheres growing together in a valley so isolated from the outside world. But when I reflected how far and how rapidly useful plants have spread over the earth; how, for example, the banana in a few centuries reached the most remote parts of tropical America, and appeared so much at home there, that even so discerning a traveller as Alexander von Humboldt was led to the erroneous conclusion that it was present in the Western Hemisphere in pre-Columbian times; it no longer seemed strange to me that Valanga had acquired a number of exotic species, some of them from the opposite side of the globe.

Most of the trees, however, were of kinds unknown to me;

and I came to regret that in my college days I had not given more attention to botany, so that now I might be able to classify them. Although eventually I picked up the local names of most of the useful plants of the valley, I shall not often burden my text with them, as they would be meaningless even to a reader well grounded in the systematic botany of the outside world. It soon became apparent to me that the food-bearing trees of Valanga had been chosen with great care to supplement each other. Some yield fruits rich in sugars, starches or oils, while others, especially the nut-bearing sorts, provide an abundance of proteins. Likewise they bear their crops at different seasons, so that there is a constant succession of them throughout the year; although even here in the tropics there is a strong tendency for plants of many sorts to blossom at certain periods, such as at the beginning of the dry season or with the return of the rains; and this results in an uneven distribution of fruits through the twelve months.

Conspicuous among the trees were palms, whose tall, clean trunks led the eye upward to enormous rosettes of magnificent feathery fronds. Some were cherished for their fruits, which hung in great clusters just below the spreading crown; while others were planted for the starch which, just before the final efflorescence, fills the soft tissues of their pith. To obtain this starch, from which sago is prepared, it is necessary to sacrifice the palm tree; but even if undisturbed it would soon die, exhausted by the vast effort of its single flowering and fruiting. The hard outer shells of the palm trunks are also

Valangams prefer ^{the} fruits of trees not only because they are produced with so little labor but because ~~and~~ ~~subject of them~~ those who subsist on them do least injury to other living things. Practically all other foods are torn from ^{living} organisms which had a life would continue to grow & flourish but for our rude interference with them. But the fruits - as distinct from the seeds of plants have no life of their own. They wither and decay once they have performed their function of protecting and often also of ensuring the dispersal of the seeds which develop within them. The fleshy, edible fruits are the plants' gratitude to those animals who disseminate their seeds. Their fleshy parts are produced to be eaten and fail to fulfil their destiny if they are not eaten. ^{destroyed} Of all ^{for we are the only foods which are} foods they alone can be consumed ~~for~~ without feeling that we are in any way doing violence to other living things. Those who reverence all life ^{may} eat them without a troubled conscience.

useful for many kinds of construction, and the many-fingered fronds of some serve to thatch sheds and other less permanent buildings.

When I recalled the tremendous toil which other people without machinery expend in preparing the ground for planting and in cultivating their annual crops such as maize, rice, wheat, or cassava, I recognized the wisdom of the Valangans in depending largely on trees for their food. Once it has been established, an orchard or other plantation of trees continues from year to year to yield its bounty with relatively little labor; while the removal of effete trees and superfluous branches provides an abundance of firewood, which the Valangans, who use so little for cooking, need for their important ceramic industry. It was because they from the first avoided the back-breaking labor of planting annual crops that the Valangans did not make drudges of their women, in the manner of the Agarunis, nor employ hirelings, nor capture slaves. As far as I can learn, slavery ~~has~~ never existed among the Valangans, even in the earliest times, but they have always been a free people who would be indignant at the very notion of depriving others of their liberty. Perhaps because they early developed an agriculture which does not demand exhausting and in many cases ~~even~~ brutalizing drudgery, they have never looked upon the production of food as a degrading or even shameful occupation, fit only for bondsmen, as has been true of all too many peoples in the long course of their history.

About the edges of the orchard and along the pathways grew

a herb with great, heart-shaped leaves on stout stalks which sprung from the ground, similar to the taro and dasheen so widespread in tropical countries. At first I wondered why the Valangans, who ate so little cooked food, planted so many of these aroids, whose starchy underground parts sting the mouth when raw and require long cooking to make them edible. Since in the rich, moist soil of Valanga they flourish with scarcely any cultivation, they are kept as a reserve for use at times when other foods are scarce. In a year when the fruit trees yield bountifully, these starchy rootstocks are seldom eaten.

While I travelled, I was amazed and distressed by the great areas of waste land in nearly all the inhabited regions, especially in tropical countries. Much of this land was not long ago rich enough to support luxuriant forests, but it had been exhausted by over-cultivation without fertilization, or by repeated burning, which is the usual method of preparation for sowing when the ground is hilly or very rocky, or the people lack machinery to clear away the luxuriant native vegetation. In the moister parts of the tropics, ^{with} ~~where there is~~ a year-long growing season, it seemed to me absurd to depend upon food-plants which must be started afresh every year, usually on new land, while the older clearings grow up with unsightly weeds. Perennial, not annual, plants are appropriate to a region of perpetual summer. Yet of all the people I have visited, only the Valangans have developed an economy which rests almost wholly on perennials. In this valley, there is in consequence none of the waste land so prominent, for example, about the Agaruni villages.

The whole country resembles one great garden; and as I wandered through its fragrant, fruitful groves, it was easy to imagine that I was in Eden before Adam's fall - that Eden of which the blind poet wrote:

And higher then that Wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest Fruit,
Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden hue
Appeerd, with gay enameld colours mixt:
On which the Sun more glad impress'd his beams
Then in fair Evening Cloud, or humid Bow,
When God has showrd the earth; so lovely seemd
That Lantskip....

Not only does the production of practically all the food on the homesteads where it is consumed save a great expense of transportation, it likewise results in a very favorable distribution of the population. In Valanga I am never oppressed by the mass of crowded humanity, as in some great city or even in many suburban communities, but I always enjoy the freedom and tranquillity of open country. Yet if the dwellings embowered among trees are rarely in sight of each other, on homesteads which in the more fertile parts of the country are about twenty acres in extent, they are never far separated; and I have never heard Valangans complain of that loneliness and isolation which so often afflict those who live on extensive farms that produce great quantities of foodstuffs for distant cities - a loneliness which too often drives the young people from their solitary homes to the dangerous delights of the great centers of population.

These were some of the observations and reflections which added delight to my convalescence. Sometimes, too, I sat in the little carpenter-shop beneath the trees close by the dwelling, where Alvandris, often with Iretanyo's help, made furniture or carved wood. I noticed that when neighbors came to carry off a table, a chair, or some other article that he had fashioned, they never left any money; and after I had become sufficiently proficient in the Valangan language, I asked whether it was the custom of the country to give extensive credit. Although Alvandris, ~~was~~ a quick-witted man, ~~he~~ often grasped my poorly expressed meaning and completed my sentences for me, in this instance I had great difficulty ~~in~~ making him understand what I was driving at. "I mean," I said, "that they carry away the table or bench now and will later bring you the...." But I could not finish this sentence, for it suddenly occurred to me that I had never heard the Valangan word for money. But I happened still to have in my possession a few coins of the last commercial country that I had visited, and I produced these to help me out of the difficulty.

"What are those?" asked Alvandris, dropping his chisel and taking them from me for a careful examination.

"In my native land they are called 'coins', and they are part of what we know as 'money.' In return for enough of them, people will give you almost anything they have, or serve you in any way you wish."

"Yes, I have heard that such a custom exists in certain

parts of the world, but it seems most foolish to me. These little disks of metal can hardly be used for anything and they are not even beautiful. My neighbor Mandinis needed a table, and I made one for him. He is a potter, and when we require a pitcher or a dish he will give it to us. Why complicate matters with a handful of little metal disks that aren't good for anything in themselves?"

"But the table might be worth more - I mean, involve more labor - than the pitcher, or the other way around. If you have money, you give for each article just what it is worth, and that simplifies rather than complicates the transaction."

"But I enjoy making the table," said Alvandris. "I make the strongest and most beautiful table that I can, hoping that it will last longer than I will. And Mandinis knows that I put a great deal of care and affection into making that table which will stand in his house; and because he is himself a creator of beautiful things, he will appreciate it and think kind thoughts of the man who made it for him; just as I feel friendly toward him whenever I use the graceful pitcher from which we pour our drinking water. This interchange of articles which we make for particular people creates a vast amount of good will among us, which we ^would never have if we did not know who made the things which we daily use, or if they made them only to get as much money from us as they could make us pay. Usually we know the origin not only of the articles we ourselves bring to our houses, but of those that have been in them for generations. We remember, for example, that the lovely fruit bowl on the dining table was made by Mandinis's great grandfather, and

that the carved bed in which you sleep was made by my ancestor Faloris, about four hundred years ago.

"Perhaps, if I were forced to work at this bench so long that I became weary, as you say is the way in other countries, I might begin to calculate whether Mandinis or other people for whom I make things are working as long and as hard as I, and I might become dissatisfied if they did not give me something that represents an equivalent amount of effort. But here in Valanga, where we are careful to avoid waste and do not crave unnecessary luxuries, it scarcely ever happens that anyone is obliged to labor when he is sick or in need of rest. When I become absorbed in what I am doing, I hardly notice how the time passes, and I often stay here at my voluntary task so long that Ilinissa complains, saying that nobody is expected to work as hard as I do. Yet I have noticed that when Mandinis or some other craftsman is making something in which he takes special pride, he often spends the whole day at it. But if he wishes to rest the next day, or to walk through the valley or watch the birds, there is nobody to stop him; for here no one commands any other person. We rarely even find it necessary to give peremptory orders to our children - except that sometimes I must command Calpani to put my tools down. He fancies that he is already a carpenter and is eager to make the same things that I make; but he is not yet old enough and will ruin my best tools if I do not watch him, to say nothing of cutting off a finger."

"I should think," I continued, "that this system would lend itself to much abuse, and that the better craftsmen would be

overwhelmed with requests for their handiwork by covetous neighbors. The accumulation of articles for which they do not pay might become a mania, just as happens with the accumulation of money in other countries."

"Perhaps in other lands this would be the case," replied Alvandris, "but not here in Valanga. In the first place, to know that something has been in our house for many years, and has served our parents and possibly even more distant ancestors, enhances its value for us; and we do not discard it unless it has worn out or become shabby. Thus we do not constantly crave something new and do not request an article unless we need it. Moreover, we know our neighbors fairly well and do not expect them to make things for us at times when they are very busy. Most of us would rather do without than impose upon their good will. But on the whole, there is time to make everything needful, at the leisurely pace to which we are accustomed."

A few days after this conversation, Alvandris said to me: "I have been thinking much about those little round pieces of metal that you showed me, and it occurs to me that, for all their innocent appearance, they might work much mischief among men. Presently somebody would discover that they are a source of power over his neighbors, to command their services or acquire the products of their toil. Then the baser sort of men would contrive to accumulate more than their due share of this money, in order to live in greater luxury or dominate their fellows. After a while, we should no longer be making things for our neighbors because of our good will toward them, or because we realize that for every-

51

one to have what he needs and none too much makes a healthy commonwealth and benefits everybody, but for the sake of this money and the power and luxury it brings. Soon men would be using their power of persuasion to make their neighbors purchase useless or even injurious articles, and they might even offer to do disgraceful things for them, just to get more of those insidious metal disks. All sorts of evil practices would little by little grow up. Far from loving our neighbors, we ^w should grow jealous of those who had managed to acquire more wealth than ourselves, and finally we ^{might} should hate them. Moreover, by using as a standard of value something intrinsically worthless or nearly so, we ^{might} should corrupt our sense of value, and run after stupid trifles instead of what is truly good. This thing that you call money might become a subtle poison, embittering our hearts, corroding our lives, and destroying the foundations of amity in the commonwealth."

"That is all quite true," I replied, marvelling at Alvandris's insight. "In countries where it is well known, money is often called 'the root of evil'. I have long thought that the moral qualities that make a society hold together - good will, co-operativeness, loyalty - all grew up in primitive communities which, lacking a medium of exchange, were necessarily based on mutual helpfulness, as in Valanga. Commercial countries have long been living on this moral capital, their patrimony from remote ancestors, and gradually frittering it away. The conditions of life in these countries are not favorable for building up this fund of moral qualities, and when their inheritance is finally exhausted, they will dissolve in a sea of selfishness and strife. Money is one

of those inventions, of which the world contains too many, which appear exceedingly clever when somebody first makes them, but are finally seen to do far more harm than good."

"After all," added Alvandris, "we create things because it is our nature to do so, as it is the tree's nature to bear fruit and the bird's nature to sing. We ^wshould not be happy, we ^wshould not feel ourselves to be men, if we did not create and produce - often far in excess of our needs. And when we have made something for which we have no immediate use, what is the best thing we can do with it? Store it away to gather dust and cobwebs? ~~Is it~~ ^{It} not far better to give these things to neighbors who need and will cherish them? We give the products of our toil to our neighbors the more freely because we are confident that they will not squander or destroy them. We Valangans believe that to waste what somebody else has made is partial murder, because we nullify that part of his life which went into the making of it. To waste what one has himself produced is partial suicide."

As I became better acquainted with him, I discovered that Alvandris is an erudite man, well versed in the literature and history of his country and moreover an authority on its birds. Yet he does a good deal of manual labor, not only at his carpenter's bench but also in his orchard. In this he is typical of his countrymen, most of whom find time for study as well as for the performance of their necessary tasks. And this, I believe, is the secret of the strength and stability of Valangan culture and the happiness of its people. One of the chief causes of the decay of nations appears to be the separation of the people into those who work only with their hands and those

who work only with their heads. But Valangans do not forget that nature has endowed them with both heads to think and hands to fashion things.

Now I began to understand why I had noticed no shops or stores in Valanga. Each family produces a large share of the things it needs, including practically all of its food and clothing, the latter from the fibers of the tree-cotton, which is planted on every homestead. Those articles not made at home are in nearly every case obtained directly from the producers. Thus, Valanga is able to dispense with a mercantile class, those unfortunate people who engage in the most hazardous and worrying of all occupations, in which many are ruined by selling too little or at too low a price, while others grow opulent by cleverly manipulating the produce of other men's toil, a proceeding ^{surely} looked upon as degrading by the clearest thinkers of antiquity.

By this system one does not acquire the variety of material goods which is available to the wealthy in commercial countries, but only what is necessary. All the jealousies, rivalries, and wars that grow out of international commerce are thereby avoided. Valangans believe that nature, which has equipped every other animal to live well on what its own district provides, has not invidiously condemned man, alone of all creatures, to fill his needs with products brought at ^{great} ~~tremendous~~ cost from the ends of the earth. They hold it possible to live well on what their own region affords. The international exchange of which they most approve is that of our truest insights, but these need no intricate commercial structure for their conveyance.

As my understanding of Valangans deepened, I detected an intimate connection between their exacting ethical standards and the simple directness of their economic and political arrangements. Our consciences are blunted by commission through agents and by commission under command. In countries where men daily purchase for their use things produced, often at a great distance, by people unknown to them, they become morally responsible for practices which the better of them could never bring themselves to perform in person. Because they do not see, perhaps are not even aware of, the injustice to men and cruelty to animals involved in the production of articles which they buy for their own use and consumption, they are not troubled in conscience by these abuses. Yet the persons who perpetrated them are supported, directly or indirectly, by the money paid for these products by the purchaser, hence the former must be regarded as paid agents of the latter. If we do not admit that we are responsible for the conduct of the agents whom we employ, at least while they are engaged in the business for which we pay them, the whole doctrine of moral responsibility is undermined. Yet it is difficult to feel responsible for the vaguely understood activities of persons whom we have never seen, whose very names are unknown to us. Accordingly, an attenuation of the sense of responsibility is inevitable in an economic system so complex that one can hardly know where or how his food, raiment, and other daily necessities are produced.

But in Valanga, where everyone knows who produces the

58

things he uses, and the methods which the producer employs, this dulling of conscience by commission through agents is avoided. A Valangan will never accept anything produced or obtained by practices which he disapproves. Similarly, Valangans are not exposed to that blunting of conscience which occurs when men under the command of others perform deeds which they could never bring themselves to do on their own responsibility, as happens especially in time of war, but is in most countries all too frequent even in time of peace. The Valangan commonwealth cannot coerce its citizens, under threat of severe punishment, to act in a manner which they individually disapprove. But of this I shall have more to say in later chapters.

CHAPTER V
CHILDHOOD IN VALANGA

Since Alvandris spent so much time in his workshop and Iretanyo's youthful energy sent him far across the valley and up into the surrounding mountains, my chief companion at this period was Calpani, whose strength about matched mine during much of my convalescence. I enjoyed the lad's company because, despite the difference in our ages, he always treated me as a courteous person treats his equals. Often I went into the orchard with him, and while he climbed the trees with the agility of a monkey, I stood below to catch the fruits that he threw down to me, so that they would not strike the ground and be bruised. He showed me with pride the trees he had planted, under his father's direction, when he was barely old enough to dig a hole for them. Every child in Valanga plants trees, in spaces left vacant by the death of old trees, and cares for them until they begin to yield. Some of the rapidly growing kinds which Calpani had set out already bore fruit, but others would hardly flower before he reached manhood. Thus by the time a child grows up, he feels that he has already contributed something substantial to his home and his commonwealth, and he is by this fact the more firmly bound to them.

Sometimes I went with Calpani to his classes and sat quietly listening to the lessons, thereby improving my knowledge of his language. In Valanga, ^{without} ~~where there are no~~ schoolhouses, children are taught in small groups, usually by one of the older men or women in their neighborhood. Although teaching a

class of a score or more restless youngsters may be a strenuous occupation, these informal lessons given to a few docile children involve no strain; and by giving instruction to the children the elderly people of Valanga preserve a sense of usefulness, of being still an integral part of their community, which prevents that restlessness or bitterness which often comes over ageing men and women who no longer have any firm contacts with the younger generations. > moreover, etc. <

Moreover, to teach small children requires much patience, a quality that elderly people, especially if they have led tranquil lives, are likely to have in larger measure than ^{do} young men and women.

... the study of the sacred epics the Valangan and ...
izing passages from it. Well-educated Valangans, which term includes practically everyone in the country, can recite large sections, if not the whole, of this long poem; just as a Greek could recite the Iliad or a Brahmin the Vedas; and by this effort they develop remarkable powers of memory. From this noble epic Valangan children learn the early history of their country, its ideals and moral code, and at the same time they acquire an appreciation of poetry of the highest order. Thus with them religious and secular education are not sharply sundered, as in so many modern societies, but form inseparable parts of the same curriculum. These children learn the traditions of their religion, and the conduct it commands, along with their other studies; for Valangans would consider it absurd to divide education, which is the development of the whole ^{person,} ~~man,~~ into two or more unrelated parts. The more speculative aspects of religion, however, are not deemed meet for immature minds, but

are reserved for such older people as have a taste for the subtleties of theology and other metaphysical problems.

I greatly enjoyed attending Calpani's classes, not only because I learned much from them, but also because both teacher and pupils appeared to be having such a pleasant time. It was easy to see that all the children were devoted to him; and like Calpani they all called him Grandfather Elindro; while he seemed to be as fond of all of them as of his own grandchild. He spent much time telling stories, usually from Valangan history, in such clear, direct language that even at this stage of my education in the Valangan tongue I could understand much of them, and thereby became acquainted with the traditions and ideals of the people. A day or so later, the children would be required to repeat these tales in their own words, or to tell others that they had read. Often Elindro took them out through the orchards or along the pathways, calling their attention to plants, insects, and birds, telling them their names and something about their uses or habits, and trying to stimulate their powers of observation. Aside from all formal teaching, merely to be closely associated with such a man, who had already served as president of his canton, was an invaluable experience for the children.

In addition to these studies, every Valangan boy and girl who has the least aptitude for them is taught music and drawing; and I often went with Calpani to these classes, too. He and his classmates were taught singing by Alcira, the neighbor who had nursed me while I was sick; and they went to other instructors to learn to play various musical instruments. Drawing was taught by Notilia, the grandmother of Calpani's pretty playmate Zettana, who persuaded me to try my hand at it, with the

happy result that I discovered myself to possess unsuspected talent as a draftsman. In addition to these subjects, each Valangan child also learns a craft, such as carpentry, pottery-making or metalwork by the boys, weaving, dressmaking and basket-making by the girls. These arts, no less than the care of orchards and gardens and later the care of babies, are usually acquired from their parents, whom from an early age the children help in all possible ways. Thus a substantial part of their education, perhaps the most important of all, they absorb in their homes while doing the things they are naturally inclined to do, and without suspecting that they are undergoing that often painful process which the word "education" suggests to children who receive nearly all of their knowledge and accomplishments through formal instruction given by paid strangers.

The Valangan children are the freest, the happiest, and at the same time the best behaved, that I have ~~ever~~ known. For them there is no sharp distinction between work and play, for many of their necessary tasks are undertaken in the spirit of games. Among the labors of the children is the kneading of the clay for making tiles and pottery; ~~and~~ sometimes I accompanied Calpani to the little factory, set among the trees, where this was done. In other countries, I had seen horses tied together and driven around in small circles, to the sound of a whip, in the shallow pit where the clay was prepared. But Valangans have no domestic animals, and whips are foreign to their nature. Instead of horses, the children make a game of kneading the clay. Six or eight boys and girls, naked except for bathing

trunks, would enter the pit together, and forming a circle by holding hands, or placing their hands on their companions' shoulders, tramp round and round in the wet clay with their bare feet, to the accompaniment of songs or shouts and peals of laughter. Sometimes one would fall into the clay and rise plastered all over with the sticky stuff, to everyone's merriment, and most of all that of the child who acquired this clinging garment. After about half an hour of this frolic, they would sit beside the pit and watch a fresh squad perform. Finally, they would scrape the clay from themselves as well as they could, so as not to waste any of it, then splash in a neighboring stream until they were clean.

Although much of the children's energy is directed toward necessary tasks with no diminution of childhood's joy, there is also time for simple play. Valangans disapprove of games and contests in which one person strives to demonstrate his superiority over his competitors. They are not so naïve as to imagine that all men are in every respect equal by natural endowment; but they believe that in the course of the years the important outstanding qualities will automatically reveal themselves; and they appreciate and honor the wisdom or the creative talent that lifts a man above his fellows. But the sage and the great artist are humble because they measure themselves by their ideal and find that they fall short of it. The callow youth, puffed up with pride and conceit because he has, perchance, stronger legs or a quicker hand than his peers, is distasteful to Valangans; and a community which recognizes neither social classes nor special privileges mistrusts the

61
mental attitude engendered by victory in athletic or other contests. The muscles of Valangan children are hardened for the tasks of men and women by the chores, proportioned to their strength, which they are early called upon to perform, and by the games which are entered for pure enjoyment and the good fellowship they create. The younger children play hide-and-seek, tap-on-back, and other games dear to childhood everywhere.

A favorite game of Calpani and his contemporaries is called "friends and enemies". As "base" they mark off five or ten paces, according to the number of players, along a path beside an open space. At first all but one are "enemies". The single "friend", clasping his hands together in front of himself, tries to touch one of the "enemies"; and the child who is caught runs as fast as he can to the base, to avoid the slaps of those still uncaught, who are permitted to beat his back with their open palms until he reaches "home". Then the first "friend" and the child he has just captured join hands and try to touch another "enemy" with their free hands; and this one, too, scurries as fast as he can to the base in order to escape slaps. Then the three who are now "friends" join hands and start out afresh to catch others. As more and more players are caught, the line of "friends" grows longer; and those who still remain "enemies" try to break through it by running between two children in the center of the line without being touched by either of the end ^{children} ~~boys~~, who alone, with their free hands, can make captures. Each time the line is broken, all who formed it must run, exposed to the slaps of the "enemies", back to the base and there reform their line. This process continues until only one child remains uncaught, and he, as reward for having remained the "enemy" longest for the game's sake, becomes the first "Friend" in the next game. The object of this game is to impress upon the children that as long as they remain hand in hand with their friends they are invulnerable, but as soon as friends break apart they suffer from hostile attacks.

Among Calpani's playmates was a timid boy who never entered into the thick of the games and stayed in the shallow water when they went swimming in the river. I noticed that this lad was never teased nor bullied by the others, but on the contrary they did all they could to encourage him and help him to overcome his shyness. The other children vied with each other to become his protector and friend.

Often the older people joined in the games of the children, for they had few sports and games of their own. I have observed that people who work under pressure, with a grim determination to finish their tasks and win the rewards of labor, commonly approach their amusements in the same grimly resolute manner, as though they would seize pleasure by the throat and force it to surrender to them. But Valangans, who derive so much satisfaction from the routine of their daily lives, the unhurried performance of their necessary tasks, and the creation of beautiful things when they are at leisure, have little need for games, sports, and spectacles; and when they play it is in an easygoing manner, as though to spend a careless hour with their friends were far more important than to win a game. Indeed, neither children nor older people ever speak of winning or losing a game or contest. It is enough to know that they played well and enjoyed the frolic.

Everyone in Valanga arises at dawn to take advantage of the cool freshness of the day's early hours and complete his more strenuous tasks before the midday heat sets in. They try to finish their evening meal before nightfall, because they consider it improper to expose a light to the outer air. For

illumination they use lamps which burn oil pressed from certain seeds, and before lighting these lamps they close the shutters of the room. When the night is too warm to remain in a closed room with comfort, they prefer to sit on the porch in the darkness, playing musical instruments and singing, reciting poetry or conversing, until they go early to bed.

The reason why Valangans do not expose lamps at night is that it distresses them to see the moths and other insects from the surrounding trees fly into the flames and scorch themselves. The tender regard of the Valangans for everything that lives, from their own wives, husbands, and children to the humblest thing that crawls, in addition to their habitual cheerfulness, courtesy, and pleasant appearance, make them the most lovable people that I have known. And because their amiability makes it easy for them to love each other, they find no difficulty in applying the Golden Rule and in being helpful, kind, and just to their neighbors - all without stern commands, threats of dire punishment if they fail in these particulars, and much prating about duty. Indeed, "duty" is a word one scarcely ever hears from them; for their natural inclinations usually lead them to do what is considered proper in their society, with no feeling of compulsion or pressure. Duty, which has received so many panegyrics from the moralists and poets of modern Europe, appears to be in high repute only among people whose spontaneous good impulses are of insufficient^{strength}, or perverted. The Greek philosophers, whose ethics were founded upon the glad pursuit of the Good, had, like the Valangans, little to

say about duty.

The reason why people in most countries must so often be reminded of their duties to each other, and are despite these reminders so often unkind and unjust to their neighbors, is that they find it so difficult to love them. And ^{humans} men are difficult to love when they are surly, discourteous, grasping, and callous to the sufferings of other beings if not actually cruel. Nothing makes a ^{or woman} man so lovable as the love he ^{or she radiates} himself displays. We do not love our neighbors enough because they are not sufficiently lovable, and they are not sufficiently lovable because those about them hardly inspire their love. Somehow this vicious circle must be broken if the moral life is to be set upon a firm and natural foundation. But with the exception of the Valangans, no people that I have visited has yet accomplished this.

20 pp. 65

CHAPTER VI

VALANGAN GOVERNMENT: ADMISSION TO CITIZENSHIP

Had I not fallen sick the day after my arrival in Valanga, the question of my presence in the country would have been promptly considered at a special meeting of the Council of Presidents. But since it would have been inhuman to expel me while I was still too weak to make my way to some other inhabited region, the matter was deferred until I fully regained my strength and the Council held its regular annual meeting. Iretanyo and Orovan were made responsible for my good behavior, and for my not attempting to escape from the valley, until the question was formally decided.

Valangans can hardly conceive of a human being without a house to shelter him and fruit trees to support him. They make themselves collectively responsible that every inhabitant of their country shall have these things, ~~and~~ in adequate quantity and quality. But in order to assure the foundations of a good life to each individual, they must control the number, and as far as possible the quality, of the individuals who enter Valanga, whether by birth or immigration. Furthermore, since they are well aware that for several centuries men from across the ocean have been advancing toward the interior of their continent, overthrowing by force of arms, by guile, or by the infiltration of pernicious habits, every indigenous culture, they have been most careful about admitting visitors who might carry to the foreign invaders accounts of their beautiful

valley and expose the weaknesses in its defenses. For the same reason, they are cautious about permitting the departure of persons who might have gained admission to the country without authorisation by the Council. Although, as will in due course become clear, their civilization could not have developed without natural isolation from the surrounding war-like tribes; their present policy of severing, as far as possible, every contact with the outside world, has been forced upon them by circumstances beyond their control.

In order to explain what the Council of Presidents is, I must say something about the government of the country. I might preface my remarks by stating that in Valanga there are no political parties; for such divisions in the commonwealth arise where there are social classes or groups whose interests are in opposition, so that each is constantly maneuvering for some advantage over the others; or where there are men avid of power, each of whom stirs up a section of the populace to support his pretensions. Since in Valanga there are neither ambitious men nor sections of the community with competing interests, political parties do not exist.

The approximately three hundred square miles of Valangan territory, about three-quarters of which is under cultivation, is divided into thirty districts or cantons of nearly equal area, each of which contains from two hundred to two hundred and fifty homesteads and from fourteen hundred to eighteen hundred people, according to the fertility of the soil. These districts are separated in part by the Tirintin River, which

cuts the valley in two, and in part by belts of forest, either primeval or of such long standing that they can hardly be distinguished from the original woodland, which are preserved for their beauty, for study and recreation, and for the timbers and other vegetable products which they yield under careful supervision. The number of inhabitants rather than the extent of the territory is the primary consideration in delimiting the cantons. Valangans believe that each canton should be large enough to include practitioners of all, or nearly all, the arts necessary for the well-being of a civilized community, yet so small that at least the older people can all know each other personally.

Each canton is essentially an autonomous community, whose citizens regulate their affairs at public gatherings which all attend. Every resident of the canton, male and female, above twenty-four years of age, enjoys the privileges of voting and holding office. At their periodic meetings, the citizens discuss and decide such matters as the maintenance of paths and bridges, the construction of houses, the correction of the rare cases of delinquency, and the selection of the administrative officers. The most important of these are the Envor or President, the Porástrin or Leader of Religious Ceremonies, the Master Builder, and the Inspector of Roadways and Bridges. Since I shall in due course describe the method of selection and duties of the Porastrin and Master Builder, I shall now consider only those of the Envor, a word which I have translated "president" as the nearest equivalent I can find in the language in which I write, although this term may be somewhat misleading, because the duties of this office are rather different from those of the head of a modern republic.

The President of a canton is a man or woman, usually over fifty years of age, who is elected annually, in each case one year before he will assume the full duties of his office. In

the intervening year he assists the actual President, so that the favors pass on their experience from one to another in unbroken sequence. If a President dies while in office, his lieutenant at once takes his place and a new successor is promptly elected to assist, and to learn from, him. No one is ever President for more than a single term. Nobody ever solicits this or any other public office, as Valangans would consider it execrable taste for one to go about extolling his own virtues, and bragging about what he has done for his community or will do for it if he is elected to the post to which he aspires. They know very well the abilities and accomplishments of their neighbors; and as the date of the annual election approaches, they begin to discuss the possible candidates. Any man or woman supported by twenty-five voters is placed on the list of candidates. This preliminary selection is attended to by an electoral committee appointed by the actual President.

On the appointed day, the citizens gather in the open, at a central point in their canton, and vote for the new President by secret ballot, each throwing into an urn a fragment of pottery inscribed with the name of his choice. The votes are promptly counted in the presence of the whole gathering. If there are more than five candidates, all except the three receiving the highest number of votes are eliminated in the first voting, then the citizens choose between these three. The ballot urn is not guarded to ensure that no one votes who is not qualified to do so, or that nobody votes more than once. A Valangan would consider it ridiculous to elect a man to the most honored office in his community by means of a dis-

honorable act.

The President not only administers the simple affairs of his community, carrying out the decisions of the cantonal assembly and seeing that the ancient customs are respected, but he represents it in the Council, which is composed of the Presidents of the thirty cantons. In a country with much public business to transact, this dual responsibility would probably be too much for one person. But in Valanga, where everyone is so well educated to his duties as a citizen, the tasks of both administrator and representative are so light that they are easily discharged by a single incumbent; and it is held that no one is better qualified to discuss the affairs of his canton in the national council than the person who actually administers it. ¶ The Council considers matters which concern the nation as a whole, and endeavors to preserve uniformity of customs throughout the country, so that Valangans will always think of themselves as a single people and no parochial differences will arise among them. Thus it controls the defense of the cliffs, the admission of strangers, relations with the surrounding peoples, and the acquisition from them of certain raw materials in which Valanga is deficient. One of the most important of the Council's functions is the regulation of the population, which, because of the frequent intermarriages among the residents of the several cantons, is most satisfactorily done for the country as a whole. To this end, on alternate years it conducts a census of the nation and sets the quota of births on the basis of this information, as I shall presently explain in more detail. If there is a failure of crops

in one district or the whole country, the Council declares a state of emergency and supervises the equable division of all the available food; although at other times each family disposes of the products of its own parcel of land.

Aside from these matters, the Valangan senate has now little to do. In its present isolation, the country has practically no foreign affairs. It has no army, because it has never waged a war of aggression, and the cliffs are defended by unarmed volunteers who serve for a period of ten days. There is no police force, because there is hardly one serious crime in a generation. For the same reason, there is no criminal law; but each breach of order is considered by the cantonal assembly as a unique case, with a view to correcting the offender or at least making it impossible for him to injure his neighbors again.

Exemplary punishment is superfluous among people with such uniformly high standards of personal conduct, and vengeful punishment is foreign to their nature. Just as there are no courts to try criminal cases, there are none for civil suits; because in a country with no commerce and a simple and direct rule of inheritance, ugly disputes over property never arise. In the rare instances when the succession to a homestead is not clear, the matter is settled by the cantonal assembly, on the principles that there can be no Valangan without a homestead, and nobody can have more than one homestead. Furthermore, there is no public health service, because Valangans long ago acquired cleanly and wholesome habits and there is little sickness among them; no ~~taxation~~ ^{taxation}, because there is no currency; and no

post office, because the citizens voluntarily maintain an efficient system of distributing letters throughout the small territory.

The Council of Presidents is a regulatory and advisory rather than, strictly speaking, a governing body. Its decrees can hardly be called laws, because there is never any mention of penalties for their infraction. All its more important decisions are at once referred to the electorate of the whole country for ratification or rejection. Any decision whatever must be submitted to the referendum if a majority of the voters of three cantons request this. If a citizen approves a measure by his vote, this is taken to be a pledge that he will obey or implement it; for Valangans would regard as a fool or a rogue anyone who voted for a measure which he did not intend to support. Thus if any innovation proposed by the Council of Presidents either remains unchallenged or is approved by a referendum, it is assured the voluntary support of the majority of the people; as is nearly always the case when the Council's proposals are reasonable and promise to benefit the whole land. The minority, composed of conservatives and recalcitrants, gradually fall into step as they see the innovation working out satisfactorily and feel the force of public opinion. Moreover, Valangans recognize the value of preserving uniformity of custom, so as ^{neither} ~~not~~ to confuse the children nor permit the rise of sectionalism; and they are willing to make some sacrifice of their personal preferences in order to achieve this, so long as their freedom of thought and conscience is not threatened.

It is probably because they are never at war that Valangans are satisfied with this easy-going system of introducing new practices. A nation whose existence is often threatened by a foreign enemy or internal sedition requires a strong government whose edicts are peremptory and admit no exceptions, and this is the price it pays for survival. But Valangans say that although it may be possible to improve upon their ancestral ways, these customs which they have followed for generations cannot be so bad that much harm will ensue if some citizens are slow in altering them at the Council's suggestion. Hence they allow the sceptical ones time to become convinced of the value of the innovation. Obviously, this method of government, without coercion, is practicable only among a people who for generations have given an excellent education to every one of their children.

The Council meets annually, or whenever any one of its members considers it advisable to convene it ~~in order~~ to discuss a pressing matter. Only in exceptional years does it sit for more than five or six days. It is presided over by a chairman, chosen by lot, who does not lose the right to debate and vote. Because there is an even number of members, the voting of the Council sometimes results in a tie, and no decision can be reached. Far from decrying this situation, Valangans approve it; for they hold that when a question is so dubious that the opinion of their wisest men is equally divided, it is best to take no action but to leave things as they are.

Since there are neither towns nor villages in Valanga, but the population is distributed rather evenly over the national territory, there is no capital city. In the centrally situated canton of Bellúcia there is a Council House, a building much like the private dwellings but larger, which contains an assembly hall and lodgings for the Presidents; and here their deliberations are held.

About eleven months after my arrival in Valanga, when I had fully recovered from the effects of my illness, the regular annual meeting of the Council took place; and the question of permitting me to remain in the country was referred to it by the President of Botámia, the canton in which the Nardan homestead is situated. It was a bright, mild morning, and all the windows of the spacious assembly hall had been thrown open to admit the air and sunshine. When I beheld the noble heads of the thirty men and women who were giving their time to consider my case, I could hardly avoid feeling that I was a person of some importance. The representative from Botamia introduced the subject by briefly reviewing the circumstances of my arrival in the country, and explaining the cause of his delay in bringing the affair before the Council. Then Iretanyo⁷ was called upon to explain why he had brought a stranger into Valanga without authorization from the Presidents. He told how he had found me in the forest above the eastern cliffs, where he had gone with Orovan to make sketches; how he had followed and observed me for some distance without being himself seen; how, although I was obviously famished, I had refrained from taking the eggs from a bird in order to eat them; and how he had in-

ferred my character from this small incident. Since I would soon have perished if left alone in the mountains, he decided to take the responsibility for bringing me to his home. The men who guarded the way down the cliff had tried to stop me, but he had persuaded them to let me pass. On the evening of my arrival, Orovan had reported my presence to the President of Botamia, according to the parting instruction of one of the guards.

Orovan was then called and merely confirmed Iretanyo's testimony.

I was then requested to explain the motives which had brought me to Valanga or into its vicinity, and to tell what I proposed to do. With the help of the Nardan family, I had carefully prepared my speech to the Council, and rehearsed it over and over to perfect my pronunciation.

"Esteemed Presidents of the Cantons of Valanga," I began, "before explaining how I happen to be here, I wish to thank you for your humanity in permitting me to remain in your midst until I have recovered my strength after my long illness. I believe that in few nations of the world at the present time would such consideration for an unknown stranger be shown, when the presence of foreigners was deemed to jeopardize the safety of the state. But such humanity is only to be expected of a people whose compassion reaches to the least living thing.

"Now I shall try to tell with brevity why I am here. I was born in a country which in the material aspects of life is far in advance of this, where the people have harnessed the energy which reveals itself in the lightning flash, and compel it to light their houses and streets, cook their food,

75

and perform a large share of their tasks; where they rush from place to place with the speed of the wind, impelled by mechanical power; where of late they have begun to fly in vehicles as big as houses, which carry a hundred people through the air far faster than any bird; and where, I am ashamed to say, they have invented instruments of destruction so powerful that in a few seconds they could kill everyone in Valanga. From this last fact you will rightly infer that although mechanically so far advanced, these people are in essential matters far behind yourselves. As I grew up and began to take account of things, I was increasingly distressed by the moral blindness of the people who surrounded me, as a result of which there was great harshness and injustice in their dealings with each other and unspeakable cruelty in their treatment of other creatures. I also saw them rushing ever more madly to clutch a medium of exchange called "money", which they then squandered on things that failed to make them happy. It seemed to me that there must be a better way of life than that which I saw about me, and I was still young and sanguine enough to hope to find it."

I then gave a brief account of my travels until I was found by Iretanye at the bird's nest, and concluded as follows: "It often happens in this life that the losses and apparent calamities which befall us redound by devious paths to our own inestimable advantage. Had I not been reduced, by anxiety, lack of food, and exposure, to the long and painful illness into which I fell upon my arrival in Valanga, my case would have been considered by you before I could speak enough of your language to explain my presence here; nor should I have known enough about your customs to decide how long, with your per-

mission, I would remain with you. I have now seen enough to be convinced that Valanga is the best-regulated and happiest community of which history or the accounts of travellers provide trustworthy information; although the traditions of my own culture speak vaguely of a Golden Age, far in the past, when our ancestors were supposedly as good and happy as yourselves. Accordingly, nothing would gratify me more than to be permitted to settle permanently in this delectable land. But whether you allow me to stay with you or decree that I must depart, be assured of one thing: I shall always be the friend of Valanga, and I should deem myself the basest and most ungrateful of men if I should ever do or say anything which directly or indirectly might bring it harm. What most distresses me is my inability to make any return, saving perhaps by helping them in their daily tasks, to those who received a ragged stranger into their home and nursed him so tenderly and long."

After I sat down there was some low conversation among the Presidents, ~~and~~ and I was gratified to overhear one of them remark upon the rapidity with which I had acquired their language. Then Alvandris and his family, and some of their nearest neighbors, were asked to give their impressions of me. They were kind enough to say that they had found me sympathetic, helpful, and intelligent, and they had noticed no grave defect of character, unless it was my insatiable thirst to know the reasons for everything I saw. Finally, when the grown people had given their testimony, one of the ^{councillors} ~~and~~ turned to Calpani and asked: "And what is your opinion about this stranger, my

son?"

With a shy smile, the lad advanced and took my hand. "I like him and want him to stay," he said in a low voice.

I and all the witnesses were then requested to retire while the Council deliberated. As I walked among the neighboring fruit trees with Iretanyo, Orovan, and Calpani, I strove to preserve a gaiety of demeanor which masked my apprehension; for I had already grown so attached to them that the thought that perhaps we should soon be forced to separate for ever was exceedingly distressing to me. I believe that they were in scarcely less painful suspense; but they tried to keep up our spirits by telling me about the Festival of Commemoration, which in a few weeks I would attend with them, and what it signified in the life of Valanga.

After an interval which seemed far longer than it actually was, a messenger from the Council requested us to return to the hall. A prisoner who has been tried on a capital charge can hardly await the jury's verdict with an apprehension more intense than I felt when the chairman of the Council arose to speak. But he was too considerate to keep us in suspense while he delivered a long peroration which displayed his erudition or his oratorical powers. On the contrary, he came directly to the point: "We shall be happy if you remain with us, Stranger, for we believe that you possess qualities of character which will make you a valuable and respected member of our commonwealth. But permission to reside in Valanga is in itself rather empty, as it cannot without some further arrangements confer citizenship. From time immemorial, every Valangan has

possessed for his use a tract of land large enough to support him and his family; for our lawgiver Déodan believed that without trees to care for, and to nourish him, one could hardly lead a good life and be the best sort of citizen. [¶] "With the exception of the belts of forest which separate the cantons and can never be applied to private use, all the productive land in the valley is occupied by families, so that we cannot donate a plot to you. Each homestead is the inalienable possession of a family, and it can be neither bought nor sold - indeed, only those who have some familiarity with the customs of other nations know the meaning of these words. Hence one can acquire land in Valanga only ^{by} ~~through~~ inheritance. Except in certain cases of rare occurrence, every child born in Valanga has the expectancy of such inheritance, and there are no disinherited among us. But our customs are such that no one can amass by inheritance more land than he needs for his support. Hence it is usual for families without children, or those whose children will acquire other land through marriage, to adopt an heir, who takes their family name and will preserve their memory. In our commonwealth, where men and women are in all respects equal in citizenship, the name is always transmitted with the land. If a woman goes to dwell on the hereditary homestead of her husband's family, they and their descendants designate themselves by the name of this homestead. But if, as often happens, the couple establish themselves on the land of the woman's family, they bear this homestead's name. [¶] If you are certain that you wish to dwell permanently among us,

we shall see what can be done about finding a family to adopt you, so that you may become a full citizen of Valanga."

When he ceased, Cálocar of Avráno, one of the neighbors who had come to bear witness in my favor, arose to speak:

"Esteemed Presidents, my wife Alcira and I had only two children. One, a boy, died in childhood; the other, a girl, is married to a man who wishes to live in his parents' place, although they have been staying with us so that we should not be alone. When they go, there will be no one to succeed to Avráno. Therefore, we have decided to adopt Wilyo, if he will consent to be our son."

I had seen much of Calocar, who made musical instruments, and Alcira, who had helped to nurse me in my illness and made clothes for me. She was known throughout Botamia for the fineness of her weaving and the beauty of her voice. Although I knew that at my age it would seem strange to give the names "Father" and "Mother" to people I had known for less than a year, I was strongly attracted to them and gratefully accepted their kind offer.

Then the President of our canton arose. "This matter being satisfactorily arranged," he said, "there remains only that you make the promise which from olden times every Valangan boy and girl, after passing the age of twelve years, has made at the annual Ceremony of Consecration. The pledge is simple: 'I promise to strive diligently to preserve the beauty and fruitfulness of this land which Anga has given to us, never to inflict avoidable injury upon any living thing, always to speak the truth, to help my neighbors as I expect

to be helped by them, and to abide by the customs of the Valangans.'"

"Such a vow can hardly fail to appeal to any reasonable man of right feeling, and I promise with all my heart to fulfill it to the best of my ability."

"Moreover," continued the President of Botamia, "two or three years after his or her consecration, each Valangan boy and girl takes a dórin, a partner of the same age and sex, who will guard him, and be guarded by him, until he or she is married; and even thereafter dorins commonly feel a special responsibility for each other. You have long passed the age when these co-guardians are assigned, so that, if my colleagues agree, we shall not ask you to wait until the next annual ceremony, when it might be embarrassing to you to stand amidst children much younger and smaller than yourself. Since you have been among us only a short while, it may be useful for you to have now a guardian who will not only help you to keep your promise by instructing you in our ways, but will also do his best to preserve you from physical peril, as you will be expected to do for him. We Valangans believe that, although everyone is ultimately responsible for his own acts, it is helpful, especially while we are young, to have others who take an interest in us, and are always so close that they can call our attention to the first step we take in a wrong direction. In view of the facts that you still have much to learn, and are of an age at which everyone who has not been bereaved by death has long had a co-guardian, I have decided, if it is agreeable to all concerned, to make Orovan and Iretanyo,

who are themselves cōguardians, your dorins also. This seems especially fitting, as they have already demonstrated their willingness to watch over and preserve you, as dorins are expected to do for each other.

"In order that you may appreciate the quality of these young men who will be your dorins, let me tell you, what their modesty restrained them from mentioning when they gave their testimony to the Council this morning, that they told the guards on the cliff that, if you were not permitted to enter Valanga, they would conduct you to some other nation where you would be given shelter, as they could not abandon you to die in the forest. This is what finally prevailed upon the guards to let you pass, as such a course would have exposed both of them to great peril. I have this information directly from one of the men who was serving as guard on that occasion."

There were nods and murmurs of assent from the other ^{councillors,} ~~men~~ while my preservers were visibly delighted by this public recognition of their act of mercy and this opportunity to continue to watch over me until I became a thorough Valangan. Calling them forward, the ^{President} ~~man~~ took the right hand of each and placed my right hand between them. "If all agree, you will now repeat, each with reference to the other two, the promise which two of you long ago made to each other: 'I will be ever watchful for your safety, that you never break the pledge you have made, nor do anything dishonorable, nor come to any harm. If need be, I will guard your life with my own.'"

We solemnly repeated these words, and then the meeting broke up. In company with our ^{President,} ~~man~~, all of us from Botania

walked homeward through the mild afternoon air, along beautiful paths shaded by fruit trees. As we marched along, we spread the news of what had happened, and that evening a number of neighbors came to congratulate me. After a few days, I moved my few possessions to Avrano, the homestead of Calocar and Alcira, which was henceforth to be my home, and whose name I took.

Although I was sorry to leave the house in which I had, in a sense, been reborn and passed through a second childhood, I had one reason to be satisfied with the new arrangement. My thoughts turned ever more to Yanoa, and I believed that my chance of winning her would be better if I were not, even by adoption, her brother.

CHAPTER VII
THE FESTIVAL OF COMMEMORATION

The Festival of Commemoration, when the Valangans remember their arrival in their present territory, was celebrated a few weeks after my formal admission to the country. Although most of the other ceremonies come on fixed dates in the accurate Valangan solar calendar, that of this festival varies from year to year; for it must always be held when the fruits of the linip tree begin to ripen, and this occurs somewhat earlier in some years than in others, as the flowering and hence the fruiting of the tree is controlled by the onset of the dry season, which is sometimes delayed a few weeks. Since the fruits of this tree saved the ancestors of the Valangans when they reached this valley after a long and exhausting journey from their famine-stricken original home, it naturally plays an important role in the festival.

Each year the Council of ^{Presidents} ~~the~~ sets the date of the Festival of Commemoration about a fortnight in advance, basing its decision on reports of the state of the linip crop received from all over the valley. Long ago, the great reformer Deodan arranged the celebration of this festival in very much its present form. An essential feature is a march across the valley, which is intended to represent the Valangans' journey from their ancestral to their present home. On alternate years, all the inhabitants of a canton who are able to make the journey visit another canton, while in the intervening years they stay at home to receive and entertain the marchers from a distant canton. These

two cantons do not exchange visits on successive years, but every year one canton celebrates the festival with a different canton, until it has made the round of all of them. Since contiguous cantons never celebrate together, the cycle is completed in slightly more than fifty years, in which each canton visits every other canton and ^{also} acts as host to every other canton, with the exception of those which adjoin it.

The object of this arrangement is to promote friendship between the inhabitants of the most widely separated parts of the country and make them feel that they are all a single people. Likewise, it appears to have been the intention of Deodan to stimulate intermarriage between the several cantons, for youths and maidens who meet at these gatherings not infrequently fall in love. Originally the Valangans, like so many other early peoples, were strictly exogamous; and members of the same clan, which roughly corresponded to the present canton, were forbidden to marry each other. But Deodan saw that this prohibition led to much hardship and even to irregularities, for boys and girls who grow up in the same neighborhood frequently become strongly attached. To remedy this situation, he made the rule against endogamy apply only as far as first cousins, and instituted these annual visits in an attempt to prevent too much inbreeding among the people of the same district.

This year the people of Botamia were to visit Alomia, a canton at the very head of the valley, about ten miles distant. Since at this season rain frequently falls after midday, we all set forth at daybreak, to travel in the coolest part of

the day and avoid the probable afternoon shower. Almost the whole population of the canton made the journey, the only exceptions being expectant mothers and those with babes at the breast or very small children, people too old or infirm to walk so far, and a few more active ones who remained to take care of these stay-at-homes. There are instances of families which improvised a sort of sedan chair to transport an ancient grandparent across the valley, the younger people taking turns at carrying it. ~~But~~ although the Greeks greatly admired Biton and Cleobis, the youths who, when unable to find the oxen that were to draw their priestess mother to the temple, placed the yoke on their own ^{bodies} ~~necks~~ and themselves pulled the chariot, to fall then into a slumber from which they never awoke; Valangans tend to disapprove of such supererogatory deeds, as involving an expenditure of effort incommensurate with the advantages it brings. Yet Valangans are so long-lived and healthy that a number of septuagenarians, and even a few octogenarians, made the march with us and arrived without excessive fatigue; while at the other extreme, sturdy children five or six years old walked all the way without difficulty; ~~while~~ those still younger were carried at intervals by their parents or older brothers and sisters.

Each family stayed together, as it was to be entertained by another family. ~~Since~~ I walked with my adoptive parents, Calocar and Alcira; but Iretanyo, Orovan, and their families were close to us until our ways separated in Alomia. Some people held it proper to fast from daybreak until they reach

their destination^s, as they believe that to march on an empty stomach is the fitting way to commemorate the journey of their famine-stricken ancestors. Others think that it is permissible to nibble the wild berries that they might find along the road, but not to eat any cultivated fruit nor prepared food, which of course would have been unavailable to their fugitive forefathers. Yet others, perhaps the majority, impose no restrictions upon themselves, as they hold that to travel empty makes their minds dwell upon their clamorous stomachs rather than their ancestors and Anga's beneficence to them, which is what they ought above all to remember on this day. It is characteristic of ~~the~~ Valangans that, in a matter of this sort, everybody is permitted to do as his conscience dictates and no one censures him. But I learned on questioning that nearly everyone of the older people had made the Commemoration journey without breakfast at least once; and as a new Valangan, filled with the novice's fresh zeal, I abstained from all food that morning, although Iretanyo and Orovan had eaten. As I marched along with a growing feeling of emptiness in my central regions, I reflected that not my ancestors, but I myself had reached Valanga in this uncomfortable state, and I was in a sense commemorating my own arrival.

On this day nobody wears the white ceremonial robe which nearly every adult Valangan possesses for use on solemn occasions. Indeed, many maintain that for the Commemoration old clothes, so long as they are clean and decent, are the most appropriate, as the forefathers certainly were not elegantly

attired when they reached the valley, and probably considered themselves lucky if they still had a few rags to cover their nakedness. We made a colorful party as we set forth in our home-woven garments in the fresh morning air, when the sun's earliest beams slanted through the fruit trees and here and there gleamed like iridescent fire in the hanging dew-drops. As we proceeded along the path our number grew, until we were over a thousand strong when we reached the zone of forest that separates Botania from the adjoining district, Tanvára. Here our ^{President} ~~leader~~, in company with all the former ^{Presidents} ~~leaders~~ who were still able to make the journey, including Iretanyo's grandfather Elindro, took the position of honor at the head of the column. Then we walked beneath huge trees whose boughs, laden with ferns and flowering orchids, interlocked above the trail. Although in the midst of a thickly populated country, these belts of forest are so lovingly preserved, so free from all wanton destruction, that in passing through them it is easy to imagine oneself in a vast wilderness, with all its beauty unspoiled by plucking human hands. Now and then a brilliant bird shot across the roadway in front of us, while green and red parrots foraged noisily far overhead. The children shouted up at a band of small monkeys who leapt among the tree-tops or peered down through the leafage, barking inarticulate replies.

Emerging from the woodland, we entered the pleasant orchards of Tanvára, where the inhabitants, who this year were staying at home as hosts, were busy preparing for their expected guests, but not too busy to greet us pleasantly as we passed. After

traversing the next strip of forest we reached Manétta, where nearly all the dwellings stood deserted amidst their multihued gardens, as the Manettans were visiting Pomália. None of the empty houses was locked, since thieves are practically unknown in Valanga; indeed, since nobody lacks the necessities and even many of the ornaments of life, one who steals is regarded not as a criminal but a lunatic and treated accordingly. Some of the absent householders had thoughtfully left piles of fruit beside the trail, for they knew that we ^would pass this way, having already walked far enough to work up an appetite. Those who were not fasting paused to eat and refresh themselves.

In the midst of this deserted district our party came to the intersection of two paths, where we met the inhabitants of Mirónia on their way to Tanvara. The open formation of both columns permitted them to pass through each other without difficulty. While we were passing, everyone sang an ancient ballad or hymn recounting the deeds of Stenóril, the savior of the Valangans. Not only was this chanting by the two moving columns most stirring, it also had the practical advantage of preventing acquaintances who happened to meet from pausing to chat and thereby delaying both companies.

Since the speed of our procession was determined by the pace of the slowest rather than the swiftest walkers, the morning was far advanced when we reached the boundary of Alomia. Here we were greeted by the ^{President} ~~Mayor~~ of that district, accompanied by a representative of each household, usually the father or an older son. Just at the boundary was an urn containing as

many numbered potsherds as there were families in the party from Botamia, and as he passed by the head of each family drew one out without seeing it. A herald now took charge and helped each visitor who had drawn a number to find the Alomian who already held the same number, also drawn from an urn. The latter was the host of the Botamian who had the corresponding number. Since there were a few more households in Alomia than in Botamia, some of the larger ^{of the} visiting families divided up, the grandparents perhaps going to one house, the parents and young children to another. Thus every household in Alomia entertained somebody.

After this matter had been arranged, the President of Alomia made a short speech, welcoming us to his canton. Then our own President replied, recalling how he had celebrated the Festival of Commemoration in Alomia more than fifty years earlier, when he was still a boy, how courteously he had been treated, and how through all the intervening years he had been friendly with the Alomian family which then entertained his family. We then resumed our march; but our company dwindled rapidly as family after family dropped out at the houses we passed, or turned off down the side paths to reach the dwellings of their hosts. Calocar, Alcira, and I were among the last to reach our destination, as we were to be entertained at Cherimóla, a homestead at the very head of the valley, within hearing of the great waterfall. Here we were greeted by Falóris, his wife Talínda, and their daughter Rilínia. Their son Cordóris, a stripling of fifteen years, had met us at the boundary and conducted us to his home, pointing out the landmarks of Alomia

along the way.

After we had washed and rested for a while, we sat down to the feast with appetites whetted by our long walk. Rilinia, a maiden of about eighteen years, sat opposite me and lighted up the whole room with her radiant beauty. I should certainly have lost my heart to her if Yanoa had not already taken such firm possession of it. The mainstay of this meal is traditionally the fruit of the linip, of which the new crop is now first eaten. Unfortunately, I am ignorant of its scientific name, if indeed it has been given a Linnaean binomial, and of its position among the families of plants. The fruit is globular, about as large as a big orange, with a thick, rough, brown skin and a single, large, shiny, black seed in the center. The flesh, which is of a light red color, has a nutlike rather than a sweet flavor and is highly nourishing. Two of these fruits are as much as one can normally eat at a sitting; but famished by my long fast, I managed to devour three, and in addition I did full justice to the delicious sago cakes, the vegetable salad, the sweet fruits, and the cups of orange juice which completed the feast.

After our hunger had been satisfied and we had chatted with our hosts for a while, everybody sat in a circle on the porch and each in turn recited a passage from the Charata appropriate to the present occasion. The recitation or reading of these passages is an invariable feature of the Festival of Commemoration. The Charata, a long metrical composition which deserves to be widely known in the world of letters, is at once the

epic and the sacred scripture of Valanga. For beauty of imagery, stateliness of diction, and the nobility of its theme, it is unsurpassed by any similar poem. While descriptions of battle take up so much space in the epics of other nations, including the sacred Ramayana of the Hindus, and they are considered so essential to poetry of this character that Milton felt constrained to introduce into his Paradise Lost fantastic conflicts among the angels in heaven, there is no battle scene in the Charata. Its subject is the arrival of a famished people in an uninhabited valley and their heroic efforts to establish themselves there, adjusting their culture to their new home without destroying its pristine beauty.

Some day, if I have the leisure, I may undertake the difficult task of translating the Charata into English verse, but for the present I shall confine myself to giving a brief resumé of those passages which relate how the Valangans reached their present abode and are essential to the understanding of their institutions and history.

As the youngest person present, who had only begun to memorize the Charata, Corderis began to recite in a clear, boyish voice. He put much feeling into the opening passages, which contain a moving account of a great famine that afflicted the Bialómins, who dwelt in a land called Mánotar, somewhere to the north of Valanga. They made baskets and pottery, used tools and weapons of polished stone and hammered bronze, and practiced at least a rudimentary agriculture, growing a grain

called zendi. But they also hunted, fished, and gathered the fruits and roots of wild plants to supplement the products of their cultivated fields. Although I have a definite opinion as to the racial stock of these Chalcolithic people, I shall refrain from mentioning it here, as it would help to reveal the location of Valanga to specialists in ethnology, and I have promised the Council to include in this account nothing which could betray the geographic position of ^{the} country to foreigners who might seek it out to its detriment. Moreover, I believe that this history will be more valuable if I say nothing of the color, race, or linguistic affinities of the Valangans; for these superficial details tend to distract us from what is fundamentally human in the character and institutions of a people. All men, at least at corresponding stages of spiritual development, have very much the same needs and aspirations; and the institutions which one nation has developed to meet these needs and satisfy these aspirations have a universal value, which is independent of the color and cephalic index of its people.

But to return to the Bialomins, as we see them afflicted with hunger in the first canto of the Charata. Babes died at their mothers' shrunken breasts; children cried bitterly day and night; and strong men were reduced to wraiths of their former selves. The priests attributed this catastrophe to the wrath of Anga, the most powerful of the tribal gods, because the sacrifices to him had not been sufficiently generous. They urged the people to increase their offerings; and there

was talk even of immolating children, as in earlier times the Bialomins had apparently done. [¶] At this critical juncture there arose a man named Stenoril, not a priest but a potter, who had thought long and earnestly about great matters while his busy hands shaped the plastic clay. He boldly declared that if Anga were indeed angry with his people, it was not because their sacrifices were scanty, but because they had been unrighteous and moreover had abused the land that he had given to them. Anga, who had created the world and all it contained, was not dependent upon the miserable Bialomins for his sustenance. He valued the sacrifices merely as a gesture of gratitude from his people; and a single fruit or a handful of zendi, offered with a pure and grateful heart, was more pleasing to him than a hundred victims given grudgingly or by one whose hands were unclean. How stupid, then, to offer richer sacrifices at the very time when the people lacked sufficient food to keep themselves alive! What offended Anga was their failure to treat with due appreciation the beautiful and fruitful world he had made for ^{them} ~~men~~. With a wide sweep of his arms, Stenoril turned the people's eyes to the lands that surrounded their villages, asking them to observe how year after year they had been swept with fire in order to sow zendi, until they had lost their fruitfulness and were now covered with depauperate scrub.

At this point in the story Rilinia took over the recitation. She began with a passage which told how Stenoril's forthright speech angered the priests and they threatened him, so that he fled into the hills to preserve his life. But three days later

he returned from the forest with such a look of determination in his eyes that no one dared to bar his way. He called the people together and declared to them that, while he slept on a hilltop, Anga had appeared to him in a dream and commanded him to lead them to a certain valley called Gansarim, away to the south, where he would provide for them. At this point there were shouts and hoots of derision from the starving people, especially from the priests, who cried out that everyone knew that Gansarim was inhabited by devils, who killed and devoured every man intrepid enough to make his way down the frowning cliffs which surrounded it. Stenoril reminded them that as a young man he and two stalwart companions had ventured into the depression of Gansarim and returned unscathed. Then he asked the people if they doubted Anga's ability to protect them from the devils, or whatever other dangers might be lurking in Gansarim. ⁹ "But there are no devils in Gansarim," he cried out. "Anga has been guarding that beautiful valley until he finds men worthy to dwell in it - good men who will appreciate and take proper care of it for him. He has been proving you with this famine, to learn which of you are worthy to enter Gansarim. You know that long ago he forbade you to eat monkeys, who are his little people of the tree-tops, and the birds which sing his praises. Some of you have been driven by your great hunger to disobey his commands. He may forgive you if you ask his pardon, because you have been sorely afflicted, but he will nowise admit you to Gansarim. Others have remained obedient, refusing to kill the birds and monkeys even

when they had scarcely anything else to eat. These are the people he wishes me to lead to Gansarim, because they have been faithful to him in adversity. Go now, you obedient ones who have faith in what I tell you, and prepare yourselves for the journey. Bring the zendi you have been carefully guarding to sow, and whatever seeds of useful plants you can find, and your axes and knives and other most necessary possessions. But do not burden yourselves with too much, for you are weak and have far to travel. Above all, let the warriors leave their bows and spears, their shields and helmets, and all other military equipment, as it will be useless in Gansarim and excite suspicion in the people through whose lands we must pass. Be ready to set forth with me at dawn. But let no man who has violated Anga's commands attempt to accompany us, for he will assuredly fall from the cliffs of Gansarim."

Now Alcira continued the narrative, which told how, early next morning, about five hundred emaciated men, women, and children, each with a small bundle of household goods and whatever food could be scraped together, set forth with Stenoril toward the south. The priests dismissed them with dire warnings of the horrible fate which awaited them; while the rest of the people stood dubious, some envying those who had at least a prospect of change from the present terrible situation, others declaring that they had been maddened by hunger. Some of the tribes, ^{whose territory} the band of fugitives had to traverse opposed their passage, but Stenoril knew how to deal with them. Pointing to his haggard, weaponless followers, he asked whether they

looked like a war party coming to harm the tribesmen or take away their lands. "We are so tired of misery that we are going to Gansarim, befall us what may when we arrive there. We ask you only to let us pass in peace, and we will harm nothing."

7 Thinking that anyone who intended to enter Gansarim was indeed at the extremity of woe, the tribesmen had pity and permitted them to pass. Some who had enough even gave food to the wanderers, while others bartered for provisions the ornaments of shell and gold which the Bialomins took from their bodies. Whatever food was available, Stenoril caused to be placed in a common fund, which he then divided among the people, taking special care that the children received abundant portions, for they, he declared, must at all costs be preserved, since they were the hope for the continuance of the Bialomin emigrants.

Now Talinda took over the recitation from Alcira and told how, after ten days of hardship in which many fell by the way from exhaustion, the famished band reached the top of the cliffs on the western side of Gansarim. Linip trees grew - as they still do - in the forests here, although not so abundantly as in the valley below; and fortunately their fruits were now ripening. Water was found, as the rainy season had already set in; and with the wisdom of a foresighted commander Stenoril established a camp here, directing the people to construct little shelters of palm fronds and leafy boughs to protect themselves from the showers. Then for several days he allowed them to rest and feast upon the nourishing linip fruits and such other fruits and roots as these forests afforded. When

they had somewhat recovered their strength, he set them all to plaiting ropes from the strong fibers in the bark of a tree which he found here. Meanwhile, he dispatched eight of the strongest and most athletic young men to search for the safest route down the cliffs, which here are over five hundred feet high. They were to go two by two, helping each other as much as they could. If they found a way down that was not too difficult, they were to return by the same route and report to him. If they reached the bottom by a way that seemed too hazardous for the rest of the people to follow, they were to search for an easier ascent. But if they reached the valley without being able to return, they were to wait there without fear until the main body of emigrants came down to join them.

At this point Calocar began to recite. The Charata now told of the death of three of these brave young men, who lost their footing on the way down and struck upon the rocks below. All of those who reached the bottom doubted their ability to return by the same route. The youth who lost his companion managed to join another party of two; and after refreshing themselves with linip fruits, the three studied the face of the cliffs from a point at a distance from their base. It was much easier to pick out a practicable course from the bottom than from the top; and without further mishap, but with much strenuous scrambling, they returned to the camp early on the day after they set forth. Of the other surviving pair, one member had sprained his ankle on the way down, and his com-

panion waited with him until the main party descended. The names of all eight of these explorers are to this day gratefully remembered by the Valangans and often given to their sons, with preference for those who managed to return: Iretanyo, Cordoris, and Varándis.

It was evident from the reports of these ~~scouts~~ scouts that it would be hazardous to conduct down the cliffside, along the path they had followed in returning, a mixed party ranging from old men and women to little children and even a few babes in arms. Stenoril therefore organized a sort of engineering corps, which bridged some difficult passes with poles lowered by ropes from the top of the cliffs; while in other places they stretched out ropes, attaching them to outjutting pinnacles of rock or to hardwood stakes driven into crevices, so that they might help the descending multitude. Even with these preparations, necessarily crude because of the paucity of suitable materials, Stenoril doubted whether all would get down alive; and realizing that nothing would so unnerve the people as seeing their companions fall from those dizzying heights, he took suitable precautions. First he sent down a squad of ten able-bodied men, with secret instructions that they were promptly to remove and cover over any fallen body accessible to them, so that it could not be seen from above and would not attract vultures, whose presence in numbers would tell the others what had happened. Then he arranged that the mass of the emigrants should descend in small parties, well spaced out, the weaker between the stronger, who would support and encourage

them. He also found pretexts to keep those not descending busy well back among the trees, so that if anyone fell from the cliffs, they would neither see him nor hear his screams.

Now Faloris, who alone of those present knew the whole of the Charata by heart, carried on the story. These preparations occupied the four days following the return of the scouts. At dawn on the fifth day, when the general descent was to begin, Stenoril called his band together, invoked the aid of Anga in the perilous undertaking, and exhorted the people to have courage and faith. Then the first group of ten went over the side of the cliff, and when they were well along their way to the bottom and had reached a point where they were in no danger of being struck by fragments of rock accidentally dislodged from the top, a second party followed, all in the pre-arranged order. The whole movement down the cliffs occupied seven days, in which the agile young men, and even some of the more intrepid maidens, covered themselves with glory by helping the aged, the infirm, and the children. But the one who most distinguished himself was Buvardo, an alpinist of amazing endurance, who in those seven days made fifteen separate journeys up and down the cliff, assisting and encouraging the descending throng. Once, when the people he was leading feared to cross a crevasse in a ledge, he entered the gap and invited them to pass over, using his body as a bridge. Even today, when an athletic young Valangan distinguishes himself in scaling the cliffs or climbing the snowy peak at the head of the valley, he is called a "Buvardo."

100

So well was this descent planned and executed, so great was the skill and devotion of the young men, that only four lives were lost. Subsequent inquiry showed that at least two of these unfortunates had disobeyed Stenoril by joining his party of emigrants despite the fact that they had eaten forbidden food. By the evening of the seventh day, nearly four hundred people were encamped in the valley beside a stream, feasting on the linip fruits then so plentiful. Of the approximately five hundred who two months earlier had set forth from Manotar, some sixty had died from hunger or its effects, seven, including the three scouts, had fallen from the cliffs, while twenty-six had turned back from the edge of the precipice, declaring that they would return to Manotar and starve rather than risk the perilous descent. It is probable that most of those whose courage failed ~~them~~ at the sight of the cliffs had eaten prohibited food or otherwise broken the religious commandments. At this critical point, Stenoril's threat that they would fall was more frightening than it had been while the high walls of Gansarim were merely a distant and imagined danger.

The four hundred immigrants gathered in this hitherto uninhabited valley were obviously a selected group. First, they had demonstrated their moral strength by remaining faithful to the precepts of their religion even when they faced starvation, then they had proved their physical stamina by surviving the rigors of the journey from Manotar to Gansarim. One who studies this account begins to understand from what

source the present inhabitants of the valley derive their excellent qualities.

When the last traveller had reached the foot of the cliff and all had rested from their exertions, Stenoril called his people together and offered up a prayer to Anga for delivering them from their extremity. Then he declared: "No longer will this pleasant valley be called Gansarim, the Pit of Devils, but henceforth it shall be known as Valanga, Anga's Land."

Paloris's strong voice died away, and we all sat in silence for a few moments. Except a few brief passages, I had not heard the Charata before this and was deeply impressed by it. "A magnificent poem!" I exclaimed. "Were it known to the outside world, it would rank with the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Aeneid, the most famous epics of Classical antiquity, but it teaches far loftier lessons."

The sun was now sinking low, and we went out to stroll among the fruit trees, then returned for supper. By the time the table was cleared darkness had fallen, and we sat on the veranda singing some of the ancient songs appropriate to the present occasion, to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument which Calocar made and played. Then Alcira was persuaded to sing a solo in her rich contralto voice. After much coaxing, Rilinia and Cordoris were prevailed upon to give us a duet. The boy's voice had not yet changed and blended well with the fine treble of his older sister, the two producing a remarkably beautiful melody which stirred me deeply. After this, our hostess suggested that since we had arisen so early and walked

so far, we were probably ready to sleep. A separate bedroom had been prepared for my parents, and I shared that of Cor-doris.

The visits made for the Festival of Commemoration custom-arily last two or three days. Early next morning our hosts led us to the foot of the waterfall which plunges nearly a thousand feet from the foot of Mt. Tunima to the head of the valley of Valanga. We stood many minutes watching the long, slender col-umn of water plunge with a wave-like effect into a broad, deep rock pool, which was kept in a state of violent agitation by the descending stream. Some slanting rays of the rising sun, finding their way through the surrounding trees, ^{made} produced a rainbow in the heavy mist which hovered perpetually around the lower portion of the waterfall. The spreading fronds of tree-ferns, giant leaves of aroids, and other vegetation which grew lushly about the rim of the basin were incessantly swayed by the air currents set up by the falling column. While we watched, a pair of small, dark-colored birds - dippers, I believe - who had built their nest in a cranny of the cliff behind the fall, flew in and out through the spray, carrying to their nest-
lings insects and tiny minnows, for which they dived beneath the surging water.

CHAPTER VIII
THE FOUNDER AND THE REFORMER

That afternoon rain kept us indoors; and when Faloris asked his guests what they would prefer to do to pass the time, I replied that, for my part, I should like nothing better than to hear more of the Charata. At the Festival of Commemoration it is customary to recite or read only the first part of the poem, which tells how the Bialomins came to Valanga; but I understood that there was a further portion, of much greater length, dealing with the establishment of the immigrants in their new home. Faloris said that he would gladly recite the remainder of the epic for me, but his wife and children could no longer help him, as they had not yet learned the whole of it by heart. Finally it was agreed that they would read some of the passages in order to rest his voice.

While in the first part of the Charata Stenoril displays the gifts of a general who leads his army on a difficult march, in the remainder of the poem we see this remarkable man as a farsighted statesman, carefully laying the foundations of a new commonwealth. His first act was to order the exploration of the valley and select the part most favorable for a settlement, since there were by no means enough people to fill the whole of it. Because the encircling cliffs gave the best possible protection from attack, there was no need to crowd into a village surrounded by a stockade and moat. Accordingly, he assigned to each family a plot of land sufficient for its needs; and it was to live upon this plot rather than to come each day

from a central settlement to attend it, as the Bialomins had done while they dwelt in the midst of alien tribes with whom they were often at war. Then, while the linip trees still supplied an abundance of food, they set about to build such rustic shelters as pioneers in the wilderness are able to erect for themselves, thatching their huts with palm fronds, enclosing them with strips split from the trunks of the same useful trees, and for the most part leaving the hard-packed earth as floor.

The linip ripens its fruit over a period of about three months; hence it could not support the people throughout the year, and it was necessary to look for other sources of nourishment. Fortunately, other food-producing trees were not lacking in the valley. Among them was the oróna, a tall tree whose abundant nuts are of excellent flavor and most nutritious. In time the Valangans learned how to store them, so that they would be available through much of the year. But Stenoril doubted whether these wild trees would suffice for the support of his people, and he directed them to make clearings and sow the zendi and other seeds which they had brought from Manotar. But they were strictly forbidden to cut down the linip, the tree which had preserved them in their hour of direst need, the oróna, and certain other trees whose value soon became apparent. Since these trees which could not be felled were widely and rather thickly scattered over the valley, the clearings between them were necessarily small. To the present day, the Valangans hold it sinful to destroy a linip or an oróna tree.

His experience of the famine in Manotar made an enduring impression on Stenoril and taught him a lesson which was to affect the agricultural practice of Valanga throughout the centuries. He was fond of pointing to the absurdity of an animal as big as man trying to nourish itself on zendi and other little grains fit only to fill the stomachs of small birds. He saw clearly that the immense toil involved in producing these annual crops and preparing them for consumption led to the institution of slavery and the degradation of the women, who became drudges in the fields and kitchens. Hence he looked forward to the day when it would no longer be necessary to sow zendi in Valanga. Not only did he forbid the cutting down of fruit trees, but as soon as the new colony had provided for its most pressing immediate needs, he sent forth strong, intelligent young men to bring back the seeds of valuable trees. Some were to return to Manotar for the seeds of certain fruits that the people knew in their ancestral home, while others were to go elsewhere to search for new kinds.

This practice of sending out agricultural explorers was continued until about two centuries ago, when the increasing difficulty of small nations in maintaining their independence led Valanga to sever nearly all connections with the outside world. The intrepid travellers who brought back useful trees are among the most honored heroes of the Valangans, who have no military heroes. Their journeys, as long and as full of marvellous incidents as those of Fa-Hsien or Marco Polo, have been celebrated in song and story. Thanks to the indefatigable efforts of these explorers, the fruit-bearing trees which in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries European seamen carried freely from hemisphere to hemisphere eventually reached Valanga, and those adapted to its climate and soil became firmly established. Since from an early date the plant-hunters were instructed to bring back only seeds, never cuttings or budwood, they avoided the introduction of destructive insect and fungal pests. The Valangans themselves improved their varieties by selection from seedling stocks.

Although on the whole the Bialomins flourished exceedingly in their new home, they were not wholly immune from the disappointments and disasters which befall men everywhere. When a crop failed, a child died, or a wife failed to bear offspring, the people, in accordance with ancestral beliefs, often attributed the misfortune to evil spirits, or to the omission of due sacrifices to the gods. Before a year had passed, someone suggested that priests from Manotar be invited to Valanga, so that the ancient rituals could be resumed. The demand for priests and sacrifices grew steadily; but it was firmly resisted by Stenoril, who remembered how the priesthood had threatened his life, opposed his plan of emigration, and refused to the last man to share his adventure. Finally, wearying of the people's clamor, he determined to settle once for all the matter of priests and sacrifices.

He directed the men to raise a platform of earth and cover it with leafy boughs, while beside it they were to collect a great pile of firewood. Then, following his instructions, ^{the whole population,} men, women, children, and babes in arms, gathered before the altar; for he strictly forbade anyone to be absent on this important

occasion. Rising before them in his white ceremonial robe, he addressed the congregation somewhat as follows: "Valangans - for so you Bialomins are now called - for many months you have assailed me with demands that in our new home we offer public sacrifices to God, as we did in the land of our ancestors. It is certainly fitting that we show our gratitude to Anga, who, when we were sorely afflicted with famine, sent us to this lovely, fruitful valley, his own favorite garden, from which hitherto he had excluded all permanent inhabitants. Here, under his care and guidance, we have prospered, regaining our flesh, begetting many children, and forgetting our past miseries. We should offer to Anga anything he wishes from us; our very best is not too much to give him. But what shall we sacrifice to him? We lack domestic animals to serve as victims, nor have we weapons for killing wild ones that we might drag to the altar. Should we offer Anga a few fruits from our trees? But the trees were already his; he gave them to us. How absurd to imagine that we can please a god or a man by making him a gift of what already belongs to him!

Thus, when you demanded that I restore the sacrifices, you placed me in a most difficult situation. I had to think long and hard to find what we might fittingly and without blame offer to Anga. Finally, Anga himself gave me the answer. There is a tradition that in times long past our forefathers, when they desired especially to please a god by offering him their most precious possessions, sacrificed their own children. Since we have nothing else adequate for the sacrifice, we must return to our ancestral custom and immolate the children. The altar is prepared; the firewood is at hand; let every mother with a babe in

arms or a child not yet weaned advance and lay it on the altar as a sacrifice to Anga. If you disobey, you will regret it."

A great wail arose from all the mothers; and a young woman with a babe at her breast, standing on the outskirts of the crowd, turned and fled into the neighboring woods before anyone could stop her. For what seemed a long while, everyone else stood immobile, as though turned to stone by this unprecedented command. Presently a woman of middle age stepped forward and cried out in a shrill voice: "All that we have we owe to Anga. He has given me six beautiful, strong children. The least that I can do is to return the last of them to him, if he requires it." So saying, she advanced and laid her baby tenderly on the leafy twigs which covered the earthen platform, then turned and fled back into the crowd, followed by the little girl who all the while had clung to her skirt.

Most of the other mothers now advanced with their babes, but some who could not pull themselves together for the effort passed their infants to their husbands, who then carried them forward. In a short while, all the unweaned children of Valanga were lying or sitting on the altar, except only the single one whose mother had fled into the forest. Some were crying, but others smiled and tried to play with those nearest them. The onlookers waited in breathless suspense.

Stenoril now spoke again: "Mothers and Fathers of Valanga, you have done well to give your children to Anga. Nothing more fortunate could have happened to them. But why do you suppose Anga wants them? Surely you are not so stupid as to imagine

that he needs for his nourishment the savor of their bodies wafted up to him in the smoke of the sacrificial fire, as the ignorant Vargúnas suppose of their god Ímil. Anga, who has given all, needs nothing - nothing, that is, for himself. But he requires men and women to take care of his garden, this beautiful valley which he has given us, lest it become as barren and ugly as we Bialomins made Manotar. He wishes every boy born in this land to serve as his priest, and every girl as his priestess, to guard and protect this valley as his temple. Now take back the children, every mother her own; but henceforth remember that they are not yours but Anga's, for you have given them to him. And Anga requires that you rear and educate them tenderly and carefully, so that they may fulfill with credit the duties which he has assigned to them, to cherish and protect this land and all the creatures in it, including each other, and always to conduct themselves as befits men and women consecrated to God. Henceforth let there be no more idle chatter about bringing priests from Manotar; for this will soon become a nation of priests and priestesses, as each year the newborn babies will be offered to Anga as you have done today; until everyone in Valanga will in a special way belong to him, as in fact we all belong to him already. And as we shall need no other priests, so we can spare ourselves the labor of raising temples of stone and wood; for this whole land is Anga's sanctuary, equally in all its parts."

With these words he dismissed the people and sent them back to their homes. He had effectively silenced the demand for

priests of the ancestral cult. As a result of what he said and did this day, Valanga has never had a special priesthood, with all the privileges it demands and all the abuses to which it gives rise; but every boy and girl in the country is educated to regard himself as a priest or priestess of Anga, serving in a temple coextensive with the nation itself.

That evening there came up to Stenoril's cabin, where he dwelt with his wife and two daughters, a young woman clutching a baby to her bosom. Standing some paces away with her head hanging as though in shame, she called shyly until he came forth to learn what she desired. He recognized her as Zettana, widow of Siáno, one of the scouts who had fallen from the cliff when eight had been sent to find a passage into the valley. Even in the twilight he could see that tears glistened in her eyes.

"What can I do for you, my daughter?" he asked gently.

"I have done a wrong thing. I ran away when you declared that every baby was to be sacrificed to Anga. But this boy is all I have. My husband fell from the cliff and died, less than half a year after we were married. He never saw his son. My father, mother, brothers, and sister stayed behind in Manotar and possibly they died of hunger, as they were very weak when we left. Without Yóron I would be all alone. That is the reason why I fled into the forest with him. But now all the babies have been consecrated to Anga save only him. What will become of him? Oh, my poor little Yoron!" And she broke into sobs.

He laid his hand lightly on her shoulder. "Do not despair, Zettana. It is still not too late to dedicate your baby to Anga,

111

who will, I doubt not, pardon your disobedience, because it sprang from your great love for your little son. I have no son, for my only male child perished in the famine. You must come and dwell here with my daughters, who are only a little younger than yourself; and I shall undertake to educate Yoron to be a priest of Anga, like all the other boys."

This episode throws a flood of light on Stenoril's character and method of persuading his people. He had no title or hereditary office, he commanded neither soldiers nor policemen and possessed no means of coercion; but his proposals were always so reasonable, and he explained their advantages so clearly, that the Valangans, being on the whole a reasonable people, nearly always consented to follow his counsels. If at first they resisted one of his measures that clashed too violently with their ingrained habits, he did not at first press it too hard, but quietly dropped the germ of his idea into their minds, like a seed into the ground, and let it rest there for a period. After a while it germinated and grew, and those who had at first opposed his innovation often espoused it as their own. Those conservatives who refused stubbornly to adopt his dispositions, after the majority had been won over, were urged to return to Manotar, where most of them still had close relations, and where they were welcomed with open arms; for the Bialomins, with their population greatly depleted by famine and emigration, needed every available man to defend their country against its enemies. Thus nearly everyone had the opportunity to live in a society congenial to his temperament: the progressive element stayed in Valanga to work out a new mode of

life in peace amidst their fruit trees; the conservatives went back to Manotar to till the soil, hunt wild animals, sacrifice to the gods, and fight their enemies. The number who deserted Valanga in protest to Stenoril's innovations is given as about thirty. For a new nation struggling to lay its foundations, this was a serious loss of man-power; but it resulted in greater concord among the people.

Stenoril was apparently in his early forties when he led the exodus from Manotar, and he continued for nearly forty years more to watch over the growth of the commonwealth which he had founded, guiding his people, settling their disputes, detecting tendencies which promised to be dangerous to the nation and nipping them in the bud. Soon after settling in Valanga, he resumed his craft as a potter. Among people who had perforce left all such heavy wares behind when they emigrated, there was a great and pressing demand for vessels of all sorts; and Stenoril, after he found a suitable deposit of clay, seems to have developed something very like mass production in order to satisfy this need. The children were set to puddling in the clay pits in the frolicsome manner which persists to this day. Men volunteered to help with the strenuous work of collecting fuel and keeping up the fire in the kilns where the pottery was baked.

Nobody was ever paid for his labor, and the vessels which it produced were given freely to all who needed them. At the same time, Stenoril exhorted every person who had a craft to follow it without remuneration, for the benefit of the community as a whole, with the assurance that, if everyone worked diligently,

there would soon be enough of the necessities for everybody and then they would enjoy greater leisure. Those who had no special craft helped to clear land, plant, and build cabins. Stenoril conceived a community in which everyone would freely pour his best effort into a common fund, whence without calculation would flow all that he needed of spiritual and material goods. He declared that this system of free co-operation would be successful if every person treated the creations of other men's hands with the same care and affection as though he had made them with his own. He warned against waste, saying that to use carelessly or wantonly what one's neighbor has produced is to insult him as though you spat in his face, for part of himself has gone into it.

After other potteries had grown up and the pressing need for water jars and other household vessels had been satisfied, Stenoril felt free, in his declining years, to devote himself to the artistic creations in which he delighted. There are still extant in Valanga a number of pitchers and vases, exquisitely executed in an antique style, which are ascribed to him. One familiar with the history of relics of great and holy persons in other lands cannot help being somewhat sceptical about the authenticity of these treasured heirlooms, but I shall not make myself obnoxious to my neighbors by casting doubt upon the origin of these pieces. One important result of Stenoril's continued devotion to his handicraft is that in a community whose founder and greatest man had all his life worked as an artizan, it was never possible for anyone to be ashamed of manual labor, or to scorn those who performed it. Often referred to as The Potter, he is looked upon as the worker in clay who molded the Valangan commonwealth.

Many tales are told of his wisdom and tact in correcting the people. One day he found two boys fighting in a pathway. Pulling them apart, he asked why they were pommeling each other, but he could not discover that one was more at fault than his opponent. He said that it was a shame to waste so much energy when there was so much necessary work to be done, and taking them to a pile of firewood that was waiting to be transported to his pottery kiln, he commanded them to carry it there. Some of the pieces of wood were so heavy that the boys had to carry them together. It is recorded that these lads never again fought, but grew up to be close friends. To this day, whenever boys - and girls, too - are found fighting in Valanga, they are given some small task to perform in common; and if the parents are not within call, it is the right, and even the obligation, of any adult who happens to come upon them to assign such a task. But now one scarcely ever sees Valangan children engaged in a fight. Even the calling of insulting names, taunting, and teasing, so frequent among children in other countries, is firmly repressed in Valanga; for it is held that if we do not learn to treat our fellows with due courtesy in earliest childhood, we shall be deficient in this important quality in later years.

Once while he was sharpening a knife, his mind occupied with the cares of the ^{Stenoril} ~~monn~~monwealth, ~~he~~ cut his hand and it bled profusely. "There!" he exclaimed to those around him, "if in future years men remember me as the founder of Valanga, or for any useful things I might have taught them, I hope that they will also recall that I sometimes did foolish things like everybody

else, and that when I cut myself I bled just as they do."

Stenoril died when about eighty years old and was, in obedience to his own instructions, buried in the white gown which he wore when he addressed the people, without any coffin or other covering. A fruit tree was then planted above his grave, as he had directed, and this was the only marker that he would permit. Today an ancient linip tree, in the canton of Zamira where the earliest settlement was made, grows over the traditional grave of The Potter and is an object of pilgrimage from all over the valley; but this can hardly be the original tree, set there when he was newly interred. When he felt his end approaching, Stenoril told the people that if they were going to forget all that he taught them, they should mourn for him as the barbarous Vargunas lament their deceased chiefs, wailing, tearing their hair, gashing their bodies, and sifting dust upon their heads. But if they intended to remember what he had taught them and preserve the institutions which he had established, they should not mourn for him at all, because in this case he would still be with them. He was buried with many tears but no lamentations. At the present time, every Valangan is laid to rest in his white ceremonial robe and nothing else, a fruit tree is planted over his grave, and no demonstrations of grief that are not wholly spontaneous are permitted.

The outstanding success of Stenoril's effort to create a good society, and the permanence of his work, are to be attributed to his unique insight in building his commonwealth upward from its prime foundation in its methods of production, especially

116

of food. Every other founder of a religion or a state, every reformer of customs moral or civil, has, as far as I can learn, accepted the agricultural and industrial practices of his people much as he found them and been satisfied to set his innovations or reforms upon that base, however incompatible it might be with some of the things he was trying to accomplish. Apparently these men failed to recognize how profoundly methods of production, above all of food, affect human character, morals, and social arrangements of every kind - affect them not only in the classes closest to the soil, but throughout the whole social fabric. Stenoril saw clearly that morality has its roots in our relations with the earth that supports us, that it extends to our dealings with everything that surrounds us, and that only when this foundation and this inclusiveness are recognized can it be firmly established. And because he set its foundation stones upon bed-rock, the society which he started to build was destined to flourish for ages.

According to the Valangan chronology, which I have carefully collated with the Gregorian Calendar, Stenoril died twenty-three centuries ago, so that he was a contemporary of Plato. But whereas the Athenian philosopher, who like other aristocratic Greeks scorned manual labor, busied himself planning and framing laws for two imaginary republics, the Valangan potter laid the actual foundations of one, which endures to this day.

The Charata ends with the burial of the hero whose accomplishments it celebrates; but since I have begun to trace the origin and development of Valangan institutions, this is an ap-

propriate place to continue. Much of what I have to record was learned from our Alomian host Faloris, an authority on the history of his country, who lent me books on the subject and, on the many visits we subsequently made to each other, helped me to interpret them.

After the death of Stenoril, the leadership of the people passed to Yoron, son of Siano, whom the Founder had brought up in his house, as he had promised Zettana that evening when she brought the babe in arms to be dedicated. Yoron began the policy of guarding the descents of the cliffs. For some time after the settlement was made, the savages who dwelt in the surrounding mountains left it strictly alone; for the notion that the depression of Gansarim was the haunt of wicked devils was firmly implanted in them. But as the years went by and it became evident that the colonists, far from being devoured by hungry monsters, prospered and multiplied, this ancient tradition began to appear absurd; and covetousness of the productive valley slowly replaced their fear of it. Still, the passage down the cliffs was everywhere so difficult that to attempt it under cover of darkness would have been suicidal, while by day anyone coming down was conspicuous from afar; and this for a long while discouraged a surprise attack. But one day, while all the Valangans were gathered for their annual Ceremony of Dedication, some warriors of a neighboring tribe, who evidently had carefully observed the habits of the dwellers in the valley, stole down the western cliffs and ransacked the nearest dwellings in the absence of their occupants. Seizing some of their most valuable and portable contents, they were far on their upward way before they were dis-

covered. Some of the Valangans, particularly those who had lost axes, knives, and other chattels, vehemently demanded pursuit and reprisals. But Yoron calmed them, pointing out that, in the first place, they lacked weapons for fighting the warriors even if they could overtake them, and in the second place, the whole community owed a debt of gratitude to the raiders for reminding it of an oversight.

Yoron then directed a careful survey to be made of the approximately seventy-five miles of more or less vertical cliffs which encircled the valley, with the result that nine points were found at which a skillful climber might succeed in getting up or down. Five of these places were made impassable, or at least exceedingly difficult to pass, by chipping away shelves and salients of the rock-face that offered footholds. On each side of the valley, one path was arranged so as to be relatively easy to climb up or down, but only with the aid of ladders and bridges which could be set up or removed at will. Two other routes, practicable only to skillful alpinists, were left in their original state. A perpetual guard, housed in caves or chambers carved into the rock, was set over these four routes down the cliffs, that on the two principal paths being the strongest. The guards, each of whom served for a period of ten days, were armed only with long poles for pushing invaders from the cliff, as no weapons were permitted in Valanga. But so strategically were the guards placed, at points shielded by overhanging bosses from missiles hurled down from above, and they enjoyed such perfect control over the ladders and drawbridges, that so long as they

were vigilant, these few men were deemed sufficient to prevent the descent of any enemy. At each guard station a pile of inflammable material, protected from rain by a projecting ledge, was kept in perpetual readiness to be kindled at the first hint of danger; and this would have made a signal visible over most or all of the valley.

The adequacy of these arrangements is attested by the fact that in nearly twenty-three centuries Valanga has never been invaded, and there are few records even of attempted descents by bands of armed warriors. It is my opinion that the nation could have resisted indefinitely even if all the surrounding tribes had banded together against it; for having everything necessary for life in its own territory, it could never, like a walled city, be reduced to submission by a siege, however prolonged. Whether the military genius and equipment of an Alexander of Macedon, a Hannibal, or a Caesar could have overcome the natural defenses of Valanga, I regard as a questionable matter; certainly the greater part of the valley appears to be beyond reach of missiles shot from the cliffs by bows, slings, catapults, and other ancient engines. Fortunately, Valanga is far from such aggressive civilizations as these leaders represented. But it is certain that it would lie helpless at the feet of any invader who should mount modern artillery at the top of the cliffs, or send aircraft above it; and it is for this reason that the nation now wishes to dwell in the deepest obscurity.

Although Valanga is without fear of aggression by its nearest neighbors, it wishes to live at peace with them and has from early times striven to win their good will. When famine afflicts

the surrounding tribes, as it does periodically, they come to certain salient points of rock at the edge of the precipices and lower baskets on long ropes. The inhabitants of the valley fill them with such fruits as they can spare, and then they are hauled up to fill hungry mouths. Because of the friendliness of most of the neighboring peoples, Valangans can roam through the surrounding forests and wild mountains without much fear of attack; although a few of the more truculent tribes, such as the Agarunis, are hostile and an encounter with their wandering hunters is to be avoided.

In the time of Yoron, gold was discovered in considerable quantity in the rivers of Valanga. He encouraged the people to collect it by panning in their leisure time and to turn it over to him, to be used for acquiring by barter with some of the surrounding nations the harder metals, rare in Valanga, which were much needed for making tools. The copper and tin were then delivered to the smiths, who fashioned knives, axes, and other necessary implements and distributed them among the people according to their needs. Later, the Valangans agreed that they would wear no more gold ornaments, as their ancestors had done, but consider all of this metal in the country as public property, to be administered by the Council of Presidents for the benefit of the commonwealth. It was used to acquire iron, which about this time became known in the region, and other commodities which the country needed. All these purchases - or rather, acquisitions by barter, for the gold was not coined - were made under the supervision of the Council for the community as a whole, and the

materials were then given without charge to those who needed them. Gold was also supplied to the agricultural explorers and a few other travellers, to pay their expenses in foreign lands.

After Stenoril the Founder, the most important figure in Valangan history is Déodan the Reformer, who flourished about three centuries later. In his youth he was restless and travelled widely, visiting some of the more advanced nations of the continent in which Valanga lies, and with keen insight scrutinizing the character and institutions of each. Returning home after years of wandering, he married and settled down to rear his children and attend his fruit trees, the more content to be in Valanga because of what he had seen in other lands. He loved his people for their gentleness, cheerfulness, courtesy, simplicity, industry, and the feeling of brotherhood which united them all like one large and harmonious family - qualities which had been nurtured and perfected by a dozen generations of uninterrupted peace.

But Deodan's penetrating vision detected one ominous sign of approaching danger. In these centuries, the four hundred original colonists had multiplied until they filled the valley almost to capacity. Hitherto, no matter how many children a man had, they could be settled in some part of the valley on a plot of land large enough to support them, because since the day of Stenoril no one was permitted to hold more than he needed and so prevent others from using it. But in a few more generations, if the present rate of increase continued, this happy situation would change. Either by the continued subdivision of

the homesteads everyone would be reduced to hunger, even famine in the less productive years; or, if a limit were set to subdivision, there would arise a class of the dispossessed, obliged to sell their services for what they could get. Thus the old society of equals would cease to exist. In its place would arise - as Deodan had seen elsewhere - an arrogant, grasping, often heartless landowning class and a cringing, discontented servile class. The difficulty of procuring enough to eat, the lack of stable, well-ordered homes, would lead the people to steal and commit other crimes practically unknown in Valanga since its foundation. In short, Deodan foresaw that overpopulation, if permitted to arise, might drive his countrymen to the misery, the crimes, the ugly passions, possibly even the internecine struggles, that he had witnessed elsewhere; and he was foresighted enough to tackle the problem before it became acute.

Deodan proposed to limit the children of each family to a number which would be set from time to time by the Council of Presidents, after a survey of the population of the valley and its capacity to support it. The necessity of regulating the size of families was not unknown to the Bialomins nor even to the least advanced of the neighboring tribes; but during their long residence in a new, underpopulated land the Valangans had almost lost sight of it; and at first many opposed this innovation, as it would have imposed upon them restraints of a sort to which they were not accustomed. But when Deodan, citing the course of their own history and the example of the foreign nations he had visited, demonstrated conclusively that they must either reduce their rate of increase or abandon their traditional policies

of preserving the natural beauty and fruitfulness of Valanga and assuring to each child born in the country enough land for his support, they were brought over to his side; for they were a reasonable people, who cared more for the beauty of their valley and the welfare of their descendants than for their own selfish pleasures.

Deodan further proposed that if any married couple had a child in excess of the assigned number, this should be regarded as unintentional and no penalties or disabilities should be imposed upon them; but as soon as it was weaned, the child should be transferred to another couple who after years together had no children, or less than their quota, so that they might adopt it and make it their heir. The notion of depriving a mother of her child was at first so repugnant to the Valangans that they scoffed at this proposal; but when Deodan pointed out how harsh it would be to expect people to pass on their homes and orchards to successors they had not learned to love in childhood, who were not a support and solace to them in their declining years, they assented to this, too. They agreed to this the more readily because they knew that practically every Valangan loved children and would be devoted to the adopted child, and they thought it a great misfortune that any home should be childless from causes beyond the control of the couple who yearned for offspring.

Deodan also instituted the formal engagement in which the youth and maiden must prove their capacity to work together before they marry; but since I shall presently tell about this from my own experience, I need say no more about it here. Like

Aristotle, Deodan believed that the promotion of friendship is the most important task of the art of government. To this end, he established the co-guardianship, the idea of which he apparently derived from the supernatural guardian spirit in which some of the neighboring peoples believed. He thought that it would be a good thing for every young person to have such a guardian, in addition to his parents, but one of whose presence there could be no doubt. Of all the major innovations of Deodan, this is the one concerning whose value the opinion of Valangans is most divided. Some point out that the dorins are paired off at an age when they are still very immature; as they grow older they sometimes develop divergent interests which cause them to be much apart; they cannot then watch over their partner as they promised to do; and it is wrong to make pledges that one cannot fulfill. However this may be, there is hardly a boy or girl in Valanga who would not feel cheated if deprived of his dorin.

Deodan was familiar with codified law in the countries he had visited, but he did not deem this proper for Valanga. Instead of having laws passed, he wrote a book in which the customs of his country, as modified by himself, are described simply but in adequate detail, and the reasons for or advantages of them are explained. Since his time, every child has become familiar with this book, The Institutions of the Valangans, as part of his basic education. Deodan believed that laws should be written in the minds and hearts of the people, not on tablets of wood or stone or in ponderous tomes. He pointed out that this is the way with birds and other creatures, who have no laws or

commandments, yet from generation to generation remain faithful to the customs of their kind, because these are impressed upon their very substance.

Deodan gave much attention to education. He declared that a good education is one which effects the perfect interpenetration of love and reason; for love without reason is blind, whereas reason without love is often cruel and wicked. He believed that, so far as natural capacity permitted, every boy and girl should receive an education which would fit him to fill the highest offices in the commonwealth; and he predicted that, in a nation which educated its children in this manner, a tyranny would never arise. Valangans have never borne the yoke of either a domestic tyrant or ~~a~~ a foreign oppressor; and never having known bondage, they scarcely ever prate of freedom, that topic so overworked by politicians and moralists in the outside world. To the present day, Valangan educational practices bear the stamp of Deodan's genius.

Since Deodan died, nearly two thousand years ago, Valangan society has changed little. Although its crafts have improved in many ways, it can point to no revolutionary changes such as have been effected in the industrial nations. Its styles in the visual arts and music have altered over the centuries; but for a Valangan a good picture or statue is still one which faithfully resembles the object it represents; and its music is intended to soothe, cheer, and uplift the spirit, never to excite unruly passions. In philosophy and mathematics there have been some notable advances; but the latter, beyond simple arithmetic, has little practical application except in ^{engineering and} astronomy, and this,

like the other natural sciences, is in some respects handicapped by lack of apparatus.

Thus Valanga has been for many generations essentially a static society, and I know that this will be a cause of reproach by all those who believe that the worth of a civilization is to be measured solely by its rate of social, scientific, and industrial "progress". But the essential progress of man is that which each individual makes as he advances from his original insentience to awareness of himself as part of a vaster whole. This is not, as we see it on this earth, a progression indefinitely continued in a straight or spirally ascending course, but one of limited duration, constantly repeated as each mind awakes and slowly matures. The most progressive society is that which makes this growth possible for the greatest proportion of its members and carries it farthest for each of them. The best society is that in which the greatest number of people love the earth and its inhabitants and feel some responsibility for them. If the society is such that nearly all of its older members have already attained this spiritual maturity, further progress, of the sort that really matters, will necessarily be slow; for it is probably related to the rate of evolution of the human species, which is itself slow. A society which two millenia ago could produce and be led by a Deodan did not, considered as a whole, have a great deal of room for further progress. It is still progressive only in the sense that nearly everyone in it progresses from the infant's nescience to a remarkably high spiritual level.

CHAPTER IX
VISIT TO THE OUTLET CHASM

After our return from celebrating the Festival of Commemoration in Alomia, I began to taste in its full sweetness the free, joyous life of Valangans, which is never freer than for the young people in the interval of five or six years which commonly elapse between the completion of their basic education and their engagement. It is a life compounded of play and work, adventures and obligations, blended in due proportions, so that each gives zest to the other. There is liberty to wander widely over the valley and through the forests at the top of the cliffs, even up Mt. Tunima, to the eternal snow, for those who have a mind to pit their strength against its mighty slopes. But for each youth and maiden there is always a welcoming home, a point of attachment without which free wandering soon loses its savor. And at the foundation of this pleasant life are the fruit trees, which supply so much nourishment in return for so little effort, and of which each family has its share.

The prescribed course of study of Valangan children includes grammar and composition in their native tongue, the history of their country and its customs, involving a thorough acquaintance with the Charata and the Institutions of Deedan, the study of the classics of Valangan literature, elementary and advanced mathematics, elementary observation of nature, drawing, music, and the acquisition of a handicraft. Every child of either sex takes this course, except that if he has no mind for mathematics he is not obliged to proceed beyond simple arithmetic,

and if he has no ear for music he is not compelled to study it. There is little geography, as Valangans, to their regret, are not sufficiently acquainted with the outside world and that of their own region is soon learned. There is no world history for the same reason. There is no foreign language, because Valangans have so little intercourse with the outside world, and even in the days when they travelled more freely they did not reach a people whose literature was sufficiently rich to warrant the study of its language - the classic civilizations were thousands of miles away from them. As I learned when I accompanied Calpani to his classes in the days of my convalescence, the children study these subjects in small classes in their own homes or in those of neighbors, with elderly people usually acting as teachers, for there are no school buildings in Valanga.

When they have completed this basic course, usually at the age of sixteen or seventeen, those who have developed special interests or have a thirst for learning are encouraged to continue their studies, while others perfect themselves in a craft. These advanced students select some scholar in their chosen field and arrange to study under his direction, either living in his house, or, if space is lacking there, in that of a neighbor. They make some return for their board and lodging by helping in the care of the orchard or in other necessary tasks, and thereby they get sufficient exercise. They owe filial obedience to the older, married people in whose home they reside, and the latter are in return responsible for them as parents would be. Indeed, when any person under twenty-four years of

age lives with another family, his relationship to the older members of that family is substantially the same as that of a son or daughter to his parents; but if he does not like this arrangement, he can always return to his own home. In this way, students pass from scholar to scholar, staying with each as long as they wish or as long as their teacher deems profitable to them, and often returning later for further help or instruction.

Thus in Valanga there are no colleges or universities with intensive courses, because a Valangan does not study for a few years and then go on to something else. If he has an inquiring mind or scholarly tastes, he remains all his life a student; for even when a householder and the head of a family, he enjoys ample leisure for intellectual pursuits. There are so many learned and scholarly men and women in the country that the whole valley might be regarded as one great university.

Iretanyo and Orovan early developed an interest in nature, and after completing the basic course they agreed to take their further studies together, as is often done by dorins. They went successively to receive instruction from a botanist, an entomologist, an ornithologist, a mathematician, and an astronomer. All of these men were in a sense amateurs, for they were householders who looked after their orchards; but they had thorough mastery of their respective sciences, to the extent to which these have been developed in Valanga. In this way the two friends passed four years, not without intervals at home to help their parents. Iretanyo, like his father, became deeply engrossed in the study of birds; while Orovan was more strongly attracted to

botany, but he was also fascinated by beetles. Now they ranged far and wide over the valley and surrounding mountains, to become thoroughly acquainted with the organisms in their chosen groups and perhaps make fresh discoveries. Among Valangans, the study of nature is encouraged as a blessed, almost a holy, pursuit; for the greatness of Anga, they believe, is best appreciated through the painstaking study of his works.

In Valanga, one never hears young people talking about "finding a job", "getting ahead in the world", or "making a place for themselves" - those prime preoccupations of young men, and in an increasing number of countries also of young

women, in the outside world. It is hard to imagine anything more effective in converting youth's natural generosity and idealism into calculating selfishness than the struggles which in these countries many young people go through in making a niche for themselves, or anything more disillusioning than seeking one's first job can be. With us, however, the economic future of every young person is assured, so long as the country as a whole continues to stand, and he never doubts that he will have a dwelling as good as his neighbor's and the means to rear his family. Instead of ignoble economic preoccupations, or the promptings of vain ambition, young Valangans are concerned with furnishing their minds, developing competence in the arts and crafts they will practice, and above all perfecting their conduct, so that they will be worthy representatives of a great tradition. In all the other literate societies that I know, the production of marketable wares takes precedence over every other consideration, and social arrangements are made with this mercenary end in view. Only in Valanga does the production of men and women of the highest character come before everything else.

With us, too, economic considerations never influence the choice of a husband or wife, for all are equal in this respect, nor do they cause anybody to defer marriage beyond the age which is held to be best, the early twenties for both sexes.

Although I had reached the years when nearly all Valangans are married and devote more time to their homesteads and

families, Calocar, Elindro, Alvandris, and others of the older men, encouraged me to accompany my co-guardians as much as I wished, thereby increasing my familiarity with the valley and its inhabitants and learning at first hand what the life of a Valangan youth is like. All too soon, they said, we would feel the weight of the passing years and no longer care to scramble up the cliffs on the slightest pretext. I welcomed this opportunity to prolong my youth and improve a neglected side of my education by learning from these keen young naturalists. I had now quite recovered from the effects of my illness and had so well adapted myself to the wholesome Valangan diet that I felt stronger and fitter than ever before, able to keep pace with my young companions no matter where they went.

Feeling that I should learn a useful craft like Orovan, Iretanyo, and the other youths, I talked to some of the men about it, especially the President of Botamia. They were of the opinion that, since I was of a scholarly bent, I could do nothing of greater value to the community than to make myself thoroughly acquainted with Valangan history and institutions, interpret to my fellow citizens the history and civilizations of the outside world, and tell them what I could about its scientific discoveries. At first I looked with disfavor upon the second part of this program, for it would be no pleasant task to spread before these innocent people the long, sad history of humanity, whose most brilliant cultures were infected with so many disorders and contradictions that they soon collapsed, a prey to foreign conquerors or their own internal weaknesses.

But I reflected that at any moment the Valangans might be unwillingly sucked into the maelstrom of this nickel-plated age; and the more they knew about it, the better they would be able to adjust themselves to its impact. And if by good fortune Valangans could preserve their isolation, some knowledge of the outside world and its ever-growing disorders would serve, I thought, to make them more contented with their own happy lot. I doubted that many would have their heads turned by the mechanical marvels and "labor-saving" devices of industrial civilization, whose net effect is to engender an insatiable thirst for material possessions, destructive alike to leisure and to reflection.

At the same time, I thought that I should learn at least a simple handicraft; for even the most scholarly people in the country made some useful article, however small. Thus Faloris made buttons, and Charóndis the philosopher, of whom I had heard much, wove baskets. Hearing that Botamia could use another broom-maker, I decided to learn this art. I soon discovered that there is much satisfaction even in making a broom, if it is made well enough to last for years.

Having beheld on my visit to Alomia how the Tirintin River enters Valanga, I was eager to see how it escapes after traversing the length of the valley. Iretanyo and Orovan needed little persuasion to take me to the lower end of Valanga, nearly twenty miles away, where the stream flows out through a deep gorge. Calpani was eager to accompany us, and although his elder brother doubted his ability to walk so far without

tiring, he finally yielded to the boy's pleading. The four of us set off at daybreak, and as we passed through the orchards and the belts of forest which separate the cantons, Iretanyo told us the names of the birds we met, and something of their habits. Although he lacks prismatic field glasses such as bird-watchers in other countries find indispensable for their observations; in Valanga, where they have never been persecuted, the birds are all tame and many will take food from one's hand, so that it is easy to approach close enough to see them well without visual aids, except, of course, those which remain high in the tree-tops.

In one of the orchards we noticed some boys who appeared to be searching for something in the trees and bushes. Presently one found a bird's nest and removed two eggs from it. I expressed my surprise that any Valangan parent should permit his children to rob birds' nests.

"Those lads are looking for the eggs of the peristo," explained Iretanyo. "It is a frugivorous bird, so prolific that unless it is somehow kept in check it will play havoc with the fruit crop. It is a fine songster and a true Valangan, for sometimes it feeds fledglings which have lost their parents, even those of other species. Nobody wishes to kill it, so we try to reduce its rate of increase. It lays two, three, and sometimes even four eggs in a set; but if all except one are removed, it will continue to incubate and rear its young. Accordingly, when the boys find a nest with eggs, they take all in excess of one. This has the double advantage that it

seems not to distress the parent birds as the total loss of their nest would do, and it is actually more effective than the removal of all the eggs or complete destruction of the nest. For if a nest is destroyed before the breeding season nears its end, the parents will promptly build another and rear two or three young in it. But if left with a single egg, they bring up the nestling from that egg and this satisfies their parental instinct. If the boys find a nest in which the young have already hatched, they do not molest it."

"Do you believe," I asked, "that if this process of removing all the eggs except one is done long enough and thoroughly enough, the peristo will finally come to lay a single egg in its nest?"

"This method of controlling the peristo has been carried on from a remote period, yet even now the bird often lays three or four eggs. But it is not practiced every year, nor consistently all over the country, but only at times and places when the peristo is becoming alarmingly abundant. Possibly if the reduction of the size of their families were carried on thoroughly for centuries, these birds would come to lay smaller sets. For then those which lay more than one egg would not leave more offspring than those which produce a single egg, but they would only be wasting their substance; and it seems to be true that the animals which live with the greatest economy are the most successful. The majority of the birds in Valanga lay only two eggs in a set and rear only one or two broods in a year, doubtless because they require no more offspring to preserve their race."

I marvelled that Valangan naturalists should have arrived independently at conclusions so closely resembling the Darwinian theory of evolution. As we walked along, I noticed flocks of parrots feasting in the fruit trees and asked if they ever caused great damage, and if so, what measures were taken to prevent it.

"I believe," replied Iretanyo, "that everyone in Valanga holds it wrong to harm any creature, however small, wantonly or needlessly. For did not Anga bring our forefathers here to preserve this land and all its creatures as he had created them? Yet I suppose that many people would maintain that an animal which threatens our very existence by destroying our food would have to be checked, even by killing it if there were no other way. For if we all starve to death, how can we take care of Anga's garden? The great difficulty is to decide just how much loss we should or can permit before taking drastic measures. No one begrudges a little fruit to the birds, which do so much to beautify this valley; and in most years our trees yield such an abundance that we hardly miss it. Even if the birds were causing a scarcity, rather than harm them many people would go to the labor of digging up and cooking the taro and other root crops which are always grown for emergencies, or of preparing sago cakes. But in some years, when there is a shortage of fruits in the trees up on the mountains, the parrots descend into the valley in such huge flocks that they threaten to devour the greater part of our crops. Then the Council declares that the nation is in peril, and every family is expected to keep some of its members in its orchard all day long, shouting, beating

on pans, and making such noises as they can. Since parrots are shy birds, this drives them away. When they find that every tree in which they settle is being watched by noise-makers, they fly up the cliffs again."

"And if some family fails to obey the Council, what measures are used to compel or punish it?" I asked.

"Perfectly natural measures," replied Orovan, "if one orchard is quiet while all the others are noisy, the birds will settle there and eat until they are sated. Those who do not obey the Council at these times are punished by losing their crops. And when people go hungry as a result of their own stubbornness, their neighbors do not hurry to help them out."

We marched on in silence for a while, until it occurred to me to ask why Valangans, who are so fond of animals of all kinds, never keep any pets or domestic animals of any sort.

"I cannot imagine one of us sitting on an animal and beating it with a whip or sticking sharp points into its flanks to make it carry him where he wishes to go, or loading it with baggage and driving it along with blows, as you tell me men do in other countries," said Orovan. "We are a liberty-loving people, and it would be repugnant to us to enslave any creature or to compel it to do things against its will. Our own legs are quite capable of taking us where we wish to go, and our shoulders are strong enough to carry the few things we need to transport from place to place. Mostly we enjoy walking and performing our necessary tasks, and even if we grow weary we persist because we foresee the advantages we shall receive from our effort. A driven animal could hardly be animated by this

just to entice them to come nearer, although they find enough without our help. And some of us climb up the cliffs to watch the deer, bears, and other big animals that dwell in those forests and are never molested by Valangans. But we prefer the animals to be as free and independent as we are."

"Are there no big animals here in the valley?" I asked.

"The little squirrel monkeys are the largest flightless creatures in Valanga, ourselves excepted, and nobody knows for certain how they got here. Some people suppose that they tumbled, or somehow managed to climb, down the cliffs; while others hold that they were first brought here by men to keep as pets and finally escaped and established themselves. There seem never to have been any deer or bears here, and the reason for this is obvious. However this depression was formed, it must ^{at} first have been without terrestrial life, and it was easier for plants to reach it than for animals. Seeds fell down the cliffs from trees growing at the top; or they were wafted across the valley by the wind; or birds dropped them while flying across it. That is the reason why Valanga has such a varied flora."

Resume

With much pleasant and instructive conversation, and frequent pauses to observe birds and trees or to admire a pretty flower garden or to greet other travellers, the miles passed easily and swiftly along the level, shady footpaths. As we approached the lower end of the valley and the great cliffs loomed up ever higher above us, we passed from the orchards to an extensive swampy area covered with sedges, grasses, and other marsh vegetation. Here we found men wading in the watery soil to gather a tall, stout, sedge-like plant that grew

abundantly. Piles of the thick, three-cornered stems lay beside the path where it skirted the marsh. When I asked my companions what these stems were used for, they told me that it was for making paper. The people who live in this part of the valley give no attention to the manufacture of paper, using simple machinery constructed largely of wood and operated by a water-wheel. They distribute their product without charge to the whole of Valanga, and in return are supplied with pottery, cutlery, and other necessary articles.

This paper, which is strong and durable, is, aside from slates and tablets of clay, the only writing surface used in the country. For ordinary books it is made up into long strips which are attached at the ends to wooden rods, and rolled from one to another as one reads, in the manner of the papyrus volumes of the ancient Mediterranean civilizations. Codices are prepared for catalogues and other special purposes. There are no printing presses in Valanga, and even the longest works are copied by hand, in a script which is both legible and beautiful; and often the volume is decorated with the most exquisite pen or brush work. At first I suspected that the lack of printing presses must be a great handicap, and wondered how a people so fond of literature could do without them. Then I recalled that even the Greeks had no presses, and their greatest masterpieces were published only in hand-written copies; yet they were so adequately distributed that, despite the vandalism of later ages, the wanton destruction of whole libraries, and the slow ravages of time, a considerable proportion of them have sur-

vived to the present day.

Valangans have not, like the Greeks and Romans, slaves to act as scribes; but every reader of books - and there are many in the country - makes it his aim to copy at least one long work in the course of his life. The scrolls are preserved in hollow segments of a thick-stemmed bamboo, specially treated with a resin and equipped with close-fitting lids; and they have been so lovingly preserved that practically every house in the land has a large collection, many of them centuries old. Since the care of these books is part of the elementary education of every Valangan, and he would almost as soon slash his parent as mutilate a book, no one hesitates to lend a neighbor a work he wishes to consult, being sure that it will be returned to him in good condition. Since there are no daily papers filled with accounts of all the calamities that have happened over the whole earth, wars and rumors of wars, political tirades and speculations, crimes and scandals, stock-market reports and advertisements of merchandise; since there is, moreover, scarcely any ephemeral literature of light novels, "thrillers," and mystery stories, the whirring wheels of the printing press are not greatly missed. [¶] Still, I do not deny that to have at least small presses would be in many ways a boon to Valanga; and it is also possible to name other articles, common enough in the outside world, which would be useful to us. But the manufacture of the things I have in mind is scarcely compatible with our way of life, for they are produced in great factories with many workers. Factories which employed so many people that they could not all live on their homesteads

and go to work on foot or bicycles, or which demanded so many hours of labor that they perforce neglected their homes and children and orchards, would be quite incompatible with our culture. Such factories would cause a concentration of population; with them we should lose our cherished contact with the soil and vegetation and the harmonious balance of our lives. I believe that most Valangans would agree that ~~there is~~ not a single one of the products of mechanical civilization, nor all of them together, is worth so heavy a price.

At the northern end of the valley, the Tirintin River impinges against the foot of a nearly vertical wall of frowning black rock and turns sharply to the left, washing the base of the cliff until it finds an avenue of escape. The consequent backing up of the water is responsible for the formation of the swamp so valuable to the country because it yields the material for making paper. To reach the outlet, we passed around the outer or upper side of the marsh until we struck the western wall of the valley, then followed a footpath along the edge of the talus slope until it met the northern wall. Here the cliff, which everywhere else encircles Valanga in an unbroken barrier, is interrupted by a profound gap through which the water escapes. A footpath had been carved into the side of the cliff for a short distance into the chasm, so that one can enter and look down upon the hurrying water.

Already in the middle of the afternoon a twilight gloom prevailed here; for the walls which rose hundreds of yards

above us were so close together that only when the sun was near the zenith could its rays penetrate to the bottom of the cleft. Here the river alternately foamed along a bed strewn with huge, angular blocks of rock and plunged over ledges, filling the chasm with spray and mist and a roar that made conversation impossible. A hundred yards downstream it swept from view around a bend in the enclosing walls. Clearly it was impossible to enter the valley along the course of the stream, which here passed into the unknown. If my conjecture is correct, this stream is an affluent of a great and well-known river, at whose mouth, thousands of miles below, is a busy seaport, where mingle the shipping, the productions, the races, the tongues, and the vices of all the world. As I stood with my companions in that resounding chasm, I could not help reflecting upon the contrast between the peoples who dwelt at the mouth and about the headwaters of this famous river.

Although it had rained hard on the preceding night and the Tirintin was swollen, its water was as clear here at the lower end of the valley as at the waterfall by which it entered. It showed none of that turbidity which reveals that a stream is carrying away the land from which it flows. The trees which covered Valanga nearly everywhere retained its precious topsoil, which in lands broken by the plough or the spade is gradually or rapidly washed seaward.

We stood for many minutes in silence, held by the sublimity of the chasm and feeling in every fiber of our bodies the power that coursed through it, an infinitesimal fraction of the

single energy of the cosmos that manifests itself in many forms. At length the deepening gloom warned us of the approach of night and caused us to tear ourselves away from the enthralling scene. When we emerged from the cleft we were surprised to find ourselves in full daylight, although all this end of the valley lay in the shadow of the frowning western cliffs.

¶ After our hearing had recovered from the roar and we could converse again, I asked my companions a question that had long been on my mind, how the Valangan depression had been formed. They told me that, according to the most generally accepted opinion, it was once the crater of an immense volcano. Some of the Valangan savants believe that after the extinction of the vent it had become filled with water, forming a great lake; and indeed there are signs of wave action far up on the cliffs. This lake had endured for thousands if not millions of years, until an earthquake fractured the cliffs at the point we had just visited, allowing the water to escape. The sediments which accumulated on the bottom of the lake formed the fertile soil that Valanga now enjoys. Since I know so little about geology, I shall refrain from passing judgment on this view, to which indeed certain objections occur to me. The Valangan scientists have thought about this problem with minds as penetrating as are to be found anywhere; but to reach sound conclusions on geological problems it seems to me necessary to accumulate a wide experience by examining allied phenomena in many regions; and such experience is inaccessible to Valangans because of our isolation.

Although since daybreak we had traversed two-thirds of the length of the country, Orovan and Iretanyo were still so fresh that they might have walked home by the light of the moon. But Calpani, who had never before made so long a journey, was tired; and I, too, was somewhat weary. Hence we decided to seek a lodging for the night. Except in Bellucia, where the Council meets, there are no inns, restaurants, rest-houses, nor other public accommodations for travellers in the whole country; but no Valangan ever refuses a wayfarer a meal or a night's lodging. It is the custom of travellers who expect to sleep away from home to take their sheets in their haversacks, as they are light to carry and this arrangement saves their hosts much labor in washing them. ¶ We were cordially received at the first dwelling at which we requested hospitality - indeed, two such charming youths as my co-guardians were sure of a hearty reception anywhere, and a curiosity like myself was welcome for a different reason. The family with which we stayed made paper, and we spent an interesting evening learning the details of that process. Our host said that the people at this end of the valley feared that a rockslide from the sides of the chasm would some day block the outlet of the river, causing the water to accumulate and flood their homesteads, as had happened once in ancient times. After singing some songs together, we went early to bed and slept as soundly as young people without worries do after a day of exercise in the open air. Next morning, before proceeding on our way, we went into the orchard to get down fruits for our hosts, on whose supply we had made great inroads. Orovan and Calpani scrambled up the trees, while Iretanyo and I

caught what they threw down. On leaving, we were given a letter for delivery at a house we would pass on the way back, and we were happy to be able to perform this small service to those who had been so hospitable to us.

We reached Nardan in time for a bath before supper. Ilinissa invited Orovan and me to stay and eat with them; but he excused himself, saying his parents would be disappointed if he did not go promptly home. While we ate, Ilinissa asked if we had heard the latest news.

"I hope it is good," remarked Iretanyo.

"On the contrary, it is extremely bad. A young man fell from the cliff at the Cássiorin Way and was killed."

"Who?"

"His name was Angámi," replied Ilinissa. "Did you know him?"

"Quite well," said Iretanyo. "I considered him a first class climber. Was Télótis his dorin with him?"

"They say that he was, and that he is very shaken by what has happened."

"Yes, it must be terrible for him. I would rather be Angami than Telotis."

"And I," declared Ilinissa, "would rather be Angami than his mother - at least, if I did not have other children to care for."

"Poor Telotis! He will never forget it," continued Iretanyo. Then, after a pause: "I am thinking how I should feel if Orovan or Wilyo were killed in that way. People would be saying that it was my fault for letting him use the Cassiorin Way, for it is not too safe." Then, after another contemplative pause:

"Mother, I promise that we will never use that path again, as I could never forgive myself if anything happened to my dorins. Hereafter, we shall use the main route when we go up on the eastern ridge, although it does mean a much longer walk for us."

I exchanged a knowing glance with Ilinissa and could see that she was repressing a smile. For months she had been trying to persuade her son, without actually commanding him, not to use the more dangerous routes up and down the cliffs, but only the main ones which had been made safe for climbers, and over which the heaviest guard was placed. But Iretanyo had felt that his competence as a climber was being questioned, and he always brushed aside his mother's objections, telling her not to worry because he went carefully and would not fall. But now the possibility that Orovan or I might fall caused him to see the matter in a new light. Ilinissa had won her point.

CHAPTER X
GUARDING THE CLIFFS

Soon after our visit to the outlet chasm, Iretanyo, Orovan, and I were called to take our turn at guarding the cliffs, for which we had volunteered some weeks earlier, as every male Valangan is expected to do before he marries. The routes for passing up and down the cliffs provide one of the most controversial issues in Valanga. Many contend that these ways should, as far as possible, be made impassable by removing all the ladders and the bridges across the fissures, destroying ledges and footholds which make the rock walls scalable. Thereby the risk of invasion would be reduced, at the same time that the guards could be diminished in number or perhaps wholly eliminated. The chief objection to this service is that those who perform it may be obliged to take violent measures, even to kill men, in order to halt invaders.

Others hold that these routes of egress and ingress justify the labor involved in maintaining and guarding them. They say that to climb to the top of the precipices, whence alone it is possible to look over the whole of Valanga and at the same time survey a portion of the surrounding territory, is an enlightening experience which every Valangan should have, for thereby he sees his country in its entirety and in relation to the larger world. Without the perspective thus obtained, he is apt to exaggerate the extent and importance of his native land. Moreover, many believe it salutary for young people, who sometimes feel cramped and repressed in the narrow, peaceful valley and yearn for adventure spiced with danger,

to climb far up into the mountains, perhaps pitting their strength against the crags and snowfields of Mt. Tunima and being humbled by that experience; for, probably because of the thinness of the atmosphere, no one has yet set foot upon the icy summit. The naturalists, of which there are many in the country, insist upon being permitted to expand their acquaintance with nature by exploring the surrounding forests and valleys, even at the risk of a fatal encounter with some of the neighboring savages. Moreover, some intercourse with the outside world is necessary in order to procure iron, in which Valanga is deficient. The men who have taken their spell of guard duty are nearly all in favor of keeping the routes open; for this is an experience they would not have missed, and many enduring friendships have been formed on the cliffs.

~~And~~ those who advocate the maintenance of the routes have until now prevailed over the isolationists, although for a period of some years the latter were so far in the ascendancy that they effected the closure, although not the demolition, of the ways.

The young men who watch over the routes up the cliffs always go with their co-guardians, as on important, and sometimes dangerous, assignments like this, dorins must be together to help and protect each other. The period of service at a guard station is ten days, but half the number of guardians at each post is changed every five days. This overlap in the periods of service permits those who have already become familiar with the simple duties of the post to instruct the newcomers. In addition to the guards, there are two Captains of the Cliffs, one for the eastern and one for the western wall of the valley, who are

appointed by the Council of Presidents for periods of five years. They visit the guard stations frequently to see that discipline is preserved, that all ladders and bridges are in good repair, and that the machinery for repelling invaders is in working order. Moreover, they are responsible for keeping watch over the whole stretch of the precipices, to detect any changes, caused by rockfalls, that might open a new route into the valley. Each Captain has a secretary who draws up the list of guards ~~in~~ such a way that the service of the stations is never interrupted.

My co-guardians and I were assigned to the upper of the two guard stations on the principal route up the eastern wall of the valley, called Yoron's Way in memory of the early leader of the Valangans who improved it and established the guard system. We set forth early in the morning, carrying on our backs food for the following five days for ourselves and the two men who were already there. At the end of this period, the next two guards would bring ^{from their homes} provisions for us as well as themselves for an equal interval. The stations are constantly stocked with a supply of preserved food for use in emergencies, and at this particular one a trickle that wells forth from a fissure in the cliff provides a convenient supply of water. Two of the men from the lower station, near the bottom of Yoron's Way, helped us carry our heavy loads up to our post, which was only about fifty yards below the top of the precipice.

Arriving at our station before the day grew warm, we were welcomed by the four guards, two of whom soon started downward,

as we had come to replace them. The other two, dorins named Theónis and Camíldo, would be our companions for the next five days. They helped to make us comfortable in the guard-room, which was a chamber formed in ancient times by chipping away the hard rock. It was furnished with a table, chairs, shelves for clothes and provisions, lamps, and six bunks, which provided sleeping accomodations not only for the guards but for an occasional belated traveller who would not have time to reach the foot of the cliff before night closed in and made the descent too hazardous to be contemplated.

Just above the chamber, the ledge on which it opened was interrupted by a fissure, which could be crossed only on a sort of drawbridge formed of planks; and these were placed over the gap only when someone who had the right to do so wished to pass. On the farther side of this fissure was a device, controlled by a lever within the guard-room, which could throw from the precipice anyone standing there. After we had rested, Camíldo and Theonis instructed us in the care and operation of this machine, which we all hoped we would not be called upon to use. A narrow slit in the wall of the chamber permitted the guards to view the gap and its approach, and to challenge invaders, without exposing themselves to their missiles.

In Valanga the day and the night are each divided into halves, quarters, and eights, whose length varies only slightly with the season, because of our proximity to the equator. Ordinarily, each of the four guards does sentry duty for an eighth in the morning, an eighth in the afternoon, and a

quarter in the night, making three turns in the course of every twenty-four hours. With five of us serving together, we worked out a slightly different schedule, with periods of duty that would have been difficult to measure by the water clock provided for this purpose, but which were easily timed by my watch. ¶ Our instructions were to permit the free passage up or down of anyone who showed a valid pass, such as each President issues to the residents of his canton, and which is in ordinary cases good for ^{ten} one years. No one without a pass was under any conditions to be permitted to leave the valley, but it fell to the lower station rather than to ourselves to enforce this rule. No person bearing weapons was in any circumstances to be allowed to enter; and if an armed man, after being duly warned and exhorted to retrace his course to the head of the cliff, persisted in attempting to cross the gap above our station, he was to be precipitated from the cliff by pulling the lever. If the approach of several armed men suggested an attempt at invasion, we were immediately to ignite the pile of fuel kept constantly in readiness for this contingency, so that its smoke by day, or flame by night, might promptly warn the whole country of peril. Foreigners who might come on pacific missions were to be admitted only if they showed permits which they had obtained by application to the Council of Presidents. But anyone in urgent need of succor to preserve his life, as a fugitive from a hostile tribe, or a lost wanderer on the verge of starvation, might be granted asylum in the valley at the discretion of the guards; and it was to this rule that I owed my own admission.

The days passed tranquilly enough in our eagle's eyrie on the sheer cliff hundreds of feet above the floor of the valley; for with the exception of parties of young people making excursions into the mountains and naturalists going to explore the surrounding forests, all of whom bore valid passes, nobody approached our station. Our duties were far from arduous, and we enjoyed ample leisure for contemplation, conversation with our agreeable and intelligent fellow guardians, and reading the books we had brought to fill our spare time. [¶] We arose each morning to watch the tinted dawn-light steal over the maze of peaks and wooded ridges that stretched into the far distance beyond the western wall of the valley. Soon the highest summits reflected from their gleaming crests the sun's earliest beams. A little later its rays reached the head of the western cliff, and we watched the boundary between full sunshine and shadow creep down the grim, forbidding ^{it} precipice. After reaching the foot of the cliff, ~~the edge of the shadow~~ travelled toward us over the myriad trees which filled the depression, rapidly at first, then more slowly as the sun's orb neared the zenith. Here and there a great white cumulus cloud, high above, cast a dark blotch that resembled an islet amidst the sea of sunlit verdure below us. All this while we were in the cool shadow of our own cliff; and it was only at noon, when the whole valley was on clear days flooded with light, that we began to feel the sun's direct rays, which soon, reflected from the rock behind us, blazed so ardently that we kept within the chamber or sought whatever shelter the irregular face of the

precipice provided. Then we would watch the cool and welcome afternoon shadow steal toward us from the opposite cliff, until the whole of Valanga was mantled in it, while we, the only inhabitants of the valley who still beheld the sun, revelled in the play of colors over the wild mountains in the west.

Often, in my free hours, I would find a quiet ledge, beyond sight and hearing of my companions, and sit in contemplative solitude, perhaps imagining myself an Indian yogi seeking illumination in a rock-hewn cavern overlooking some profound valley in the far-off Himalayas. Once, while I rested so, gazing over the vast depression beneath me, thoughts which came unbidden brought tears into my eyes. Presently I felt a hand laid lightly on my shoulder, and looking up, saw Orovan standing beside me.

"You seem sorrowful, Wilyo. Are you homesick for your native land?" he asked.

"No, I have my native land before me, for here I was reborn into a better life. I was thinking how many powerful nations and empires have risen and fallen while Valanga, devoid as it is of military strength, has continued on its even and tranquil way. Since Stenoril led his colonists here, Rome, at that time an unknown village at the western verge of ancient civilization, rose to power, overthrew its dreaded rival Carthage, conquered Macedonia which not long before had overthrown the huge Persian realm, became the mightiest empire of antiquity, decayed, and fell before the northern barbarians. And in America the extensive empires of the Incas and the Aztecs, along with count-

less lesser nations, rose, flourished, and finally succumbed to the treachery of rapacious Europeans. There is hardly another country in the world today that has stood as long as Valanga and never been humbled by a foreign invader. Yet Valanga could be so easily destroyed. If Mt. Tunima, so long quiescent, were to renew its activity, it might overwhelm the country with ashes or flood it with a stream of molten lava. Or an earthquake, closing the outlet chasm, might cause the Tirintin River to rise until the whole depression became the bed of a lake, as apparently it once was. Then there has always been the danger that an invader might find an unguarded route down the cliffs, or force a passage, and massacre the inhabitants. And now there is the peril of attack by air. And if Valanga were to be destroyed, the world would suffer an incalculable loss."

"What cheerful thoughts you have today! Thanks to our guardian cliffs, we still exist," said Orovan.

"Thanks also to the character of the people within these cliffs," I added. "Otherwise, while the precipices were holding foreign enemies aloof, Valanga might have sunk into slothful luxury within its protecting ramparts, and undergone that internal decay which has so often preceded the downfall of nations."

One evening, while Orovan stood sentry and the rest of us sat watching the moonbeams creep toward us across the valley, Theonis asked: "Have you heard that Witálbin and Amántis, dorins who live in our canton of Thevéna, refused to volunteer for guard service?"

"No, we do not know them and we had not heard about it,"

replied Iretanyo. "Why will they not take their turn?"

"They said that they could not kill a man by throwing him from the cliff, even if he persisted in trying to enter Valanga with weapons. Hence, if such a contingency should arise, they could not fulfill their duty as guards."

"And what was done about it?" I asked.

"The President of our canton talked to them. He told them that nobody could force them to perform guard duty, as this is voluntary; but they owed it to themselves and their country to have clearly in mind the implications of their refusal, before they reached a final decision. He said that if conscience forbade them to kill a man in defense of their country, they must look upon it as equally wrong for any other Valangan to take a similar course. Accordingly, if their refusal were a matter of principle and not of whim, it signified that they advocated the complete abandonment of the guard posts and leaving the valley open to invaders. He said that they should take time to think this over and then tell him their decision."

"And then what happened?" Iretanyo inquired.

"A few days later," continued Theonis, "Amantis came to tell our President that he was willing to take his turn on the cliffs; for as lamentable as it would be to have to kill a stranger, it would be far worse to permit the destruction of Valanga and everything for which it stands. But his co-guardian Witalbin was obdurate, so he requested to be sent with another companion."

"And what did the President say to this?" I queried.

"He thanked Amantis, but reminded him that he has only one dorin, whereas Valanga has many young men to guard her. There-

fore he thought it proper for Amantis and Witalbin to stick together; either both should serve, or neither of them. And there the matter rests, as far as I know. Have you heard any more about it, Camildo?"

"No, as far as I am aware, Witalbin and Amantis are still arguing it out between themselves."

"Well, I must say that Witalbin has some strong points on his side," remarked Iretanyo after a thoughtful pause. "All our lives we are taught that it is wrong to kill an ant or a worm if we can avoid it, and then when we come up for guard service we are shown how to destroy men with the greatest ease, merely by pulling a lever."

"Yes, but in this instance we cannot avoid it, without exposing all those whom we love, our whole country, to the most dreadful consequences, perhaps to such a fate as befell Florunda years ago," said Theonis.

"But perhaps it is not necessary to resort to violence, even to halt a fierce invader. It seems possible to stop him by spiritual power alone, as Nevóran did in the case of King Gálthim," said Camildo.

"How was that? I have not heard about it," said I.

"All of us who grew up in Valanga learned the story as children," replied Camildo, "but if Iretanyo and Theonis will pardon a repetition ~~of it~~, I shall tell it briefly to you. Gálthim was ruler of Manotar in the days when Deodan flourished in Valanga. His cousin Inyoro raised an army and strove to wrest the supreme power from him, but was crushingly defeated

in battle. Inyoro escaped with a few faithful adherents and fled to Valanga where, after throwing away his weapons, he was admitted as a suppliant. Galthim pretended that his rival was trying to raise an army here in order to renew the conflict, and demanded his surrender, threatening to invade our country if Inyoro were not immediately delivered to him. The Valangans replied that it was not their custom to surrender suppliants, that if Galthim wished to enter the country without weapons in order to negotiate with his cousin, he would be admitted with two attendants, but he would never pass the cliffs with armed forces.

"Enraged by this rebuff, the proud king set forth with his victorious army to invade Valanga. Everything was done to strengthen the defenses and make the ways down the cliffs impassable. Reaching the western walls, Galthim started down the main route with his soldiers following in single file. As he was pushing cautiously along a narrow ledge he was confronted by Nevoran, a man renowned for his piety and wisdom, standing alone and unarmed in his white robe.

"'King Galthim,' said the old man mildly, 'you must not enter Valanga with weapons. You know there are none in the country, which we look upon as our sanctuary, and you must not profane it by bringing them here.'

"' And who is to stop me?' shouted the king.

"' I am stopping you now. You cannot pass without pushing me from the cliff.' And he looked straight into the eyes of the king.

"Galthim paused with his warriors above him, not knowing

what to do. A brave man himself, he admired courage.

"'Come, my friend,' continued Nevoran, 'lay down your weapons and I will lead you to Inyoro, with any two of your followers you select to accompany you. You will be safer in Valanga, unarmed, than in your own country in the midst of your mailed retainers.'

"After a little reflection, Galthim said: 'Well, I shall go with you. If I cannot drag Inyoro away, at least I can tell that scoundrel what I think of him. And I shall have the honor to go in company with a brave man.'

"Thereupon Galthim handed his sword and battle axe to one of his soldiers, and calling two of his nobles by name, bade them ~~to~~ follow, unarmed as he was. He directed his army to encamp in the nearest suitable location and await his return. He went without fear, for it was known far and wide that Valangans never broke their word nor resorted to treachery. Nevoran led them down the cliff and took them straight to Deodan, who the next day brought the two rivals together. He spoke to them of the obligations and true glory of rulers, and ended by saying: 'If you intend to govern for the benefit of your subjects, there is room in Manotar for two such capable men as Galthim and Inyoro; but if you continue to be swollen with vanity, caring for nothing but your empty glory, the land will scarcely hold one of you. Neither of you can revile the other without condemning himself. You quarrelled because you were both alike thinking of nothing but yourselves and forgetful of the obligations of rulers.'

"After a few days, Galthim returned to Manotar, and soon

afterward he sent for Inyoro to come and serve as his chief minister. For many years they ruled wisely, often sending to Deodan for advice; and they made Manotar the best-governed and most prosperous land in this part of the world, with the exception only of Valanga and, later, Florunda. It continued to flourish until, centuries later, it fell, like so many other countries, before the invading hordes of Wolturans.

"And that," concluded Camildo, "seems to prove that it is possible to defend our country without resorting to violence, by spiritual force alone."

"Perhaps you are drawing too broad a generalization from a single instance," objected Iretanyo. "You may recall that at the time of that same barbarian inroad, when the Wolturans, having overwhelmed so many other thriving countries, attempted to invade Valanga, Mirálvo, a young man inspired by the example of Nevoran, tried to stop them as the latter had stopped King Galthim. He was hurled from the cliff for all his trouble; and if his companions who manned the defenses had not acted with great promptness, the Wolturans would have entered the valley."

"Might not the reason for Miralvo's failure be that, courageous as he was, he had not reached the spiritual height of Nevoran?" suggested Theonis.

"I think it more likely," I said, "that he was thrust aside because the Wolturan chief whom he confronted had not as much conscience as King Galthim. The Wolturans were, from all accounts, barbarians of the worst sort. Galthim, for all his impetuous pride, was after all a Bialomin; and the Bia-

lomins, who centuries earlier had produced a man like Stenoril, were certainly on a higher level of culture, even admitting that Stenoril towered head and shoulders above his contemporaries. And Galthim's subsequent behavior showed how susceptible he was to good influences."

"Doubtless," said Iretanyo, "both points must be considered, the spiritual development of the man who opposes violence without using it himself, and the spiritual level of the aggressor whom he confronts. Certainly there must be a conscience slumbering within the man of violence if he is to be moved by a spiritual appeal. And it would seem that the weaker or more deeply buried his moral awareness, the greater must be the spiritual force of the man who awakens it. But unless the brutal aggressor has something in common with the saintly man who resists him, the latter will be ineffectual. I do not imagine that spiritual power, however intense, could halt a lava flow or a falling rock."

"Some have supposed that it can do even this," I said. "Gautama the Buddha, one of the great religious leaders of mankind, was constantly menaced by his envious cousin Devadatta, whose confederates one day sent a boulder hurtling down a precipice toward him. But as it approached the Buddha the great rock split into two, the halves passing on either side and leaving him unscathed. I cannot vouch for the tale, I merely repeat it. In our time, the world's greatest exponent of passive resistance was Gandhi, an Indian like Gautama, who without resorting to arms liberated his vast and populous country from the British, a more aggressive people, thousands

of miles away, who for several centuries had dominated it. But I believe that Gandhi was successful because the British are in a fair way to develop a conscience in national affairs, which is ~~far~~ rarer than a conscience in individual affairs. I am certain that two centuries earlier Gandhi's methods would not have availed against the British, and I doubt whether they would have been effective as little as a century ago. Needless to say, there are countries in the world today upon which Gandhi's spiritual force would make scarcely any impression."

At this point, Iretanyo went to relieve Orovan at the sentry post. On joining us, the latter wished to know what we had been discussing, and we told him briefly. After a little reflection, he remarked: "I have often thought about this matter, especially since we volunteered to serve as guards. It seems to me that when rational or spiritual persuasion fails, and one is reduced to employing force to protect his country, his friend, or himself, he faces a most tragic dilemma. If he refuses to oppose violence to violence, his country may be destroyed, all that it has striven to accomplish in thousands of years annulled, and everything sacred to him violated. But if he resists the brutal invaders with force, he becomes more like those whom he opposes, which is exactly what he wishes to avoid. It seems to be a general law that when we oppose violent and wicked people by the only methods we know to be effective with them, we grow more similar to them. Thereby something precious in us is profaned, or possibly even destroyed."

"That is quite true," I said, "and in the outside world today we witness whole nations coming more and more to resemble

the rivals which they most fear and hate, while preparing feverishly to resist them by force of arms."

"And what is one to do when this dreadful necessity is imposed upon him?" continued Orovan. "We cannot permit Valanga to be destroyed; yet if we are reduced to defending it by violence, we seem to sully ourselves and to be no longer true Valangans. I can well understand why our ancestors long ago, like some of the more primitive peoples who surround us, felt the need to purify themselves by abstinences and lustral rites after slaying an enemy in battle, and sometimes after killing an animal in the chase. Their feelings about this matter were doubtless somewhat different from ours, and one may doubt the spiritual efficacy of the procedures they used for purification, yet something of the sort seems necessary to cleanse us after performing an act of violence. At very least, we must be most vigilant lest the ^{ugly} passions, which I suppose inevitably surge up in a man engaged in a desperate struggle, gradually overcome and debase us."

"It is not only in defending one's country against external enemies that the dreadful necessity to which you refer arises," said Theonis. "Sometimes we must take violent measures against the enemies who spring up in our midst. Not long ago I read the official report on the last murder ^{that} which occurred in Valanga, before our grandfathers were born. My uncle, who is President of our canton, persuaded me to study it, although it deals with a subject about which nobody likes to think. He said that unless some of us are familiar with the measures which have been taken on past occasions, when the next violent crime occurs,

as no doubt some day it will, we shall be caught wholly unprepared and lose our heads. I shall not distress you by reciting the gruesome details; suffice it to say that it was a most hideous murder, performed with diabolical cunning, and with such care to avoid detection that only by chance was the corpse discovered. The murderer was found largely by a process of elimination, for there was only one man in the country who, in the judgment of his neighbors, seemed capable of committing such an atrocity. He finally confessed, and there was no doubt of his guilt. He was confined in one of the stone-walled cells beneath the Council House, until they could decide what to do with him."

"A dungeon in Valanga! We did not know there was such a thing in the country!" the rest of us exclaimed together.

"I didn't know about it either," continued Theonis, "but I asked my uncle, who replied that it is still there for just such emergencies, although nobody has occupied it for many years. It is the business of the Presidents to be informed about it; but scarcely anyone else knows, as we do not like to think that there is such a dismal thing in our country, and we scarcely ever talk about it. Well, the matter was brought before the Council, as the whole country was endangered by the presence of such a vicious character, and the canton in which the murder occurred did not wish to assume full responsibility in the case. The report which I read is largely taken up with the discussion in the Council. Some of the councillors thought that a man who perpetrated a crime like that must certainly be insane. Physicians were called to examine him, but they could

discover no injury to his head, nor any indication of a tumor on the brain, which they might have removed by trepanning. They agreed that if the man were mad, they could do nothing to cure him. ^{however} ~~but~~ the precautions he took to avoid detection, and his manner of speech, were not those of a crazy man but of one not lacking in reason, whatever might be wrong with his spirit.

"One councillor suggested that the culprit must have had a disorderly home in childhood or else a defective education, and that since he was still young, by proper care and instruction he might be regenerated. But the investigation showed clearly that his ancestors, as far back as anyone could remember, had been decent, honorable people, and that his teacher, of whose excellence all the other pupils bore grateful testimony, had taken exceptional pains to correct certain alarming traits he had detected in the future murderer, who even as a boy had been headstrong and violent. It was generally conceded that since it had proved impossible to straighten the tree when it was a pliable young sapling, nothing could be done now that its trunk had grown massive and unyielding.

"That a man with such a background and education, and who moreover lacked nothing that he needed to live well, should commit a hideous crime, was to some of the councillors clear proof that he was mentally unbalanced, in spite of what the physicians said. This led to a long debate, which continued until one of the Presidents rose to ask ^{if} ~~whether~~ it would make any difference in their treatment of the culprit, whether they decided that he was incurably insane with criminal tendencies or merely incurably criminal. In either case, the alternatives seemed to be ~~indefinite~~ ^{for an indefinite period} confinement or removal from the country,

both of which were regarded with equal abhorrence. When nobody could point out any practical difference the answer to this question would make in the present case, he reminded his fellow councillors that they were elected to guide their country, not to debate abstruse questions, hinging on terms, 'sanity' and 'insanity', which are themselves most difficult to define with precision."

"And what did they decide to do with the convict?" asked Orovan.

"They voted to cast him into the rapids where the river flows out of Valanga, so that he might be washed clean out of the country. Five men, not residents of the criminal's canton, were to be chosen by lot to execute the sentence. This decree was, because of its great importance to the country, referred to the whole electorate, and it was approved by only a narrow margin, as most of the women voted against it. The man was duly cast into the cataract in the midst of the chasm."

"What a horrible thing to do!" exclaimed Orovan.

"Yes," agreed Theonis, "it was horrible and everybody concerned appears to have admitted as much, but no one could think of any more satisfactory conclusion to the affair. I have pondered the matter for several weeks, and I confess that I cannot either. Can you?"

"They might have sent him into exile," suggested Camildo.

"That was considered," said Theonis, "especially since in former times malefactors were not infrequently banished from the country. But the councillors said that, although some people who were out of place in Valanga might fit into some of the

neighboring nations, it would be unjust to inflict upon them a man so cruel and vicious as this murderer."

"They might have sentenced him to imprisonment for life, as is now done in a number of other countries which shrink from the violence of capital punishment," I remarked.

"But how do you avoid violence by such a course?" asked Orovan indignantly. "To confine in a cell a man, or any creature, who is constantly trying to escape, is an act of violence, just as much as striking or killing him; for it is not rational persuasion but brute force that keeps him there. And this violence, although it may appear less acute than the execution of a sentence of death, is daily repeated as long as the man remains incarcerated, so that in the course of time it seems to outweigh that other form of violence. Moreover, to be the custodian of prisoners must be a most humiliating experience to anyone who is not wholly insensitive. Would you have consented to act as that murderer's ^{jailer} ~~guard~~?" he asked, turning to the three of us.

"It's about the last thing I would wish to do," I asserted.

"I should almost rather be thrown into the rapids myself, than to be responsible for keeping that man in prison for the rest of his life, which might have lasted many years, as he was still young," declared Camildo with feeling.

"Well," concluded Theonis, "since we cannot agree on any more satisfactory procedure, and we admit that such a man was too dangerous to be left at large, I believe that we must concede that the Council took the best course possible in the circumstances. Perhaps you will say that they might have found

a subtler method of ending his life; but we have had little experience with that sort of thing in Valanga where, my uncle says, hardly a dozen men have suffered the supreme penalty since the time of Deodan, two thousand years ago. He was merely executed by the traditional method, and no doubt he perished quickly enough in those boiling rapids. Nobody denies that it was a hideous thing to have to do. But there seem to arise from time to time, even in the best regulated of communities, ills so dreadful that only by a dreadful remedy can they be cured. No greater affliction could befall a gentle, peace-loving people, who strive in all things to do what is right, than a situation such as I have described to you. And this brings me to the point of the history. The five men who threw the culprit into the chasm felt that they had been polluted, not by contact with the man so much as by their deed, and that they needed purification, just as Orovan said. Since lustral rites were dropped from our religion ages ago, nothing of that sort could be done for them. They were told that they must keep careful watch over every word and act, so that they never again committed ~~any~~ violence, and that was the only lustration they needed. I suppose that the episode left a sore spot in their minds to the end of their days, although they acted only as agents of the commonwealth and not on their personal initiative. Still, nobody could have forced them to act as executioners, if they had refused."

"But how can a man like that murderer arise among people who have for generations been honorable? How would they account for it in your native land?" Camilão asked me.

"In former times, they might have attributed it to the innate wickedness of man. Now the scientists would, I believe, say that such an occurrence results from a sudden, random change in the hereditary factors which influence character - a mutation such as might alter an animal's size or color, or cause a physical deformity. It is an upsurging of the irrational side of the universe."

After we had been together for five days, Theonís and Camildo left us, to our great regret, as we liked them immensely. They were replaced by Sestórin and Clórodel, co-guardians from the canton of Alomia, who brought our provisions for the remainder of our spell of guard duty. Sestorin was a budding astronomer, while his friend Clorodel was a mathematician; and both were eager to hear what I could tell them about the state of these sciences in the outside world. Not being myself a mathematician, I quickly discovered that I could teach Clorodel no mathematical principle with which he was not already familiar; but I amused him by showing him the numerals and mathematical symbols I had learned in school, all of which are of course different from those used in Valanga, whose mathematics is a purely indigenous growth. Fortunately, I had read a number of popular works on astronomy, and I held my fellow guards spellbound while I related what I remembered from them. They were especially impressed with what I told them about the outermost planets and the method of their discovery, ^{how they were} ^{ed.} the satellites of Jupiter and other planets, the sizes and distances from the earth of the moon, sun, and other celestial bodies, the extent of the universe, and the velocity of light.

"We always supposed," remarked Sestorin, "that Anga had made the universe on a vast scale, but without telescopes and other instruments which have recently become available to foreign astronomers, we could not learn the full extent of its magnificence."

He was particularly eager to learn the latest conclusions as to the size of the earth, which he knew to be spherical and to circulate around the sun in company with the other planets. Here a difficulty arose; for although I remembered that the earth is about 24,900 English miles in equatorial circumference, I did not know the value of the mile in Valangan units. But using my estimate of 30 miles as the length of the Valangan depression, I told him that our planet's girth is about 830 times the length of Valanga.

"Our astronomers," he said, "long ago calculated its circumference to be about 40,000 of our miles, which would make it 740 times the length of Valanga, which measures 54 miles from end to end. That was not a bad estimate, considering how small a portion of the globe was available to them as a base for their observations. It would be most valuable to us to know the exact relation between the foreign units of measurement and our own. How could we discover this?"

"If we had the measuring stick which I left behind when I fled from the Agarunis, we could work out the conversion factor with fair accuracy. But much as I love science, I shall not go back to recover it."

"No, but it is just possible that something could be done through a trader. We must try," said Sestorin.

In agreeable conversation, silent contemplation of the magnificent panorama, and our light spells of sentry duty, the days passed all too quickly; ~~and~~ we were almost sorry when our period of service came to an end. I arranged to meet Sestorin and Clorodel after their return from the cliffs, and promised to do my best to answer some of the questions which would meanwhile occur to them, in return for further instruction in Valangan astronomical discoveries. Now I understood why the men, nearly all of whom had taken one or more spells of guard duty, were almost unanimously in favor of keeping the ways open and guarded, and it was chiefly the women, who never served on the cliffs, who advocated their closure.

CHAPTER XI
AN EXCURSION INTO THE MOUNTAINS

After our spell of guarding the cliffs, we turned our attention to our orchards, which now required cleaning, as the weeds beneath the trees were growing high. Some people work a little in their orchards almost daily and spread the cleaning over much of the year; others prefer to make a concentrated attack on the weeds and finish the task in a few days; and the beauty of life in Valanga is that everyone is free to perform his unavoidable labor in the manner which best conforms to his temperament and other interests. Since there were many other things that my dorins and I wished to do in the next few weeks, we elected to clean our orchards in the second manner, the sooner to be free. We brought over the other members of our families to our point of view; and since there were three orchards to be cleaned, we decided that it would be more pleasant to join forces and do them in succession. ⁹ First we turned our attention to Nardan.

We and our fathers took turns swinging long scythes, which easily cut through the soft herbage that grew in the shade of the spreading boughs. When not engaged with this, we pruned and cut up the fallen branches. Elindro and Orovan's grandfather trimmed young trees that did not need to be climbed, while the women and children of our families pulled by hand the weeds that grew close about the bases of the trunks. We worked from early morning until the day grew warm, then had the afternoon for rest, study, play, or lighter tasks. In less than a fortnight the orchards on the three homesteads had been cleaned, and we were

relieved of this necessary operation for the next six months.

We were now free to make the excursion into the forests at the top of the eastern cliffs which we had long been planning. Our party would consist of Crovan, Iretanyo, Yancoa, her dorin Alestia, and myself. In Valanga, youths and maidens are permitted to go almost anywhere together, even to camp out in the mountains, so long as each is accompanied by his co-guardian. In this close companionship among the young people of both sexes, improprieties scarcely ever occur; for aside from the personal disgrace which would result from his or her improper conduct, each is aware that his co-guardian would be reproached for the misbehavior of the one for whom he is responsible; and Valangan young people are most careful lest any slur be cast upon the good name of their dorins. Far from disapproving excursions by both sexes together such as we proposed to make, Valangan parents encourage them; as they hold it desirable that their sons and daughters know each other intimately in a variety of conditions, so that each has an opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with the character and temperament of his prospective conjugal partner. Indeed, they believe that the same kind of friendship may exist between a man and woman as between two people of the same sex. Marriage is not a relationship fundamentally different from such friendship, but adds further obligations to it.

In preparation for this journey up the cliffs, we made dozens of sago cakes, as these are lighter to carry than fruits. We also provided ourselves with quantities of nuts. Since we expected that there would still be some fruits on the linip trees up on the heights, we included few fruits among our pro-

visions. I was glad that our impedimenta contained none of the cumbersome and too often greasy pans and pots which burdened the camping trips of my boyhood. Each of us took a cover of quilted cotton, as nights at the top of the cliffs are usually cool. This baggage was divided among the haversacks which each of us carried on his back.

Orovan passed the night with me at Avrano; and after an early breakfast we set forth, just as the sun was rising, for Nardan, which is only ten minutes away. Here Yanoa and Iretanyo were waiting for us. As we took leave, Calpani, who wished to join our party, looked sad. Iretanyo, who loved him dearly, paused to console him: "Cheer up, little man! You walked so well on the trip to the chasm that we shall try to persuade Father and Mother to let you come with us next time we go up into the mountains. But it must be a time when Yanoa does not go, for they do not like all of us to leave the valley together, lest some accident befall us and they be left childless. You are growing big and strong, and will soon be able to take care of yourself as well as any of us."

These words from his revered elder brother turned the lad's gloom into smiles, and we parted in high spirits. A short walk brought the four of us to Alestia's house, where she joined us with her pack. It took us about two hours of brisk walking along the cool, shady paths to reach the foot of Yoron's Way. When near the top, we looked in at the guard station where we had served our turn a fortnight earlier, and greeted the present guards, two of whom my dorins knew. Yanoa and Alestia climbed

as easily as their male companions and when they reached the summit seemed as fresh as when they set out. Here we turned southward toward the point where Iretanyo and Orovan had ~~found~~ found me after my escape from the Agarunis, for the girls were curious to see a spot that had become important in the history of our little circle. After some searching, we found the very log where the famished wanderer sat to eat the fruit which Iretanyo cast at his feet, like Manna from heaven. Alestia, who had a taste for the dramatic, suggested that we act the episode for the benefit of Yanco and herself; and I agreed to comply with her wish, with the reservation that I need not look so thin, haggard, and ragged as then I was. As I sat munching the fruit which Iretanyo took from his haversack to cast at my feet, I found it hard to realize that little over a year had elapsed since I first sat on that log. The interval was so crowded with novelty and growth that it seemed in retrospect to have been several times as long, and I felt that in these fourteen months I had changed inwardly even more than in appearance.

After this diversion, we continued to climb upward through the forest until we came to a spring that ^{flowed} ~~issued~~ from the base of a cliff. Here ~~there~~ was a small thatched shelter occasionally used by people from the valley; but it needed repair, and after resting for a while we devoted what was left of the day to putting it in order. Then, agreeing that it would be pleasant to have a campfire for heating our sago cakes, we kindled a blaze with a fire drill. We sat around it, so absorbed in conversation that we failed to notice that the daylight had almost faded,

until certain beetles and other nocturnal insects were drawn to the flames, into which one of them fell. To avoid further tragedies of this sort, we quickly extinguished the fire and went to rest, the two girls making their bed on one side of the shelter and we three on the other.

Since we were not yet sleepy, we decided to beguile the time by telling stories, and I asked to hear some^{thing} about the famous men of Valanga. After each of my companions had told about a hero of ancient times, they wished to hear about some of the most renowned men of my native land. But when I recalled how largely deeds of war and violence entered into the tales of national heroes which had nourished my boyhood, I was reluctant to hold them up for comparison with the Valangans who had won places in their countrymen's hearts by more pacific means. Thinking that ^{my companions} ~~we~~ would find greater pleasure in some of the imperishable legends of ancient Greece, I told them the story of Alcestis as I recalled it from the drama of Euripides, whose wide sympathies, which glow so warmly amid the prevailing callousness of the ancient world, would delight the people of my adopted country, could his works somehow be introduced among us and adequately translated. After Hercules, in gratitude for the impeccable hospitality given to him in the house of mourning, had restored Alcestis to the disconsolate husband for whom she had voluntarily relinquished her life, we all fell silent, pondering over this ancient tale of woman's devotion and listening to the mournful cries of a nightjar off among the moonlit trees, until slumber overcame us.

Next morning Iretanyo, taking some breakfast in his haversack, stole forth at peep of day, to seek his birds when they were most active and vocal. The rest of us slept a little longer and made a more leisurely breakfast, then set out together as the sun was rising. Orovan went in quest of beetles and new plants; Alestia, of butterflies and moths; Yanoa, of flowers; while I had decided to make a collection of ferns as a first step toward learning a little botany. Since the Valangans' reverence for life forbids them to kill the creatures they study, they never collect animals of any sort but make drawings of them where they are found. Thus, Iretanyo tried to discover the nests of birds new to him, so that he might sketch them while they sat quietly warming their eggs or young; but he was also adept at calling them up close to himself by imitating their distinctive notes; and sometimes he caught them in traps, as bird-banders do in other countries, and retained them only long enough to paint their portraits. Alestia watched her butterflies closely as they hovered over the flowers, or caught them in a net and confined them in a small cage just long enough to copy their intricate color patterns. Orovan placed his beetles in a little box with a transparent top while he made paintings of them.

Although to collect plants is permissible, Yanoa preferred to draw her flowers where they grew, and already had a large collection of colored sketches remarkable for their accuracy and delicacy, ~~of touch~~. I had provided myself with papers and a frame for pressing and drying my ferns, as to make detailed

drawings of their intricately divided fronds seemed to me too laborious an undertaking.

As we worked up a long spur that led into the main mass of Mt. Tunima, I was delighted with the beauty and variety of the ferns which flourished in the cool, humid forest. There were tree ferns with straight, slender trunks four or five times my height and magnificent, symmetrical crowns of great, spreading fronds, each containing a myriad small leaflets; and growing on their rough trunks would often be other ferns, which even when mature could be spread out on the palm of my hand. There were hart's-tongues with thick, rigid leaves and filmy ferns whose delicate fronds were of almost transparent thinness. With so many treasures to find and arrange carefully in my press, I proceeded slowly. Orovan wished to search for new beetles at higher altitudes, and cautioning me not to wander far from the trail lest I lose my way, he pushed on with Alestia, leaving me with Yanoa, who was sketching the bell-like flowers of a lovely shrub. I kept busy with my ferns until she finished, then we climbed upward together until she found another blossom to draw.

My new occupation was so delightfully absorbing that the hours sped by almost unnoticed. In the bracing mountain air, amidst an endless array of beautiful forms and colors, I all but forget that I had a body which grew tired and hungry. Before I was aware that the morning was spent, Yanoa called my attention to the sun, which had already passed the meridian and was declining toward the west. We both suddenly discovered that we were ravenously hungry, and began to look for a spot where we could sit and eat the food we carried. Continuing up-

ward a short distance, we came to an outcrop of rocks on which the trees were scattered and low, leaving a sunny opening bright with a profusion of blossoming shrubs and herbs, amid which flitted some small, glittering birds who sipped their nectar. There was a wide outlook over the whole great depression of Valanga, spread out far below us between wooded ridges that receded in successive crests into the purple distance. Agreeing that a more delightful spot for a midday rest could hardly be imagined, we sank down side by side on a mossy ledge.

"We must come up here from time to time to realize what a small part of the earth Valanga is," remarked my companion between bites of a linip fruit. "Yet when we are there between those great cliffs it seems the whole world to us. Sometimes it saddens me to think that our little valley, with a bit of the surrounding hills, is the only part of this great earth that I shall ever know. But I marvel that you, who have travelled so far and seen so much, could be content to pass the rest of your life shut up between those walls of rock, as you say you will."

"It may comfort you to reflect that although the part of the world that you know is so small, it is the best part. It is precisely because I have seen so much of the world that I can appreciate Valanga."

"Do you really believe that Valanga is the most beautiful valley in all the earth?" asked Yancoa.

"There may be other spots as pleasing to the eye, although there are not many. But taking everything together, the setting,

the people, and their relation to each other, it is my firm conviction that Valanga is the most beautiful country on this planet. Were I to take you to my native land, or to almost any other part of the world, you would ^{see} behold a great deal to distress you - things unknown in this happy land."

"But don't they distress the people who live in those countries?"

"Yes," I replied, "at least the more sensitive and thoughtful of them. But habit blunts one's sensitivity to almost everything. Just as those who dwell close beside a rushing mountain torrent cease to hear its roar, so those who from early childhood are daily exposed to cruelty and injustice and ugliness are rarely pained by them as a Valangan would be on his first contact with them."

After a while she asked; "Wilyo, what do you think is the noblest thing a man could do?"

I reflected a moment. "To make all the rest of the world beautiful and happy like Valanga... But that is perhaps too vast an undertaking. To make some small part of the earth something like Valanga would be a great and noble thing to do. Could I accomplish this, I ^would feel that my life had not been misspent. Now tell me," I added, "what do you think is the noblest thing a woman could do?"

"Just what you said," she promptly replied. "If other countries were good and peaceful like Valanga, we could travel and see something of the world; and even those too distant for us to visit would be more pleasant to think about. But to make another nation like Valanga is perhaps too large an undertaking

for a woman. I ^Wshould be content if I could raise a son who could make some other part of the world like ours - as our ancestors once tried to do in Florunda and succeeded for a while."

"But here in Valanga we are taught that men and women are equal. They receive essentially the same education and enjoy the same opportunities. Why should not a woman realize her ambition herself, without waiting for her son to do it for her?"

"It's true that we are in a sense equal to men, and any woman in the country is eligible for the highest office, presidency of a canton and membership of the Council. But look at the result. Although as many women cast their votes as ^{do} men, this year there are twenty-three male presidents and only seven female presidents. In the nearly fifteen hundred years that women have been presidents, there were never, I am told, more than eight, or about one quarter of the whole number, at one time. That tells us something about our countrymen's judgment ^{of} ~~as to~~ the relative ability of women and men. We have had in Valanga women who equalled, or almost equalled, the most famous men in intellectual and artistic pursuits; but outstanding accomplishment is certainly far rarer in my own sex."

"How do you explain that?" I asked.

"Perhaps ^{it is} because we women are not so often capable of the same intensity of concentration," she replied. "When a man of exceptional ability becomes absorbed in something, he gives himself wholly to it and usually accomplishes what he sets out to do. Women may as often have outstanding intelligence, but they are more seldom capable of ^{intensive} ~~the~~ concentration. Do you think that is true?"

"But wouldn't the world become very monotonous if ~~it~~ every country were to be made like Valanga?" I ^{asked myself in my own mind} ~~said~~ after a pause.

"But it need not become like Valanga in every detail" she replied. "It would be better if each ~~large~~ nation retained its own language and costume, and styles of art and architecture, and many of the other things which give it distinctive character. What we wish is to make all people good and happy like Valangans, and for this it seems necessary that their social arrangements somewhat resemble ours."

"Yes," I agreed, "since men everywhere have the same organization and the same fundamental needs, it would seem that the foundational institutions which prove best for one race would be best for all, although everywhere they might need to be ~~slightly~~ somewhat modified to adapt them to local conditions. It is in the more superficial matters such as those you mentioned that diversity is not only permissible but desirable,

since it adds to the ^{variety} diversity and interest of
the world.

"I believe that you have the right explanation," I replied. ^

We rested for some minutes in friendly silence, feasting our eyes on the magnificent panorama or following the movements of the brilliant butterflies and birds that visited the flowers which clustered around us. Presently a blue and red butterfly settled on a yellow blossom which Yancoa had stuck into her dark, lustrous tresses. She was so lovely, reclining amid the flowers in the mellow afternoon sunshine, that of a sudden I felt a strong impulse to kiss her. "Yancoa," I said, "yesterday evening we were all talking about love, and I wondered whether any boy has ever kissed you."

She showed no trace of the blush that I had ^{ex}suspected my question would bring to her cheeks. "Of course not," she replied seriously, "except Tanyo and Calpani. Kissing and love are two quite different things. We certainly do not kiss everything we love, even most dearly. And I am told, although I find it hard to believe, that sometimes men and women kiss without loving each other." And here at last she blushed, heightening the loveliness of her cheeks, smooth as the petals of flowers.

"What would you do if a lad were to kiss you?" I persisted.

"Do you mean before we had finished making our robes and were ready to be married?" she asked.

"Yes, that is what I mean."

"I don't know, since nobody has ever tried it. Maybe I should slap him. Or maybe I ^would just walk away, since Valangans scarcely ever slap anybody, not even little children, unless they are persistently disobedient and cannot be restrained in any other way. But certainly I ^would never again speak

to the boy who kissed me before we had finished the robes in which we marry."

"But suppose that you loved him dearly. Wouldn't you give him another chance?" I asked.

She thought deeply before she replied: "Perhaps if I really loved him I would give him another chance, because it is possible that he merely forgot himself and did not intend to be rude or indecent. But he would have to tell his dorin what had happened, as I should tell mine, as we must conceal nothing from them. It is just possible that I ^W~~sh~~ould even pardon him a second time. But a third such slip would be unforgivable. We ^W~~sh~~ould certainly have to stop seeing each other for ever. Why did you ask? Do youths and maidens kiss each other in your native land?"

"I believe that they do quite frequently," I replied.

"Before they have completed their period of engagement?"

"Before they have even begun it. Maybe before they have known each other three days," I said.

"Since you were so outspoken with me, I shall be the same with you, and ask whether you followed the practices of your native land."

"Not in this matter, nor in a number of others. I had my own peculiar notions about what is right and fitting, and I made up my mind, while I was still a boy, that I ^W~~sh~~ould never kiss a girl until I found one whom I loved well enough to marry. I suppose that I was in some respects a Valangan before I ever heard about Valanga. But I never found such a girl until I came here; and if some day I win her, she shall have my first kisses - not counting, of course, those that one gives to members of

his family. I was merely telling you what many other people do in my native land."

"But if this is a common practice," she said, "it is probable that they often marry before they have really become friends and love each other as friends do."

"In some languages the word 'love' is used ambiguously to designate two quite different things. On the one hand it signifies the enduring affection we have for that which is good and beautiful, and on the other hand it refers to the transient passion which brings animals together for reproducing their kind. The Valangan language, more precise than many others, does not permit this confusion. Using the word in its proper Valangan sense, I may say that in foreign countries it quite frequently happens that people marry without loving each other, before they have become true friends."

"What happens then?" asked Yancoa.

"Well, sometimes they grow to be friends after marriage, and perhaps more often they get unmarried - 'divorced' is the word they use."

"I know what you mean," she said, "because sometimes that happens here, too. Once I heard my father say that he knew a man who had separated from his wife, but I have never met anybody who has done that. Such separations rarely occur among us, because we must become friends before we marry. I suppose that in the countries where people are so hasty to do things that are proper only for married people, youths and maidens are not permitted to go off into the mountains together as we do, or to be

much alone together. I can see that much mischief might come of it."

"Opinions and customs have been changing rapidly in those countries," I explained, "but until recently it would have been held shocking for young men and women to go off on a camping trip such as we are taking, at least if they did not have an older, married person to keep close watch over them."

Yanoa said: "Then in those countries where they are not trusted to be together, it must be much harder for a true friendship to grow up between a youth and a maid. For the sake of a kiss or two, the sort of companionship we have been enjoying would be made impossible, or at least very difficult to cultivate. It seems to me that this would be a very high price to pay for a paltry touching of lips."

"Yes," I agreed, "something very precious would be lost. Now I believe that I understand the real reason for the Valangan objection to kissing and fondling before the engagement period has been completed, or even before the marriage ceremony has been performed. It is because it would make impossible, or at least difficult and dangerous for all concerned, the free and intimate companionship of young people of opposite sexes. Without such companionship, true friendships could hardly grow up between them; and unless it is founded on the sort of love that exists between friends, marriage is not likely to be enduring. In any society, the dissolution of marriage is a tragic thing, especially for the children. In Valangan society, based as it is on the unity of the family and the orderly succession

of the homestead from parents to children, divorce if frequent would be positively disastrous. Have I understood it properly?"

"Perfectly!" she said. "And I think it was in order that we should taste what friendship is before we have any inclination to marry, that Deodan instituted co-guardianship. When dorins are true friends and love each other, they are so happy that it is delightful merely to see them together. But if they never were friends, or cease to be friends, they find the relationship irksome in the extreme. When, as sometimes happens, one meets co-guardians who constantly disagree, our parents are likely to remind us: 'Notice how miserable it is to have a dorin who is not a friend. But it is a hundred times worse to have a wife or a husband who is not a friend. Not much harm is done when dorins wish to separate; but it is a grave matter indeed for married people to break apart.'"

"What do you understand by friendship, Yancoa? How would you define a friend?"

"A friend is a person you love because he is good and kind and cheerful. You share everything with a friend, your possessions, your joys and sorrows, your secrets. You are sad when your friend is sad and happy when he is happy. If your friend does something wrong, you are as much ashamed as though you were yourself at fault."

"But as far as I have seen, practically everybody in Valanga is good and kind and cheerful, so that here more than anywhere else I find it easy to practice that injunction on which I was brought up but could never quite understand; 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' Are all Valangans then equally friends?"

I asked.

"In a sense we are," she replied. "Although everybody must have his own property so that he may be responsible for taking good care of it, nobody can bear to see another in want. At the time of the great famine, which happened many years ago, the people said they would all live or die together. Somehow they mostly managed to live. But although we are all in a sense friends, some are more friends than others."

"What is the difference between these special friends and the others?" I queried.

"It is difficult to explain. For one thing, it is more pleasant to be with your particular friend, because you love him more, you have more to talk about, and you enjoy doing the same things."

"And when you feel that sort of friendship for an unmarried person of about your own age and the opposite sex, he or she is a good person to take as your husband or wife?"

"Certainly," she replied, "if he feels the same way toward you."

"Which would you say is the more sacred relationship, friendship or marriage? I mean, should one feel the stronger obligation to his friend or to his husband or wife?"

"I think it is more important to preserve a friendship than a marriage, unless of course the marriage is founded upon a true friendship, as it should be."

"Your attitude toward friendship," I remarked, "is much the same as that of the ancient Greeks and their imitators, the Romans. I ^would suspect that some of the things you have just

said were taken from the works of their old philosophers, were their writings known in Valanga. But there is one important difference. The Greeks in general cultivated friendship only with others of the same sex. Their wives took care of their homes and reared their children but were hardly regarded as their friends, although they were, as I judge from the tale I told you last night and many another poem and drama, capable of the greatest devotion. The reason for this was that in Greece the women were not fitted for equal friendship with the men because they received a very inferior education and were allowed no voice in public affairs. But in Valanga where the girls are taught along with the boys, true friendship between the sexes becomes possible."

While we were absorbed in this conversation, Orovan and Alestia came down the mountainside and sat on the ledge near us, so quietly and unobtrusively that we scarcely noticed them. Finally Orovan remarked: "Charondis the philosopher says that just as the spirit is higher than the body, so a friendship founded on mutual understanding and respect is higher than a passionate attachment, which does not even serve as a foundation for true friendship. Although spiritual love can ennoble animal passion, such passion adds nothing to love; just as a beautiful spirit can give dignity to an ugly and deformed body, whereas a beautiful body, far from elevating an evil mind, is made almost repulsive by its presence."

"Thank you, Orovan," said Yanoa. "With your usual clearness of mind, you have said in a few words what I have been trying to tell Wilyo in many. But now let us hear about yourselves."

What did you and Alestia find today?"

"Yes, let us all see those new butterflies you found, Alestia," Orovan prompted.

Alestia opened her sketchbook to show us the colored drawings she had made. One was of a very large butterfly with black and yellow wings extended rearward in long, slender projections. Another was beautifully marked with red, blue, gray, white, and black. Alestia drew with a delicate touch, and her paintings seemed to me works of art no less than accurate delineations of natural objects. After we had admired them, Orovan passed around his sketches of beetles. He had succeeded well in suggesting the play of metallic colors on the shards of some of them.

"Where can Tanyo be?" asked Yanoa. "We have not seen him all day."

"Nor we," said Alestia.

"I believe that he went high up on the mountain looking for birds," added Orovan. "Let us wait here a little longer; but if he does not soon appear we had better return to camp; for the sun is sinking low and he may have gone back another way. I have no doubt that he is all right."

After another ten minutes we heard singing in the distance, and soon Iretanyo came into view from among the flowering shrubs. It was easy to see that he was in high spirits. "What a wonderful day I have had!" he exclaimed. "High up on Mt. Tunima I found a bird I had never seen before, and I was able to call him to me and keep him close until I had painted every detail of his plumage. Would you like to see him?"

We were delighted by his painting of a brilliant bird with

a high crest and a long, graceful tail. Its plumage was metallic green, crimson, and yellow. It belonged to the araceline family - whose English equivalent I cannot give - but Iretanyo did not know its name. Perhaps I am prejudiced in my friend's favor, but I believe that if his paintings of birds were known in the outside world, he would become as famous as John Audubon or John Gould. Although I am not an expert in these matters, it seems to me that his delineations are superior to theirs, for he paints living birds, whereas their models had been shot. Hence his portraits are more graceful and life-like.

We could not delay long looking at the drawings and collections which each of us had made, for there was barely time to reach our shelter before darkness fell. We ate our supper without a fire, went early to bed, and were soon soundly asleep after our long and exciting day.

Although it was not planned, it somehow happened that Yancoa and I were together all of the following day. Wherever I found ferns, she discovered blossoms to sketch; and while we rested on a mossy log or flowery open slope, we had much to talk about.

After another night in camp, we packed our belongings and set forth for home early in the morning of the fourth day. It was tacitly understood that we would descend the cliffs by Yoron's Way, as we had come. But while we were travelling through the forest and still some miles distant from this, Orovan suddenly turned to the left and declared that he would go down by the Cassiorin Way, which would shorten the homeward journey by several hours. The rest of us were much surprised by this announcement.

"If you insist on going that way, Orovan, you place me in a most difficult situation," remonstrated Iretanyo. "Everybody knows that the Cassiorin Way is not without its dangers, and not long ago Angami was killed by falling from it. Hence Wilyo and I cannot let you go that way alone. But as you know, I promised my mother that I ^W~~should~~ henceforth use only the routes that everyone considers to be safe; so that I must either break my promise to her or fall short in my duty to you. And what will the girls do?"

"You and Wilyo go down Yoron's Way with the girls," said Orovan. "I don't think I shall fall from the cliff; and if I do, nobody will care in the least."

"Orovan!" exclaimed Alestia. "How can you make such an absurd statement? You know that if anything were to happen to you, there would be many sorrowful hearts in Valanga."

"Of course there would be," affirmed Yanoa. "How could we ever forgive ourselves if we did not bring him safely home with us. Come, Orovan, please don't place poor Tanyo in an impossible situation. Give us the pleasure of your company on the rest of the journey."

"And what's the hurry?" I added. "We have all day to go home. Good companions make a long road short."

Orovan finally yielded: "Well, if everyone insists, I'll go with you, although I have no doubt that you would get along quite well without me."

For a while we walked along in silence toward the head of Yoron's Way, wondering what could have come over Orovan, who

was always so cheerful and agreeable. Presently he said:

"Please forgive my stubbornness. It was thoughtless of me to try to spoil what has been a delightful excursion."

"Certainly we forgive you," said some of us; and "We have forgotten about it already," added others.

"We were merely surprised that you, who are usually so sweetly reasonable, should have even moments of stubborn irrationality," said Yanco. "But I suppose that everyone has his irrational spells."

Soon Orovan recovered his habitual good humor, and we travelled along as though no cloud had come over our cheerful party. Early in the afternoon we reached our homes, to display our trophies and recount our adventures to eager listeners. But I continued to wonder why Orovan had behaved so queerly, and why he, who was usually so frank and open with Iretanyo and me, had not yet explained himself.

191

CHAPTER XII
THE MUSEUM

Before we separated, the five of us who made the excursion into the mountains arranged to go together on the following day to the Museum. We were eager to learn the names and classification of certain insects and plants we had painted or collected; and Iretanyo was especially impatient to look up his brilliant araceline bird, which he suspected was new not only to himself but likewise to Valangan ornithologists as a whole. Neither his father nor grandfather could recall having seen such a bird, and there was no representation of it in the Nardan house. Like every young naturalist, Iretanyo longed to make a fresh discovery and increase the general fund of knowledge. Alvandris, who like his son was an ardent ornithologist, decided to accompany us; and we took Calpani, who always welcomed an excursion.

The Museum is situated in Bellucia, the central canton, close by the Council House. It is a long edifice of a single story, constructed in much the same manner as the private dwellings, but on a more spacious scale. Established on its present site about seventeen centuries ago, it has been repeatedly enlarged in this long interval, and the older portions have several times been either extensively repaired or rebuilt; but part of the oldest foundation still exists and can be recognized by the antique designs on the floor tiles. Under the direction of the Council of Presidents, the Museum was built and is supported by voluntary contributions of labor and materials from the citizens of all parts of the country. The savants in charge of its several divisions of course receive

no salary, but they live in houses belonging to the Museum and surrounded by grounds extensive enough to provide food for them as well as for those who come to study here. These grounds and their fruit trees are attended in part by the students and in part by neighbors as a public service. The curators of the Museum do not work in the orchards except when they wish to take exercise in this manner, as they are mostly old men and women and their administrative and curatorial duties are ^{viewed} ~~looked upon~~ as their contribution to the general welfare.

Although some of the oldest of the curators have resided continuously for many years at the Museum, all regard themselves as merely sojourners here, as each has his homestead, occupied by the younger members of his family, somewhere in Valanga. Those visitors whose investigations at the Museum detain them for more than a single day find lodgings in the Council House, which is available to them whenever the Council is not in session, in the curators' houses, or with neighbors. Attached to the Museum is a capacious hall, where public lectures are given to an audience which sometimes gathers from all parts of the valley, ~~as this is the only building of its kind in the country.~~

The Museum has three sections: the natural sciences, arts and crafts, and history. The historical section contains the national archives, where important public documents from the earliest times are carefully preserved; a library of historical works; and portraits or statues of the personages who figure

prominently in Valangan history. In the division devoted to arts and crafts are exhibits tracing the development through the centuries of the several crafts and manufactures carried on in Valanga, as ceramics, textiles, metalwork, and furniture-making. Here are found examples of the various sorts of musical instruments, some of types that have long since become archaic, and paintings representative of the different periods.

The natural history division contains a large herbarium, where dried specimens of all the vegetable species known to occur in Valanga, and over the surrounding mountains to a distance of many miles, are preserved, arranged according to their natural affinities. There are also exhibits showing the useful products of the vegetable kingdom and the stages in their preparation. In addition to the dried, pressed specimens mounted on paper, the botanical collection contains a great series of exquisite paintings showing the habit of each plant, with details of its foliage, flowers, and fruits. These drawings are made from living examples, by a special technique developed long ago in Valanga, on squares or rectangles of porcelain, which after the painting has been executed are glazed over in the kiln, thus rendering the delineations almost indestructible by time. Nearly all of the species present in the herbarium are also represented by one or more of these paintings on porcelain, which, far better than the pressed specimens, show at a glance the appearance, floral structures, and colors of the living plant.

Although in its cabinets full of pressed specimens the botanical section of the Valangan Museum resembles any other

great herbarium, its zoological section is, so far as I know, unique. Since our respect for animate life of all sorts prevents killing to make specimens no less than from other motives, the Museum contains no stuffed skins of mammals or birds, nor any pickled examples of vertebrate or invertebrate animals in jars. The main part of the zoological collection consists of a vast number of paintings on porcelain, similar to those of the plants, all arranged according to the natural divisions of the animal kingdom. Here, filed away neatly and readily accessible, are pictures of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, insects of an immense variety from bees and butterflies to termites and aphids, spiders, millipeds, molluscs, worms, and all the other divisions of invertebrates to be found in a mountainous tropical country. But because of Valanga's isolation from the sea, marine organisms are represented by only a few paintings, most of them made long ago by intrepid Valangans who had ventured so far from home. All these paintings are remarkable for the minute details which they show no less than for the faithfulness of their coloration. Supplementary to the main collection of paintings are skeletons of animals found dead, which help greatly in settling problems of natural relationship and classification; empty shells; nests of birds taken after the young had flown, often with eggs that failed to hatch; deserted nests of wasps and bees, sometimes of the most curious construction; and similar materials which may be gathered without destruction of life.

The Museum also has a manuscript library containing studies of the habits and mode of life of a great variety of animals, from birds and mammals to snails and worms. Some of these

studies were made well over a thousand years ago, and they reveal a minuteness of observation and attention to relevant detail which the naturalists of other countries have attained only within the last two or three generations. Although I do not pretend to great authority on such questions, it is my impression that the habits of the living things found in Valanga and the neighboring mountains are known with far greater accuracy than those of any country where a European language is spoken; although Valangan zoologists are far behind the outside world in their knowledge of anatomy and physiology. Despite this inadequate understanding of internal structure, a result of their lack of microscopes and refusal to kill animals for dissection, their unrivalled knowledge of habits and behavior has enabled the Valangan naturalists to work out a system of zoological classification which appears to me the more admirable the more I pursue my biological studies. It is hardly necessary to remark that even animals and plants of wide distribution, well known to the naturalists of other lands, have in Valanga received scientific designations peculiar to the country.

Although each of us who had gone up into the mountains desired to find names for his own drawings or specimens, we were all so stirred by Iretanyo's enthusiasm for his new bird that we resolved to accompany him to the bird room before we did anything else. Well known to the curator, he had free access to all the paintings. Going at once to the cabinet which contained the araceline birds, he ran through the paintings so quickly that the rest of us had only fleeting glimpses of the beautiful creatures they depicted. Finally he drew out a plaque

you will succeed in finding and painting her, perhaps even discover her nest. Oh, to be twenty once more, able to roam through those mountains as I did fifty years ago!" he sighed.

Iretanyo was delighted, for it is the aspiration of every artist-naturalist to have some of his paintings accepted for permanent preservation in the national collection, which can admit only objects of some importance, lest it become too vast and unwieldy. I wondered whether that earlier Iretanyo had been equally elated on the day long ago when he brought to that same museum his painting of a bird hitherto unknown to it, and whether his spirit, living on in some realm hidden from our view, experienced a vivid renewal of this ancient memory, stirred up by the similar joy of his remote descendant. At least, it seemed to me that these two namesakes, separated by so long an age, were in some inexplicable way brought closer together by this episode, in a mystic union of a sort impossible between the generations of a rapidly changing society, in which ancestors and descendants, separated by only a century or so, are worlds apart in customs, occupations, beliefs, and values.

After looking at a few more paintings of birds, we separated, all of us equally uplifted by the good fortune of our beloved companion. Orovan and Alestia went to the entomological hall to identify their butterflies and beetles, while Yanoa and I passed to the botanical section to find the names of the flowers she had painted and the ferns in my collection. Alvandris, Iretanyo, and Calpani stayed to talk with the curator of birds.

and laid it beside the painting he had made three days earlier. It was easy to see that the birds represented by these two paintings were of the same species, or at least very similar, and it was likewise evident that Iretanyo was disappointed; for his discovery was not as new as he had supposed it to be. His father and the curator bent over the paintings with him while they compared them point by point. After some discussion, they agreed that both drawings represented males of the same species, the Long-tailed Aracela.

"Notice the signature in the corner, Tanyo," said Alvandris, pointing to the porcelain plaque. "It reads 'Iretanyo of Nardan,' the same as your own. He was our direct ancestor, and he lived in our present home, as his name indicates, nearly five hundred years ago, as the date shows. What a strange coincidence!"

"That is a very rare bird in these parts," remarked the curator, "and I have never myself seen it. I cannot recall that there is any record of its occurrence since the original drawing was made. Let me look." He went to a great codex which seemed to be a catalogue, and after turning the pages for a few minutes came back to us. "No," he added, "we have no further record of the Long-tailed Aracela. Your painting is excellent, Iretanyo, and it shows certain details not evident on the one we have. If you would care to make us a copy on porcelain, I ^would be glad to accept it for the national collection and place it beside that of your ancestor. I am sure that it is superfluous to remind you ~~not to forget~~ to write in the locality and date before the piece is glazed. And we still do not know what the female of this species looks like. Maybe on another expedition

The paintings on porcelain, which form the principal part of the national collection, have long been preferred by many Valangan naturalists for their private collections, as they are capable of a higher finish than paintings on papyrus, and in a tropical climate are far more permanent. It is natural that a people who long ago brought the ceramic art to a high degree of perfection should choose this medium for their records. But hundreds or thousands of plaques of porcelain take up much space; and since people so pious as the Valangans naturally cherish the handiwork of their ancestors, the storage of the successive collections of paintings before long became a perplexing problem. Finally, it occurred to someone that if the paintings were made on plaques of suitable quality and size, they could eventually be used as tiles and built into the floors and even walls of houses, where they would be constantly on view, unstead of lying unseen in some dusty storeroom. And this is the origin of the tiles bearing figures of animals and plants, which from the first struck me as such a curious and attractive feature of the Valangan homes.

In other museums of natural history I soon felt depressed, as though I were in a great morgue set aside for dead animals. But the Valangan Museum did not have this disturbing effect upon me, and I spent a delightful day there. As we walked homeward in the cool of the evening, Calpani talked much of painting birds, as so many of his ancestors had done before him.

The day had passed without a word from Orovan in explanation of his strange conduct on the preceding morning, when he declared his intention of descending the cliff by the dangerous

Cassiorin Way and said that nobody would care if he fell off. I continued that night to turn the matter over in my mind, and the more I pondered, the more I was convinced that he acted just as young people in my native land do when, disappointed in love, they talk of joining the army, going to sea, even of taking their own lives - threats which they rarely carry out. I had known for some time that my dorin's attachment to Yanoa was more than simple friendship, and that Iretanyo thought fondly of Alestia, although his pursuit of birds had left him little time to spend with her while we were in the mountains. Finally, I concluded that Orovan had been piqued because Yanoa and I were so intimate, and he imagined that she preferred me to himself. But after his momentary loss of self-control, he had not again revealed any sign of disappointment; nor had he at any time displayed the slightest resentment toward me.

When I thought calmly of the matter, I did not see how Yanoa could possibly prefer me to Orovan, who was younger, stronger, handsomer, more vivacious, and no less intelligent than I, even if ~~the scope of~~ his knowledge was necessarily more restricted. ^{in scope} Moreover, he was a member of her own race and I a foreigner, from a country which Valangans, when they heard my accounts of it, could only regard as strange and barbarous, centuries if not millenia behind them in the essentials of civilization. I told myself that even to imagine that she preferred me to Orovan was an indication that love was upsetting my judgment. Yet when I recalled that for many weeks she had taken a large share in nursing me back to health, it seemed quite possible that she had formed a motherly attachment to me

in the time of my almost infantile weakness. But to play upon such an attachment would, it appeared to me, be taking an unfair advantage of the man who had helped to preserve my life and place me in the very situation where I could supplant him in his sweetheart's affections. Even ^{apart} ~~aside~~ from this, I had such love and respect for Orovan, and regarded him as so suitable a partner for Yanoa, that I ^W ~~should~~ gladly have stepped aside for him. Although I could not easily pluck her fair image from my heart, I could at least adore her from a distance and in silence.

As a result of these reflections, I resolved to see as little as possible of Yanoa, and in the succeeding days I stayed away from her house. But about a week after our visit to the Museum, Alvandris came to ask Calocar to make a flute for Calpani and found me at home. "We have missed you of late, Wilyo," he said. "Have you been too busy to cheer our home with your presence now and then? Yanoa especially is perplexed by your continued absence, and wonders whether she has in any way offended you."

Valangans are not adept at dissimulation of any kind, which they regard as a form of dishonesty and a culpable lack of confidence in those who wish to befriend them. Accordingly, I resolved to conceal nothing from Alvandris. "Perhaps you have heard," I began, "how Orovan wished to come down the Cassiorin Way without the rest of us, and when we remonstrated with him, he said that if he were killed it would matter to nobody."

"They told me about that," said Alvandris.

"Well," I continued, "I have thought much about it, and

the only conclusion I can reach is that he was hurt because Yancoa and I were together so much in the mountains. I am sure that he loves Yancoa, not merely as a friend, and perhaps he imagines that she prefers me to himself, which is absurd."

"Why absurd?" asked Alvandris.

"If you compare the two of us, you can answer your own question. ^{for any} ~~At all~~ events, I have decided to remain away from Yancoa for a while, ~~as~~ to leave an open field for Orovan. I shall be grateful if you will tell Yancoa for me that she has in no way offended me, but on the contrary she has pleased me too much."

"Your decision reveals greatness of spirit and does you credit," said Alvandris, "but that is not the way we handle this situation in Valanga. If it were, Orovan would be staying away from Yancoa, too; for he is too noble a youth to permit himself to be outdone in generosity by his dorin. And the result would be that poor Yancoa, from having two admirers, would be left with none."

"That never occurred to me," I remarked. "Of course Orovan is capable of the highest generosity. What must we do, then?"

"Since dorins are so much together, it often happens that they fall in love with the same girl, and female dorins with the same boy. In the two thousand years which have passed since the institution of the co-guardianship, the situation in which you and Orovan find yourselves has arisen countless times. Dorins often love each other so deeply that this affection prevails over the attraction of the opposite sex, and

rather than bring pain to their friend, they will relinquish their aspiration for the youth or maiden they admire. In ancient times it sometimes happened that a young man would steal quietly away from the country for a period, ~~in order~~ to leave his co-guardian in possession of the maiden they both loved. Or else he would concoct some quarrel with the girl, to make it appear that he no longer cared for her. There is a story, often told, of two youths, dorins, Otórvil and Theónis, who fell in love with two maidens, also dorins, Fayána and Notília. Otorvil adored Fayana, but fancying he detected signs that Theonis also loved her, he paid obvious attention to Notilia, to make it appear that she was his choice. Theonis actually preferred Notilia, but when he saw how assiduously his friend courted her, he turned all his attention to Fayana, so as not to interfere with the other's suit. Fayana was deeply in love with Otorvil, but believing that Notilia had set her heart on him, she did everything to encourage Theonis. Notilia loved Theonis, but her affection for her dorin made her pretend to prefer Otorvil. The upshot of all this complication was that each of the four finally married the one he or she loved less, in the belief that he or she thereby gave the co-guardian the one of his choice. But they did not discover their mistake^s, until some years after their marriage^s."

"And how did the marriages work out?" I queried.

"With four such generous souls, their wedded life was bound to be happy any way they paired off. None of them ever regretted his needless sacrifice."

"The moral of this tale," said I, "seems to be that nothing is to be gained, and perhaps much lost, by concealing the true state of one's affections from one's closest friends."

"Precisely," replied Alvandris. "For many centuries it has been the custom, when a situation such as your present one arises, for each of the young men to press his own suit in every fair way and permit the maiden to make her choice. And do not be so sure that you stand no chance beside Orovan. He is young and handsome, but you are neither old nor ugly. And a man who can drop into a strange country, and learn its language and adopt its ways, as rapidly and as thoroughly as you have done, is no fool, to say the least. Yancoa is proud of the accomplishment of the stranger she helped nurse back to health. Let her decide between you. Either way it works out, all of us at Nardan shall be happy. Orovan is sure to find a good wife."

With this our conversation ended. That same afternoon I went to Nardan, my heart soaring like a skylark. Along the path I met Orovan, who had just come from there. "Thank you, Willyo," he said simply, and pressed my shoulder even more warmly than usual. I knew without further explanation that Alvandris had reported our conversation to him. I knew, too, that whatever the outcome of our friendly rivalry for Yancoa, I should be satisfied. If he won, I should be happy in their happiness. If I won, I should be supremely happy with Yancoa, but my bliss would be tinged with sadness because Orovan had been disappointed. As I walked along, I mused upon the contrast

between the story of Otorvil and Theonis and the oft-repeated tale of Palamon and Arcite, a creation of the medieval European mind which, curiously enough, had been foisted upon ancient Greece, to whose modes of thought it is foreign. And I was impressed anew with the infinite superiority of friendship over irrational romantic passion.

CHAPTER XIII
THE DEDICATION OF INFANTS

At Nardan I was welcomed with the usual warmth. Here I found everyone talking about the Ceremony of Dedication, one of the most solemn of the Valangan religious rites, which would take place in a few days. This ceremony is very ancient, having been instituted by Stenoril himself, in the dramatic fashion which is related in vivid detail in the Charata, when the colonists clamored to be permitted to sacrifice to Anga as they had done in their ancestral home. Originally celebrated annually, it has for many years been held twice yearly, at the equinoxes, so that every infant may be offered to the deity before it begins to speak. The approaching ceremony was of special interest to us, because Viminia, Orovan's comely elder sister, was about to dedicate her firstborn.

Except for two classes, both exceedingly rare in Valanga, all the infants born in the country during the preceding six months are dedicated at this ceremony. The first class includes those born out of wedlock. If the father and mother of such babies agree to live as husband and wife and assume the full responsibility of parenthood, they are dedicated after the parents have demonstrated, over a period of about two years, their capacity to live and work together and take proper care of their child. To avoid embarrassment, such dedication is performed privately, before a few witnesses. But if the parents of an illegitimate baby fail to claim and become responsible for it, it cannot be dedicated, because nobody else will assume charge of it and there is no state institution for this

purpose. Valangans are convinced that the unwanted fruit of lawless passion can hardly be of the same spiritual quality as the intensely desired child of parents who have made all the preparations deemed essential to its future well-being. Hence, eager as childless couples are to adopt babies, they will accept only those born in wedlock. They believe that the others, although they may occasionally turn out well, are all too likely to repay with grief and shame the immense care that will be devoted to their nurture and education. Doubtless the long experience of the nation has provided adequate ground for this caution.

The second class of infants not dedicated includes those born with serious deformities. After careful examination by competent persons, such babies, deemed unfit to offer to Anga, are exposed on certain rocks at the head of the cliffs, as has been done since ancient times. I doubt not that many readers will be shocked by this statement, and wonder how people so compassionate as the Valangans can act so cruelly. But I am convinced that it is the very tenderness of feeling of my countrymen which causes them to persist in this practice so widespread ^{in earlier periods.} ~~among primitive peoples.~~ They argue that it is ~~far~~ kinder to permit the life to ebb from a little body in which sentience is still at the lowest stage, which neither fears the future nor has formed conscious aspirations for a fuller life, than to condemn such an unfortunate being to an existence handicapped and possibly embittered by congenital defects, which may also be heritable. And I believe that much can be said in support of this point of view.

There are neither temples nor sanctuaries in Valanga, as the whole country is held to be sacred to Anga. At a point near the center of each canton is a place of congregation called the sparáto, a sort of amphitheatre, whose stone-topped benches are built on rising ground beneath the open sky. The seats face a level, grassy stage with a large, sod-covered platform in the middle. The sparato is usually so oriented that those occupying the central benches behold the great, snowy peak of Tunima rising directly above the altar, like a motionless white cloud that never changes its shape. In a few cantons, however, some other natural object, almost equally impressive, has been chosen as the background. Flowering shrubs are massed along the sides of the sparato and behind the stage, while beyond them stand the fruitful trees of the neighboring orchards. With the exception of the Festival of Commemoration, all the sacred ceremonies are held in these amphitheatres, and all but the weddings take place in the thirty cantons simultaneously. I shall later give the reasons for this departure from the rule. The ceremonies are invariably ^{held} ~~carried on~~ in the cool of the morning, when showers rarely fall, rather than in the afternoon, which in Valanga is often rainy.

There is no priesthood in Valanga, but the ceremonies are directed by an officer designated Porástrin, which might be translated as Leader of Ceremonies. He is an ordinary citizen, with no more training in religious matters than every child receives but with deep insight into their significance, and he is, moreover, an eloquent speaker and capable organizer. Like the President of the canton, he is elected

by popular vote, a whole year before he assumes the full duties of his office, and in the interval he assists the present Porastrin, in order to become thoroughly familiar with his functions. The voting for these and other officers, as well as the meetings of the citizens to discuss and decide communal affairs, are held in the sparato itself; and this arrangement is considered to be perfectly fitting, for in Valanga there is no opposition between church and state, religion and politics, but the aim of both is identical. Both of them strive, each in its own way, to create a community which is a fitting expression, in its social arrangements no less than in the character of the individuals who compose it, of the highest creative power. The sparato is also available for lectures and public gatherings of various sorts, so long as their purpose is serious and they are conducted with decorum, as is almost invariably the case in Valanga.

The Porastrins of the thirty cantons meet together from time to time for the purpose of preserving uniformity in the ceremonials throughout the country, as this is held to strengthen the feeling that the inhabitants of all the cantons are a single people. There is, however, no effort to impose uniformity of creed; for all that one need believe in order to participate in the Valangan religion is ^{the existence of} ~~that there exists~~ a beneficent Power which makes itself felt throughout the universe and in the heart of man. This doctrine would seem to be acceptable to all the higher religions; and without it there could, I think, be no religion worthy of the name.

The morning of the Ceremony of Dedication dawned clear and mild. Before the day was an hour old, practically the whole

population of Botamia had gathered at the sparato, where the habitants of each homestead sat together. I was with my adoptive parents, Calocar and Alcira. Their daughter was not with us, as she had gone to live with her husband in another canton, but Alcira's aged parents sat beside her. To our right sat the three generations of the Nardan family, while on our left was Orovan's family, his lovely sister with her infant on her lap. All the married people, including those who had lost a husband or wife, were clad in the long, white robes which they first wore at their wedding. The remainder, composed almost wholly of people under twenty-five years of age, were dressed in their simple, everyday clothes, new and fresh for this solemn occasion.

After everyone was seated, the Leader of Ceremonies arose, his tall figure impressive in the long, white gown, which fell in graceful folds almost to his feet. "Valangans and residents of Botamia," he said in a clear, ringing voice that carried to the most distant benches, "we have gathered here today to repeat a ceremony which we and our ancestors have celebrated once or twice each year, with never an omission, for twenty-three centuries. All except the youngest of those present will recall the passage in our sacred Charata wherein it is related that after their arrival in this valley our forefathers, distressed by certain sorrows and reverses which are the inevitable lot of ^{humans} ~~men~~ wherever they dwell, imagined that their troubles came to them as punishments from their ancestral gods, whose rites they had neglected. Accordingly, they wished to bring priests from their original home, Manotar, in order to in-

stitute sacrifices of the sort to which they were formerly accustomed. But Stenoril, our great founder, desired no priesthood in the new commonwealth he was building. He had seen too much of the evils and abuses which arise from a body of men who, ~~some~~ given special privileges and exempted from all productive labor, have little to do except to impress other people with their superior holiness and special insight into the ways of God. He held that, just as Anga displays the splendors of his creation to every seeing creature, so he has left his purpose open to discovery by every man, layman or priest, who will approach this great mystery humbly, with a pure heart and a clear head. Rather than create a special priesthood, Stenoril wished to make us a nation of priests, who would regard this favored land as their sanctuary and treat every inch of it with the same scrupulous care that a devoted priest takes of the inmost sanctum of his temple. To this end he instituted this Ceremony of Dedication, in the impressive manner that nearly all of us here present know.

"Will all who have infants still undedicated now bring them forward as an offering to Anga."

The music conductor now stood up to lead the congregation in a stirring hymn. Fifteen couples arose and formed a column in the central aisle, fathers on the left and mothers on the right, each pair holding their infant between them. Clad in their long robes, with wreaths of flowers and glossy leaves on their heads, they marched slowly forward to the strains of the many-voiced choir. They circled the central altar, then laid their babies carefully in a row near its forward edge, behind a low parapet

which prevented their falling off. Leaving them here, in charge of several women whose duty it was to quiet them if they cried, the parents retired to the sides of the stage, half to the right and half to the left.

One of the babies was much bigger than all the others, and the woman who carried it seemed to me to press it to her bosom even more tenderly than the other mothers. It might have been about two years old, and at the conclusion of the ceremony I asked Alcira why it had not been dedicated sooner. She explained that this was the little one's second dedication, for it had just been adopted. Born to parents who already had the number of children permitted to them, they had presented it to Anga in the usual manner; for in these cases the mother always continues to nurse her offspring until it is weaned, which usually occurs at the age of about two years. After weaning, such a child is turned over to certain men and women, appointed by the Council of Presidents, whose office is to convey children born in excess of the quota to couples who, five years after marriage, are still childless. This transfer is effected in such a fashion that, except the discreet persons who attend to it, nobody knows the complete history of the child. The parents are ignorant of their baby's destination, which is usually a distant canton; but they are assured that it goes to a worthy couple who will give it as much love as though it were their own offspring. The adoptive parents know nothing of their foster child's origin, except that it is the legitimate offspring of an honorable family. The purpose of this secrecy is to sever every connection between the child and its natural parents, whom it soon forgets,

while it comes to look upon its adoptive parents as its own. The latter must then re-dedicate the child, for the ceremony involves the acceptance of an obligation by them.

When the infants lay in a row on the grassy altar and their parents stood on either side, the Leader of Ceremonies again came forward. "Fathers and mothers," he said, "you have freely given your beloved babies to Anga, from whom they came, to whom they rightfully belong. He needs them to serve him as men and women should, but in their present helpless state they are of little use to anybody. Accordingly, he ^{needs} ~~requires~~ those who will attend them lovingly, so that they will grow up sound in body and firm in mind, fit to act as priests in this sanctuary of Valanga. Hence he returns them to you in trust, to bring them up for his service, on condition that you make the promise which your parents and grandparents made before you, and which you already know."

"We will promise," said all the parents in unison.

"Then repeat these words after me: 'I promise to nurture my child with loving care, doing all in my power to help him (or her) to grow up strong in body, loving, reasonable, truthful, helpful to all, familiar with the traditions of Valanga and observant of its customs, a zealous protector of the beauty and fruitfulness of this land and of all its creatures. May Anga help me to carry out this pledge which I make to him.'"

Thirty voices repeated this solemn promise in chorus after the Leader of Ceremonies, who then said: "Now gather up your infants, every couple its own, and take them back to your homes."

But remember that they are no longer yours. They belong to God, first because he created them and in begetting them you acted only as his agents, and second because you have freely given them to him. Henceforth you hold them in trust for him, as guardians of a treasure which has been deposited with you and is not your own. Be ever watchful in carrying out your obligation. May Anga bless and preserve you and your little ones."

Again a solemn hymn swelled forth; and while the congregation sang, the parents gathered up their infants and, marching slowly side by side, returned with them to their places on the benches, to receive the congratulations and embraces of the other members of their families.

After all had settled down, the Leader of Ceremonies announced: "Now let all the parents of older children arise in their places, with their boys and girls between them."

This applied to the parents of all persons under twenty-four years of age, and about half the congregation stood up. Alvandris and Ilinissa arose, with Iretanyo, Yanco, and Calpani between them, as did Orovan and his parents. Here and there was a man or woman with a child or two but no partner; these were widows and widowers. To our right I noticed a man and woman approaching middle age with, for Valanga, the surprising number of five children between them. Alcira explained that they were a widow and widower, with respectively two and three offspring, who had married each other. Some of the couples who had just dedicated infants rose again, for they had older children.

"May I ask all of the parents now standing to renew the promise which they first made when they dedicated their first-

born, as it is customary to do each year," said the Leader of Ceremonies.

Nearly four hundred voices repeated in unison the promise which we had just heard.

"Now," continued the Leader of Ceremonies, "I must request each of you to examine his conscience, asking himself whether during the past year he has striven earnestly to carry out the promise he made to Anga." Then, after a pause: "Have you done all in your power to fulfill your obligation?"

"I have striven earnestly," came from four hundred voices.

"Did I hear everyone? Did anyone's conscience command him to keep silence?" asked the Leader of Ceremonies.

No one spoke.

"Now I speak to the boys and girls. All except the youngest of you know that you belong to Anga, and that without your obedience and help your parents cannot properly fulfill the promise they made at the time they gave you to him. Have you tried hard to obey them? Have you studied your lessons? Have you been helpful to your parents, friendly to your playmates, and kind to all creatures? I do not ask whether you have always succeeded, for I should be much surprised if there is one among you who has not ~~failed~~ from time to time failed to behave as he should. What I ask is whether you have tried hard. Answer me truly."

"I have tried hard," spoke the children all at once.

"I believe there were some that I did not hear. Let them speak up. Who among you has not done his best to help his parents fulfill their promise to Anga?"

"I have not," came in a hoarse whisper from a gangling boy of about fourteen at the back of the amphitheatre. All eyes turned upon him, and Alcira whispered in my ear that he was well known for his waywardness.

The Leader of Ceremonies looked straight at him, saying: "Ránolin, I am glad that you are at least truthful. That is a good start toward being a worthy citizen of our commonwealth, but you still have far to go. Remember the promise you made at your consecration. Remember that you are now nearly old enough to have a dörin, but no boy will care to be your co-guardian if you do not improve. Will you promise before all the people of Botania that you will try harder this coming year than you have done in the past, to keep the pledge which you made at your consecration?"

"I promise," said the boy, and sinking to his seat, hid his head in his hands and wept. Everyone pitied him.

Calocar explained to me: "Now that he knows that all eyes are watching him, I ^would be greatly surprised if he does not mend his ways. This public singling out for remonstrance is a drastic medicine for a young person, and it is not done without much forethought by the Porastrin, and previous consultation with the delinquent's parents and teacher. But it is nearly always effective."

The meeting closed with the usual short discourse by the Leader of Ceremonies. He pointed out that different nations take pride in different things. In some, military prowess and the ability to conquer in battle is esteemed above every other accomplishment. In others, wealth, the possession of palatial

210
dwellings, wide-spreading fields, and hordes of servants or slaves, is the ruling ambition. Among still other people, to dress gorgeously, with richly embroidered garments and masses of jewelry, is the highest mark of distinction. But Valangans are a simple people, ignorant of the arts of war, indifferent to riches, and content with the plainest attire. Their greatest pride is in their children and their ability to bring them up to be good neighbors and careful guardians of the land which Anga gave them. All their social arrangements have been developed with a view to producing men and women of the highest character, and for permitting the great attention to education necessary to this end. In Valanga, no occupation is more highly respected than that of teacher; and even men and women who have held the highest office of their community, that of President of a canton, are proud to instruct children. For this reason, Valanga is the happiest country of which he knew, and its institutions have endured with scarcely any change for the longest period.

He further pointed out that Anga, ^{by} ~~through~~ natural processes, takes care of forming the children's bodies, and it depends on nature whether they are comely or deformed. But he has entrusted to the parents the still more important task of forming their children's character^s, and it rests with them whether they become beautiful or ugly in spirit.

At the conclusion of his moving discourse, he announced:
"Now let us all meditate in silence on the many reasons we have for gratitude to Anga; those of us who are parents for the sturdy, helpful children he has given us; those who are children

for the loving care of their parents; and all of us for our homes, and the abundance we enjoy, and the peace which has blessed our nation from its first foundation, and for the beauty of the valley in which we dwell."

After about a minute of silence, broken only by the birds which sang in the surrounding groves, we all joined in another hymn. This brought to an end the simple yet impressive ceremony, held under the open sky in the freshness of early morning.

On the way homeward, I walked for a while beside Blindro, whose serene countenance and mellow wisdom attracted me strongly. It occurred to me to ask which part of life he had found the best. "In Valanga," he replied, "all parts of life are good and each has its peculiar charms, but in many ways the last is the happiest. When young we live more intensely, but with maturity, if we cultivate a contemplative mind, we live more extensively. The child and the youth are so absorbed in their own pursuits that they give little thought to anything else. But in later years, when we desire less from outside ourselves because we have seen many sights and gathered much experience, our thoughts range more widely, and we have more leisure to participate in the lives of those about us. It is easy to do this when we are surrounded by those with whom we feel sympathy because we love them. When I watch Calpani frolicing with his playmates, I share his exhilaration and relive the years of my own childhood, so far in the past. When Tanyo returns from an excursion up into the mountains, aglow with his discoveries, he brings back to me my own adventurous youth; and while listening to him I am again a ^αlad of twenty, roaming

through the forests. When I watch young lovers, like you and Yanoa or Tanyo and Alestia, they recall to me the enchanted days when I courted Calintha, and I am happier through their happiness. When parents dedicate their infants or watch the consecration of their sons and daughters, I know just how they feel; for my thoughts are borne back to the time when Calintha and I carried our babies to the altar, when Alvandris and then his younger brother Invrin were consecrated. Thus after we grow old we can, in a sense, live all life's stages simultaneously; whereas at earlier periods we are commonly so engrossed in the present that we give little thought even to the stages of life that we have already traversed, while of those yet to come we with difficulty form an estimate. In old age, then, we see life whole, in a manner impossible to those who are younger. We enjoy ample time for reflection, and perhaps we come closer to fathoming life's meaning. But much still remains obscure to me."

"It seems to me, then," I said, "that in order that our latest years may be filled with beautiful and satisfying thoughts, it is most important that the earlier stages of life should also be happy; for there can be little gratification in reliving years that were in themselves distressing."

"Yes," he agreed, "that is the reason why we consider it so important to set the children on the right path from the very beginning."

At this point our discussion was interrupted by Yanoa, who ran up, seized her grandfather's arm, and led him aside to admire some bright flowers that grew beside the pathway.

CHAPTER XIV
MY BETROTHAL TO YANOA

At the Ceremony of Dedication I had felt somewhat self-conscious, for, with the exception of a few confirmed bachelors and spinsters, I was the oldest person without a white robe. I had now passed my twenty-ninth birthday, and practically everyone else of my age was already married and wore the ceremonial gown. I was convinced that if I could live happily with any woman, that woman would be Yanoa, who had long since captivated me by her beauty, intelligence, goodness of heart, and sound common sense. Since it had been agreed by all that she should select her husband, there seemed to be no point in leaving the matter longer in suspense. I decided that at the earliest opportunity I would try to put an end to the uncertainty which hung over Orovan's future and my own.

On an afternoon a short while after the dedication of the infants, I found Yanoa working at the loom in the big front room at Nardan. She was alone, and I took a seat beside her, watching her deft hands push the shuttle back and forth. I suddenly awoke to the fact that I had a great interest in weaving, an art of which before my arrival in Valanga I knew next to nothing. She explained her operations to me, the while continuing busily at her task. Little by little I gathered courage to ask the question on which my future depended.

"Yanoa, do you think that together we could make a couple of robes?"

There was a barely perceptible break in the movement of her gliding shuttle. "If we tried hard, I have no doubt that we could

make some excellent ones."

"When should we begin?" I queried.

"As soon as you wish. For my part, we cannot begin too soon."

My heart beat rapidly, and her shuttle slid back and forth with an increased tempo. We were engaged.

Before a young man and woman may marry, they must make their ceremonial robes together; hence when Valangans say that two people are "making robes", they mean that they are engaged to be married. Valangans view matrimony as a co-operative enterprise between a man and a woman whose end is the production of children. But to nurture children who are sound in every respect is a long and exacting undertaking, and it seems to them absurd that two people should embark upon such a great task before they have demonstrated their ability to carry smaller ones to a successful conclusion by their joint efforts. Hence the engagement period is one in which the prospective husband and wife work in closest co-operation at various undertakings related to their future life together, one of the chief of which is the manufacture of the robes, beginning with the stripping of the textile fiber from the plant which produces it.

In this probationary period, which generally lasts about six months, the youth and maid must not unnecessarily touch each other, much less kiss or caress. Should it be discovered that they kiss or fondle each other, the engagement may be terminated by their parents. Indeed, a self-respecting Valangan maiden will, on her own initiative, sever relations with a youth who shows so little self-control that he cannot keep his hands off her until they have finally demonstrated that they are suitable nuptial

partners; and a sober young man will shun as though she were afflicted with a foul disease a girl who during this period makes coquettish advances to him. For the whole object of "making robes" is to prove that the two can work together, possess common interests, enjoy each other's presence, and respect each other's character, before they enter into more intimate relations. Valangans, as I have already remarked, esteem friendship higher than a passionate attachment, and believe that a union not founded upon true friendship is most precariously established. The purpose of the engagement period is to cement the sort of friendship which is the surest foundation of a happy and enduring marriage. If it fails in this purpose, if the two young people cannot co-operate or are not happy when working together, it may be terminated without reproach to either party, so long as they have not indulged in forbidden intimacies.

All this passed through my mind as I sat watching Yanoa at her weaving. We already knew each other so well, and loved each other so deeply, that I believe neither of us had much doubt about the outcome of our trial - at least, this was true on my part.

Of a sudden, Yanoa dropped her shuttle and exclaimed: "Come, Wilyo, let us tell everybody. I'm sure they will be glad to hear."

I followed her out, and the first we found was Alvandris, the noise of whose hammer guided us to his carpenter shop.

"Father," she said, "if you and Mother consent, Wilyo and I are going to make robes."

"I knew that quite a while ago," he replied with a smile.

"But I never told you," said she.

"Nor I," I protested.

"That is true. But I have eyes in my head, and I know my daughter," he declared.

I wondered whether he could in fact have been so sure of the outcome of the friendly rivalry between Orovan and me. For my part, I was still amazed that she should have chosen me in preference to a youth so lovable as my dorin. But then I do not pretend to understand all the subtle turnings of the feminine mind. I was content, and not a little flattered, to know that I had found favor in her sight.

"Well," continued Alvandris, "if you are going to make robes, you will need that with which to make them. Come, let us take a look at the dorúva plants."

He led us through the orchard to a piece of low ground beside a little brook. Here, in close stand, grew a plant with slender, withe-like stems three or four yards high and large, toothed leaves. It appeared to belong to the nettle family and closely resembled the ramie or Chinese hemp, although I doubt that it was the same species.

"Here," said Alvandris, "are your robes, although it requires a good imagination to see them in their present state, and you must put in much hard work before they are wearable. This is the doruva, whose cortex yields the strongest, finest, and most durable fiber we have. For other kinds of garments we mostly use cotton, which is easier to harvest and to spin; but for marriage gowns doruva is invariably employed. Those who take pride in their work try to make these ceremonial robes so well that they

will last for the rest of their lives, and serve for their winding sheets in the end. If they become a trifle frayed or patched as we grow old, we say it does not matter, for the garment is only following the example of the body it covers. Hence Presidents are not ashamed to get up to speak in the Council in a patched robe, provided it is the one they wove with their betrothed; they would rather have that than a new one.

"This unadorned robe is the one gala costume that our simple mode of life admits. Since it requires only industry and patience to have it of the finest quality, it is accessible to all alike; and no Valangan can puff himself up because he dresses better than the rest, and none who is willing to take the pains need be ashamed because of the poorness of his garments. In general, only people who are regularly married are permitted to wear these robes at public gatherings, but a few exceptions are made. Thus an unmarried man or woman who has faithfully helped to care for the children of his ^{or her} widowed brother or sister, or one who is a teacher, or has in some other way performed some outstanding service to the community, may be granted the privilege of wearing a robe by the vote of the people of his canton. If one who is not entitled to do so comes to the sparato wearing a robe, there is no guard to throw him out; but the Porastrin will not proceed with the ceremony so long as he is present, and he would find the situation unendurably embarrassing.

"The foresighted man who has a daughter approaching the age of marriage always takes the trouble to plant a good patch of doruva. It ^{may} save her and her partner much time. It is a great convenience to have enough of it ready for cutting on one's own place."

"What a kind, thoughtful father I have!" exclaimed Yanoa, patting his cheek.

I confess that as I looked at those slender green stems a feeling of helplessness stole over me. I did not see any cloth for making a garment, nor anything which looked as though it could be spun or woven.

"Before you cut the stems," continued Alvandris, "I suggest that you call on Melótis and his wife Myrtílla. They are experts in the extraction and spinning of doruva. I have not worked with it since Ilinissa and I made our robes. Now we must find her and all the rest of the family, to break the good news. They will be glad. Iretanyo must try to tell Orovan before he comes here. He will finally be satisfied, too, with the way this affair has worked out; but he would not be human if he did not take it a trifle hard at first, and we must try to make it as easy as possible for him."

I felt for Orovan, and I could see that Yanoa was distressed. She said: "What a pity that a woman cannot have two husbands, so that I might avoid disappointing Orovan. We played together as children and I love him like a brother. Do you think he will be very downcast, Father?"

"When one's matrimonial pretensions are disappointed, half the sting may come from wounded vanity. Orovan is not vain, hence it will be easier for him to take. He is a reasonable lad, and he will soon find someone to make him happy. Don't worry about him."

"I am relieved to hear that, Father. I have thought for weeks and weeks what course I could take to make both Wilyo and

Orovan happy, and I could not think of any ^{way} better than the one I took."

We walked back through the orchard, laying our plans. Yancoa wished to be the first to tell her mother, who was out visiting a neighbor. I was eager to apprise Alcira and Calocar of my engagement. At the house we separated, arranging to visit Melotis and Myrtilla next morning, to learn the most approved method of preparing doruva thread.

Alcira was delighted by the news. "You could have searched the whole of Valanga without finding a lovelier or more capable girl," she declared. "I am certain that you will live happily together. Her mother and I are cousins, and our grandfather dwelt here at Avrano, which will be your home after your marriage. Hence his direct descendants will continue to occupy his homestead, which is what every Valangan desires."

When I reached Nardan early next morning there was important news for me. Ilinissa and Alvandris had decided to place Yancoa and me in charge of the house while we made our robes. This is a great mark of confidence, not accorded to every engaged couple. Some parents prefer that the young man lodge in a separate house, often in that of a neighbor, who is nearly always willing to admit such a suitor temporarily into the family, if his parents' home is inconveniently far from that of his betrothed. But I ^would share Iretanyo's bedroom, and together Yancoa and I would be responsible for the management of the household. Our duties would not be heavy; for all the occupants of a Valangan house help with the necessary tasks, which are light because our mode of living is so simple. But as in every other situation where

a number of people work together, somebody must take charge and co-ordinate their efforts. It would be our duty to see that there was always enough food on hand, that the house was kept clean, that guests were received with due courtesy, that nothing essential was lacking. In managing the household, Yanoa and I would not only acquire valuable experience but we would have an opportunity to observe each other in the kinds of situations we should have to face in our subsequent married life; and this seemed to me a most sensible arrangement. In many countries, a man and woman about to marry have seen each other chiefly or only at dances, parties, picnics, the theater, and similar amusements, but they have never tested their ability to co-operate in the responsible situations which every husband and wife must confront.

Yanoa's parents were glad to entrust their household to us, as it would give them a sort of vacation. Ilinissa would have more time for her flower garden and sewing. Alvandris could concentrate on the improved spinning wheel which he was trying to perfect, and which he hoped to finish before our doruva fiber was dry. This wheel, operated by a foot treadle, would spin several threads simultaneously, thereby saving much time. Valangans approve of small machines which lighten labor; but like the ancient Indian lawgiver Manu, they distrust and avoid great and complicated ones, fearing that they might eventually enslave the very men whom they are intended to serve.

When these arrangements had been made, Yanoa and I visited Melotis and Myrtilla to learn how doruva thread is prepared. They gave us full instructions, and even promised to come from time to time to see how we were progressing. It seemed that

everyone in Valanga was eager to forward a young man and woman in their robe-making.

That same afternoon we started to cut the long, pliable stems of the doruva plant, and to bed them down in a moist place for the preliminary fermentation. Since I am not writing a treatise on textiles, I shall not trouble the reader with a detailed description of the long, laborious process which we now began. After the stems had been softened by decay, they were beaten to loosen the fibrous strands, the soft tissues were then scraped away, and the fibers hackled out. Then they had to be picked over to remove defective or discolored strands and finally dried on a rack in the sun. We devoted about a fortnight to this task, which doubtless would have been irksome enough to either of us working alone; although together, with the prospects it held before us, we were most happily engaged. We prepared enough fiber not only for our robes but also for some sheets, which Alcira, Calintha, and Ilinissa kindly offered to weave for us.

While we were engaged in preparing the doruva fiber, the annual Ceremony of Consecration fell due, and there was considerable excitement in our household because Calpani was to be consecrated. At the Ceremony of Dedication, the parents offer their infants to Anga, and receive them back in trust, with the obligation to bring them up to be zealous guardians of the beauty of Valanga and good citizens of the commonwealth. But the parents cannot fulfill this obligation without the co-operation of the children themselves, who, when they become old enough to understand, must be consecrated to the service of Anga. They are held to be ready for this when they are thoroughly familiar with

the Charata, from which they learn not only the early history of their country but the ideals which inspire it; although only a few precocious children can recite long passages from it by the time they are consecrated. Before they are admitted to this sacrament, they must prove their readiness for it to the Leader of Ceremonies or his assistant, the Leader-elect; for Valangans hold it wrong to require children to make a promise before they know what they undertake to do. Accordingly, the age at which the boys and girls are consecrated varies with the development of their intelligence and the progress they make in their studies; but none is permitted to do so before he is twelve, and only the most retarded are as old as fourteen. Calpani had ^{just} celebrated his twelfth birthday, and being a bright lad, he passed with great credit his examination by the Leader of Ceremonies.

As usual, this ceremony, held under the open sky, took place in the cool early morning, and in all the thirty cantons simultaneously. All of the married people wore their white ceremonial gowns. The members of each family ^{were} ~~sat~~ together. As Yancoa's affianced, ^{I might have sat} ~~it would have been permissible for me to sit~~ with the Nardans; but since my parents had no other younger person with them, I thought it proper to sit beside them. Eleven boys and thirteen girls were to be consecrated. The girls wore attractive colored frocks, the lads blouses and knee-breeches; and each was crowned with a wreath of mingled flowers and glossy leaves. While the congregation sang, the children left their families and gathered by classes in the central aisle. Each teacher tries to prepare all the children in his class for consecration at the same time, and he leads them together to the stage. When

the column was formed, it marched slowly forward while the singing continued, circled the altar once, then stopped in front of it, where the children formed a line with their teachers behind them.

When the hymn ended, the Leader of Ceremonies explained in simple language the purpose of this ritual. Then the twenty-four boys and girls repeated after him the vow which I had taken before the Council of Presidents when I was admitted to residence in Valanga: "I promise to strive diligently to preserve the beauty and fruitfulness of this land which Anga has given us; never to inflict avoidable injury upon any living thing; always to speak the truth; to help my neighbors as I expect to be helped by them; and to abide by the customs of the Valangans."

After making their promise, the children and their teachers took seats reserved for them in the front row, and the Leader of Ceremonies addressed them as follows: "Boys and Girls, you and the eight hundred other children who are at this hour being consecrated to the service of Anga in all the thirty cantons of Valanga are, as far as I can discover, the most fortunate youngsters in the world; for you have pledged yourselves to do your share in upholding a country which is everywhere beautiful and is filled with happy people. Most other countries contain parts which are beautiful and other parts which are ugly, because men in their ignorance, greed, and folly have made them so. They contain people who consider themselves happy because they dwell in fine houses and have everything they need, and many others who live in ugly, crowded buildings or else in flimsy shacks, with scarcely enough to eat. Hence in these countries where such in-

equalities exist, people envy and hate each other; they have enemies who are constantly looking for a chance to take away their property.

"But as you go through life you will have no enemies, for our society has not been poisoned by social inequalities and the lust to accumulate wealth. You will never have to deal with anyone who is slyly looking for an opportunity to injure you by depriving you of what you need to support life; and nobody will ever try to corrupt you in your formative years for gain. Wherever you go between these encircling cliffs, you will see only beauty, find only friends, and be as safe as in your own homes. Nor will you, like the young men of many other countries, be forced into an army and taught how to destroy your fellow men; for we have no foreign enemies, as we have none at home. Moreover, when you grow up and are ready to marry, you will not have to plot and scheme to obtain a home to live in and means to support your family, as is true of countless people in other lands. For each youth and maiden there is a beautiful home and a productive orchard, which served your parents and grandparents before you, and which you will pass on to your children and your children's children.

"Because you have never been beyond your own country and have never seen anything different, you may imagine that all the advantages we enjoy as Valangans were given to us by nature, without effort on our part, like the sunshine and the air we breathe. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We owe the blessings we enjoy largely to the foresight, the careful planning, and the self-control of our ancestors, beginning with those whom Stenoril brought here; and without these, even the natural advan-

tages which Anga gave to this fruitful valley would doubtless have been lost long ago. If we become careless, our institutions will decay, our land will lose its fruitfulness and beauty, and we may become miserable like so many other peoples. How long Valanga will remain the pleasant land that it is depends wholly on you and the other children now growing up. It rests with you whether your children will be as happy as you have been and can look forward with the same confidence to the future. It is for this reason that you have been asked to pledge yourselves, according to the immemorial custom of our ancestors, to preserve the incomparable heritage which you have received.

"I said a while ago that you have no enemies, but that was not strictly true. I should have said that you have no external enemies, but only such as are within you. What are these enemies that lurk in the depths of your own souls? They are carelessness, pride, greed, envy, selfishness, anger, and hatred. Our ancestors unintentionally brought these foes when they came here from Manotar, where they were engendered by the difficult lives they led, surrounded by hostile tribes and often hard pressed to find the food they needed. In the many generations our race has dwelt here in peace and plenty, we have largely outgrown these deadly enemies; but we have not ^{completely} wholly lost them, and sometimes we surprise them hiding deep within us, ready to do us harm if we do not hold them down. Indeed, one of these foes is likely to grow and become more dangerous in the easy lives we lead here. I refer to carelessness, which is perhaps the most insidious of all, because it is the ally of all the others. Because life has always been good to us, we readily fall into the error of believing

that it will always continue to be so, without any effort on our part. This is a fatal mistake. Without strenuous efforts to preserve the customs of our nation, without constant vigilance to suppress every least upsurging of greed, selfishness, anger, and hatred, our society will fall into disorder, and the friendship which binds us firmly together will be destroyed.

"Your teachers have discussed with you the meaning of the several parts of the pledge you have just made, and the reasons for them. We must keep our land beautiful because it was beautiful when Anga gave it to our race, and we must revere his works. Moreover, ugliness depresses the spirit, and if our valley loses its beauty, we shall no longer be as cheerful as we have been. If we lose our cheerfulness, we shall find it harder to love each other; we shall then be less helpful to each other, and life will become more difficult for all of us. We must preserve the fruitfulness of our land so that we and our descendants shall never lack sufficient food, and Valangans will never be forced to contend with each other in order to fill their stomachs. We never inflict avoidable injury on any living thing, because, when we begin to think about it, we soon recognize that pain and distress are the same in all creatures as in us, hence we become as careful to prevent them in other beings as in ourselves. As to helping our neighbors, it is obvious that none of us can provide all the things he needs. There is not one of us who can make clothes, shoes, tools, pottery, furniture, houses, paper, and all the other things we require to live well; and even if we tried to make all these articles for ourselves, we ^would find that our products were not nearly as good as those made by people who take pains to perfect themselves in a single craft.

Hence we depend on our neighbors for many things that we could hardly do without, and our own self-respect makes us wish to give them at least as much as we receive from them. We ^wshould have a poor opinion of any able-bodied person who sat down and did nothing while his neighbors toiled to supply his needs.

"You have also pledged yourselves to speak the truth always, and this point calls for special attention. In other countries, where men who compete with each other for wealth and position make enemies, they have many reasons for concealing the truth. They must sometimes do so to shield themselves from the wiles of their opponents or the unjust oppression of their rulers. Then, too, they often lie in order to harm their enemies or to gain some unfair advantage over their competitors. But here in Valanga, where we are all friends and nobody ever tries to oppress or cheat us, we have no reason to conceal anything from anybody; yet in two situations we are tempted to practice deceit. Sometimes, to avoid doing something which we do not wish to do, as when our parents require our help and we feel lazy, we invent some story, perhaps saying that we have a pain somewhere. When we recall that we shall not be able to respect ourselves if we do not perform our share of the tasks which keep us alive, we shall be careful not to shirk necessary work. ⁹ But our strongest temptation to lie comes when we have done something wrong and wish to conceal our mistake or transgression from our friends and neighbors, whose good opinion is precious to us. But if we reflect a little, we ^{shall} see that this is a most foolish course to take. The chances are that sooner or later our deception will be discovered, and then our friends will have two reasons for having

a poor opinion of us, instead of only one. And in most cases, they will now have a much stronger reason for despising us than if we had freely admitted our error. For our first fault was probably unintentional, springing from our ignorance or our weakness; whereas a lie is always intentional, hence far more difficult to forgive. The only safe course is freely to admit that we have done wrong, so that our parents and friends can forgive us and help us to avoid similar lapses in the future. A true friend is always quick to pardon the failings of the one he loves, especially when there is repentance and eagerness to improve.

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The final part of your pledge, to abide by the customs of the Valangans, includes all the rest, and a good deal more besides, most of which you already know, the rest of which you will learn as you grow older. There are many reasons why you should be faithful to this promise, but perhaps the most compelling one is that thereby you will enjoy the greatest happiness. Men have spent much time discussing the nature of happiness and how we can best secure it. Some have thought that it consists in having many pleasures, as by seeing beautiful sights, eating delicious foods, smelling fragrant perfumes, hearing delightful music, enjoying shows and spectacles, and so forth. Others, more modest, have held that the foundation of happiness is simply freedom from pain. Yet others maintain that happiness consists in knowledge, or in having such advantages as wealth, power, or fame. They come closer to the mark who say that good and honorable conduct, rectitude in all things, is sufficient for happiness, and if we have this we need nothing more to enjoy the greatest

felicity that men can know. But in my opinion, to be happy we must be convinced that we are leading the best life that it is possible for us to lead; for if we believe that a richer and fuller life is attainable by us, we shall be discontented until we attain it. And I believe that for us Valangans the best possible life is that which our ancestors have perfected for us through many generations of ceaseless striving. Therefore, to be faithful to the customs of our country is for us the sure foundation of the happy life.

"There are some boys and girls who are impatient to become men and women, because they fancy that they will then be more important, and possibly have a better time, than while they are children. This is a great mistake and leads to lamentable consequences; because if we believe that what we are now doing is not of the greatest importance, we tend to become careless about it. All parts of our lives are equally important; and what makes us worthy of respect is not how old we are, but how well we play the part which corresponds to our years. Children are just as necessary to their parents as parents to their children; for without the presence among us of all stages of life, and the performance of all the activities which properly correspond to each stage, our lives would be crippled and imperfect. It is just as difficult to be a good child as a good parent - perhaps even more difficult, because parents have greater experience and this makes it easier for them to do as they should. And a good child helps his parents to be good, just as good parents make good children. You will never be more loved than you now are, nor more respected, if your

present conduct merits respect. Therefore, do not be impatient to add to your years - they will soon pile up on you more than you wish - but remember that if you play your present part well by studying diligently, being helpful and obedient to your elders, being always cheerful and kind, you will serve your country as much as anyone else, not even excepting the presidents of the cantons.

→ "Finally, it is customary on this occasion for all those who have earlier been consecrated to renew the pledge you then made, so that you may have it constantly in mind. Will you please rise and repeat it in unison with me."

Everybody but the young children then stood up, and we all repeated the same promise that the newly consecrated boys and girls had just made. Next there was the usual minute of silent meditation on the reasons we had for gratitude to God. Then, after joining in another hymn, we all dispersed to our homes.

On the way back, Calpani walked with his friend and classmate Orosmo, who likewise had been consecrated that morning. The two lads already looked upon themselves as dorins, although several years must pass before they would exchange pledges in the sparato and be publicly recognized as co-guardians. They went with their arms around each other's shoulders and seemed oblivious of everyone else. Yanoa and I walked a short way behind them, slightly envious of their freedom to give expression to their feelings as those who are making robes may not do, and we heard nearly all that they said.

"What part of our promise do you think will be hardest to

keep?" Calpani asked his companion.

"Never to injure any living thing," answered Orosmo after a moment's reflection. "There are so many living things, especially insects and other small creatures, and they are in so many places, that it is hardly possible to avoid hurting some of them, no matter how careful one is. I suppose that even while I was saying this I stepped on an ant or two."

"We did not promise never to injure any creature, for that would be impossible in a land as full of living things as this, but never to do so intentionally, when we might avoid it."

"Still, it is horrible to think that we crush the life out of tiny animals as we walk along," said Orosmo. "Perhaps we should carry a little broom to brush them off the path ahead of us, so as not to step on them. But then I suppose it would take us all day to reach home. What part of the promise do you think is hardest to keep?"

"To help our neighbors as much as they help us," promptly replied Calpani. "When I remember all the things they do for me, it seems impossible that I could ever do as much for them."

"Oh, but when you are older you will probably make beautiful furniture for your neighbors, as your father does, and I shall make tools, as mine does. Then we will do our share in building houses and bridges, and take our turns guarding the cliffs, and many other things besides. And when we are very old, I hope that we can be teachers like Grandfather Elindro; for Mother says that is the most important work anybody can do."

After a while Calpani asked: "Orosmo, what would you do

if I failed in some way to keep the promise that I have just made?"

"So long as I saw that you were trying, Calpani, I ^Would help you to do better, as you must help me. But if you did not try, then we could not be dorins any longer; for it is impossible to help somebody who will not even try."

"That's right," agreed Calpani, "we cannot help each other if we do not ourselves try."

As I watched these two lads walking along together, I reflected with a pang how much I had lost by being reared in a society where so many things, such as wealth, social position, scholastic and athletic achievements, are valued more highly than friendship founded upon simple goodness. And I silently vowed that, with Yaboa's help, I ^Would make compensation for the past by bringing up a child who would have what I had missed.

CHAPTER XV BUILDING A HOUSE

Alvandris finished the new spinning wheel by the time our dor-uva fibers were ready to be twisted into thread. Yanoa tried it and was delighted with its performance. About this time a house was to be put up in Botamia, and she suggested that I help with it while she spun the thread for our robes, an operation for which her fingers were from long practice far better fitted than mine. Since I was eager to learn about building, I readily assented to this arrangement.

Since Valanga has for many generations had a stationary population and there has long been adequate housing for all its inhabitants, most of its building is reconstruction. We do not stint the labor we devote to the construction of our dwellings; for we believe that scarcely any other effort is so well applied, and that a well-made house of adequate size is far more essential to a good and well-ordered life than fine clothing or luxurious food. ^{Houses} Our homes are made with the best materials and the greatest care, so that they will last a long while. With timely repairs, most of them stand well over a century, and some are still sound after several centuries. But in a tropical climate, the wooden framework does not endure indefinitely, and eventually they must be rebuilt. In Botamia, where there are about two hundred and twenty-five dwellings, it is the practice to replace at least one house each year. In some years, when there is much other work to be done, this building is omitted; and occasionally it is necessary to replace several houses in a year. It is considered expedient to

do a little construction each year, even when this is not necessary in order to keep the houses from falling; for without practice the builder's art would be lost, and when, as will surely some day happen, all the buildings at present standing become decrepit, the people would not know how to replace them. In this way, too, the houses are kept in excellent repair.

Each canton has a Master Builder, who is elected by the people and, unlike the President and the Leader of Ceremonies, may serve for many years together, for he has a special skill which few possess. Lorano, Orovan's father, has been Master Builder of Botamia for well over a decade. After referring to the cantonal records which give the whole history of each ^{built,} with careful specification of the materials of which it is edifice, he inspects the older ones and decides which is most in need of reconstruction. The family whose house is to be replaced is permitted to design its new dwelling, as it is held that a home should be pleasing to those who occupy it. But the occupants are not given unlimited freedom in this matter; for their house will be built by the community as a whole, to serve a number of generations; and a home constructed on an unusual plan is less likely to be satisfactory to the later occupants than one built on more conventional lines. Indeed, it often happens that the very people who put up fantastic houses soon grow tired of them. Hence the Master Builder must approve the design of the new house before work begins on it. Usually he himself plans the edifice in consultation with the occupants.

I once asked Lorano what would happen if someone pertinaciously insisted that his new home be built according to specifications which the Master Builder did not approve. He

told me of a man named Glindon, a shoemaker, who, when his dwelling was to be replaced, submitted a plan which Lorano found unsatisfactory. Glindon was stubborn and declared that he would have the new house he desired or live in his old one until it fell. To arbitrate the matter and be perfectly fair, Lorano called in as consultants the Master Builders of several other cantons, who agreed that a house of such peculiar design would be wasteful of materials, difficult to maintain, and probably unsatisfactory to Glindon's descendants. Since the man still refused to have his home rebuilt on any plan but his own, Lorano turned his attention to another homestead. Thereupon, the shoemaker proclaimed that if his neighbors could not reconstruct his dwelling when necessary, he would make no more shoes for them. He severed all relations with them and lived in isolation, refusing even to attend the religious ceremonies. But he could not build his house without help.

It might have gone hard with Glindon's wife and two children if his neighbors, pitying their plight, had not supplied them with certain things they needed. Some of the residents of Botamia who had depended on Glindon for their shoes were obliged to have recourse to shoemakers in other cantons to supply their needs. Glindon was left strictly alone, save that when he did not send his children to their classes the matter was brought before the cantonal assembly, which decided that so long as a man did not injure his neighbors or ruin his land he could live as a recluse if he pleased; although nobody need feel under obligation to help one who, being able, refused to contribute anything to the common welfare. But he

could not, in violation of his plighted word, deprive of instruction the children whom he held in trust for Anga, and if he persisted in this they would be placed in other families until they married. Accordingly, the children went for their lessons.

Things went on in this fashion for several years, until one day a decaying beam gave way with a crash and brought Glin-don to his senses. All this while, whether from force of habit or a feeling of duty, he had been secretly plying his craft, storing his product instead of distributing it. He now had a great stock of shoes made of hemp covered on the lower parts with rubber; and he let it be known that they were available, as long as the supply lasted, to anyone in Valanga who needed them. Although no accounts are kept, a Valangan loses his self-respect if he fails to do for his neighbors about as much as they do for him. Then he went to Lorano and said that he was ready to have his house rebuilt in whatever style the Master Builder deemed best. In a few months he had a comfortable new dwelling. Few Valangans, added Lorano, are so unreasonable.

"What amazes me," I said, "is that in Valanga an unusually capable and intelligent man appears to be content to live no more luxuriously than his less efficient neighbors, having a house, furniture, clothing, and food no better than theirs. In nearly all other countries, including those which call themselves communistic, the more able men believe that they deserve to live in grander style than their plodding fellows, and they generally manage to acquire far more than their proportional share of the material things that the others produce."

"In Valanga we have a different attitude," replied Lorano. "The more efficient man finishes his necessary tasks sooner and enjoys greater leisure for the pursuits most agreeable to him. The more intelligent man learns more and probes more deeply into the causes of things, thereby satisfying his thirst for understanding. These advantages are, in our estimation, sufficient recompense for superior natural endowment; and we should consider it most unkind of the man to whom nature in the first place has been unusually generous, to use his gifts to place a still greater distance between himself and his less fortunate neighbors by exploiting their toil. The man of superior abilities has been dowered by God with an advantage which no one by taking thought can acquire for himself or his children; and we believe that having been freely given something of inestimable worth, he should as freely share its fruits with the other members of his community. What we expect of everyone is equal effort to serve his neighbors; if, through no fault of his own, this effort does not yield as richly as another man's, we do not blame him. Here, where the least of us is provided with all that he needs in the way of food, housing, and the other material supports of a good life, nobody desires more."

"Moreover," continued Lorano, "at our consecration each of us pledges himself to strive diligently to preserve the beauty of his country. And we do not suppose that a country can be truly beautiful so long as anyone in it lives in squalor or misery, in an ugly house filled with ugly things, or lacks what he needs to lead a good life. Hence, when we work to provide things for our neighbors, we do not believe that we are working for them alone; rather we reflect that we are exerting our effort to create a beautiful country, which we can contemplate with pride and regard as our true and proper home, at the same time that we give happiness to our neighbors individually. And since nearly everyone has this attitude, scarcely anyone fails to do his share. "A Valangan would be ^{as}ashamed to see one of his fellow citizens living in a dilapidated or inadequate house as to inhabit such a building himself; and among the craftsmen it is a matter of pride to see that none of his neighbors lacks anything necessary for the furnishing or equipment of his home."

Lorano's discourse reminded me that, whereas in other countries social arrangements tend to exaggerate the innate differences between individuals, and even ^{by} through privilege and educational advantages to create apparent differences in natural ability where real ones do not exist, the Valangan

system tends to mask innate differences. Our system is not only kinder and more pleasant but, in my opinion, an actual source of strength to the commonwealth. Because the man of lower intelligence has received, as far as he can absorb it, the same education as the superior man; because he lives in the same kind of house, wears clothes of the same quality, and is treated with the same courtesy, ~~as the more efficient man,~~ he tries hard to comport himself as his equal status demands, and to a considerable degree he succeeds. I have scarcely ever, in my intercourse with my fellow citizens, been distressed by their boorishness and gaucherie, as so often happens in a stratified society, but on the contrary I have been most favorably impressed by their almost invariable dignity and good manners. I have never visited a house which was not clean and neat, where visitors were not received with faultless courtesy. There is no doubt that in a competitive society many of these people could not acquire such commodious and well-appointed homes as they actually possess; but having them, they all live as befits their dwellings - a result of their careful upbringing and excellent education. It is scarcely possible to convey to another the good feeling which this situation creates; one must live in such a community ~~in order~~ to appreciate how pleasant it is.

When a house is to be rebuilt, the family moves in with a neighbor for a few months. The floor of glazed tiles, covering the foundation platform of hard-packed earth, is usually in good condition, or needs only minor repairs. The roof-tiles, too, are as a rule sound enough to be placed upon the new

structure. But the walls and the wooden framework that supports the roof have deteriorated and must be replaced. The heavy beams required for this are provided by hardwood trees growing in the belts of forest that separate the cantons or along the hedgerows and in the corners of the orchards, where they are often planted in anticipation of this need. They are squared by axe or adze where they lie after being felled. Orovan is a skilled axeman, and it is a pleasure to watch him hew to his line with the greatest precision; ~~so that~~ his finished beam is as straight and almost as smooth as though it had been cut with a saw.

There are no sawmills in Valanga, not because the people are unfamiliar with the use of water power and incapable of constructing them, but because the transport of heavy logs to such a mill would be difficult. Accordingly, houses are built with a minimum of sawed boards, which are used chiefly for doors, windows, and ceilings. To cut these boards a log is raised on a platform, close to the point where the tree grew. One man stands above it and another beneath, and between them they pull up and down a long, coarse-toothed saw, which rapidly rips along the grain. Although in some countries slaves or paid laborers have been kept all day at this hard toil, in Valanga nobody is expected to continue at it for more than two hours at a stretch. Strong young men work in relays and soon cut enough boards for a house.

After the beams and boards have been cut, they are permitted to dry and lose weight before they are transported to the

site of the house. A dozen strong shoulders may be required to carry one of the heavier beams from the forest where it was cut to the nearest pathway, which is usually not far distant. Sawed boards are borne in small lots by two men in similar fashion. The removal of the pieces from the woodland on human shoulders does not cause the great destruction of young growth which would result from the passage of a team of oxen or horses, and even more from that of a tractor. At the roadway, the lumber is placed on a light cart and pulled by manpower to the house site, which is rarely more than a mile from the woodland which supplies the greater part of it and often much nearer. For several mornings I helped to carry and haul the lumber and did not find the work exhausting. To native Valangans, whose muscles are trained from childhood to useful work, it was hardly even tiring. They carried their beams and pulled the carts with a rhythmic swing that lightened the effort, and often they sang as they went.

At first I could hardly believe that all the materials for the commodious Valangan dwellings were transported by human muscles alone, but then I recalled how the massive stone structures of the Incas, the Aztecs, and other peoples were raised with no other power. Still, one might suppose that the absence of draft animals would be a great handicap to us. However, Valanga has largely overcome the difficulties of transportation by producing necessary materials, especially such as are heavy or bulky, near the points where they will be needed. Nearly all of our food is grown in the orchards which surround each dwelling. The kilns for baking tiles and

pottery are scattered over the country at convenient spots, near the sources of clay and firewood. Our lumber is grown close to the points where it will be used. Thanks largely to the uninterrupted peace which permits intelligent planning for the future, Valangans have become a foresighted people; we look far ahead to avoid unnecessary toil for ourselves and our descendants. Considering the great labor involved in raising domestic animals, cleaning pastures and supplying food for them, nursing them when they fall sick, catching and harnessing them when they are required for work, my impression is that employing such animals for the small amount of heavy hauling which we do would increase rather than diminish our toil.

Even were they available and could somehow be lowered down the cliffs, Valangans would hardly use beasts of burden. I have observed in other countries that to care for domestic animals one must have either the callousness of a machine or the patience of a saint. To keep them profitably, the former seems necessary; for if one feels much compassion for them, he is unlikely to drive them hard enough, or dispose of them when they cease to be useful and become a burden rather than a help to their owners. I have never known a Valangan sufficiently insensitive to treat animals as they are treated on nearly every farm where they are reared for the work they can perform, for their flesh or their products such as milk or eggs. As for raising animals not for exploitation but in order to be kind to them, Valangans would consider it ludicrous to spend their time caring for creatures so admirably

adapted for taking care of themselves, if only man permits them to lead without molestation the lives natural to them.

After the beams had been transported to the site of the new house, the carpenters set to work cutting and joining them to raise the frame. Then the tiles were laid on the roof. Next the strips of bamboo or palm stems were woven into the walls, to be covered with a coating of plaster. When this had been done, the carpenters returned to fit the doors and windows and apply the trimmings which gave a finished appearance to the edifice. The reconstruction of a dwelling whose foundation is sound requires about three months; but because of the division of labor, scarcely anyone is engaged at it through the whole of this period. This house-building is looked upon as a sort of party or social gathering, and nobody receives any pay for his share in the work.

At this house-building, as on my visits to neighbors who were working at their crafts, I received the impression that Valangans are a happy people because their necessary occupations are intrinsically satisfying to them. In other countries, men spend a large share of their lives, and the greater part of their strength, in tasks which yield them little satisfaction, in which, therefore, they engage only as a way to acquire the necessities and some of the amenities of life. By means of occupations which bring them no joy, they earn the money which they hope will purchase felicity. But this is the pathetic fallacy of a commercial society. If the necessary activities by which life is supported, which are indeed its solid core, fail to satisfy us, it is futile to try to create happiness

by supplementing them with a few glittering frivolities.

CHAPTER XVI
OUR ROBE-MAKING

By the time I finished my stint for the new house, Yanoa had spun a good quantity of thread and we were ready to begin weaving the cloth for our robes. The large front room at Nardan contained several looms, and we set two close together, so that we could work ~~simultaneously~~ side by side. Yanoa taught me to weave, and after I caught the swing of the work I found it pleasant. Weaving plain cloth, without pattern, left one's mind free for thought or conversation while his hands plied the shuttle back and forth.

One day, while we sat at our weaving, Yanoa asked: "Wilyo, doesn't it sometimes make you sad to be so far from your parents and your old home? I am sure that I ~~should~~ miss my family terribly if I stayed away so long."

"I do miss them at times, but I am far happier here, weaving our marriage robes with you, than I could ever be in my native land. It is not the accident of birth, so much as community of interests and aspirations, that makes people feel at ease with each other. Even under my father's roof, among my nearest kin, I used sometimes to feel myself a stranger. As you know, many men have believed that when we die our souls pass to another body, and this process of transmigration is continued indefinitely, until at last by religious rites or spiritual self-discipline we win release from the round of rebirths. If we live righteously, we are born again with a better body, or in a more favorable environment; if wicked,

we may be reborn as one of the lower animals, or with a deformed body, or in a less happy ambience, all according to the magnitude of our transgressions. I am not sure whether this belief is true, but sometimes since coming here I have fancied that in an earlier incarnation I was a Valangan, who for some fault was reincarnated in a distant and less happy country. In my new body I did not remember anything definite about Valanga; but I preserved a vague recollection of my former condition, which made me restless and ill at ease in the land of my latest birth, and finally drove me forth to seek the better country which I had forfeited by my transgression. When I reached Valanga I seemed, even before I could understand a word of what was said around me, to have returned to the blessed land that I had lost. Since then I have felt at home. Doubtless this is all a fantasy, but I can think of no better way of telling you how I feel."

"I understand," she murmured.

"Of course, I ^would like to introduce my betrothed to my parents, my sister and brother, and tell them how happy I am with her. But I am not sure that they would understand. Certainly they could not deny that she is beautiful, but otherwise they would probably not approve my choice. They would measure you and Valanga by their own material yardstick and find both wanting. My mother would probably think that you dress too plainly. My father would say that we are wasting our time weaving this cloth at the rate of a few inches a day, when in his country there are great halls filled with hundreds of

looms, driven by steam or electric power, which with a few attendants turn out miles of cloth every ^{day} hour. The fact that we are weaving our lives together while we weave our fabric, that we can meditate while we work, whereas in those factories the din of whirring wheels and gliding shuttles drives one to distraction, would be outweighed in his practical mind by the sheer mass of marketable goods which the mechanical looms can produce. Perhaps, on the whole, it is better that Valanga and my native land are so far separated. To have the parts of one's life so sharply sundered as mine have been is in some respects a misfortune. But it is better to renounce the outside world for Valanga than never to find it."

For a while we wove in silence, then I said: "Yanoa, I still cannot quite understand why you accepted a foreigner, whose people you do not know, when you might have had a native Valangan for a husband, and why you chose me when such a splendid young man as Orovan was eager to make robes with you."

"You are very good and handsome, Wilyo,"

"But Orovan is better looking than I, and certainly no less good."

"Nobody could deny that Orovan is good, but he is not as handsome as you."

"Love does strange things to one's eyesight, Yanoa, and I suppose that it's useless to argue about it. But you still have not told me why you preferred me to him. If I had not come, would you have married him?"

"No doubt I should, and we would have been very happy together."

"And had handsome children," I added. "But why did you

change your mind when I fell out of the sky, so to speak?"

"You ask such difficult questions, Wilyo. Maybe the reason is that with you I feel that I am reaching out toward the larger world, while with Orovan I am confined to Valanga. Valanga may be, as you say, the best part of the world, and I love it intensely; but it is far from being the whole world, and we cannot help reaching out toward something greater. I fear that I have not given you a very clear explanation, but I have done my best."

After another interval of silent weaving, she asked: "How many children would you like to have, Wilyo?"

"If they are all like you and Iretanyo and Calpani, we cannot have too many for me. How many do you want?"

"As many as the Council permits, which if we marry next year will probably be three. But often, when nearly every family has its full quota and few children die, the number is limited to two. It all depends upon the year in which one marries, and every man and woman know at the outset of their married life how many children they may have. Everybody tries to obey, for it would be a terrible thing if so many children grew up that they could not all have homes when they marry. Although this last year our trees have borne profusely and many more people might live in Valanga, there are years when each plot can barely support a single family of grandparents, parents, and children, with here and there a great-grandparent still alive. I hope that we do not exceed our quota, for the extra children are taken away and given to some other couple, and the parents

do not even know where they go. It must be sad to lose a child that one has nursed at one's breast for two years or more. But I suppose that it is selfish of me to say that, for the extra children bring such happiness to the couples who cannot have any of their own; and they love and care for them just as though they were the actual parents. The adopted children that I know are cheerful and no different from others. Most of them are not aware that those whom they call 'father' and 'mother' are not their parents."

"Suppose that a baby dies, is one allowed another to replace it?"

"If a child dies before the age of twelve, it is not counted as part of the quota, and the parents may beget another to replace it. Once when there was a plague and many people died, the Council urged every couple to have another child."

"Are those who have children in excess of the quota punished in any way, besides being deprived of their baby?" I asked.

"It is considered that the loss of their baby is sufficient punishment, because they did not willfully disregard the customs of their country. But if two extra children are born to a couple, they are held to be very careless, and neighbors shun them as irresponsible people, indifferent to the future of Valanga and of their own descendants. Everybody tries to avoid the disgrace of being parents of two extra children, but nobody is punished for it."

"Well," said I, "let us hope that Anga gives us as many children as we are permitted to have, and no more. Would you like them to be boys or girls?"

"It would be nice to have one of each, or two of one sex and one of the other. Still, parents should be grateful for whatever children Anga sends them, and not make up their minds that the next baby must be a boy, or else a girl, when it is just as likely to be the other. That is a perverse thing to do, and much unhappiness may come of it."

"I agree. But I do hope that our children will resemble their mother's people rather than their father's."

"Why?" asked Yancoa.

"Because Valangans are on the whole so much more even-tempered, self-controlled, pacific, and considerate of others than the people of my native land, or for that matter, of any other country I know. Sometimes I fear that if we have children they will be as selfish and aggressive as certain of my relations, and bring shame to their parents."

"May it not be that the children of your native land are more wayward and uncontrolled because they are not as lovingly and carefully trained as Valangan children?" she asked.

"That is certainly one of the reasons," I agreed. "The parents are not with their children nearly as much as in Valanga. They send them away to school and for instruction of all sorts, and when the children come home the parents are likely to be out. There, children and parents rarely work together, except on the farms; and even farmers' children are with their parents less than formerly. Then, too, in other countries children pick up many strange notions from the most varied sources, and they are tempted to do all sorts of things which the parents must forbid. These frequent prohibitions

make the children antagonistic to their parents and resentful of their authority. Here, the children never see older people doing things, like drinking intoxicating liquors, smoking a weed called tobacco, and carousing in various ways, which are prohibited to them. Nobody ever suggests to them that other customs are better than those which their ancestors followed. They are not made to feel inferior to grown people, but allowed to help them in every possible way, and they know that they are contributing something of importance to their family and the community. They are respectful to their elders, not because the latter make out that they are some superior class of beings, but because the older people are respectful to children and demand an equal courtesy from them. Hence Valangan children look upon their parents as comrades and are seldom rebellious, as is so often true in other nations.

"But after we have made allowance for all these differences in environment and training, there seem to remain innate differences between Valangans and the people of other countries. You remember that, according to the Charata, Stenoril chose the original colonists on the basis of certain moral qualities; and Valanga has never had much use for the self-assertive type of man. In other lands, the man who is most aggressive, whether in war, business, or love, has most often succeeded in leaving descendants. Certainly, in the course of many generations, these differences in national ideals and customs must have left their mark upon the innate constitution of the population. That is the reason why I fear that our children may inherit too many of the traits of their father's ancestors to fit well into Valangan

society."

"But you told me that while still a boy you thought differently from your parents and comrades, more like a Valangan than a child of your own country. Since you received the same education as your brother and your schoolmates, and were subject to the same influences, it must have been something inborn in you that made the difference. Therefore, there is no reason to fear that your children will be born with qualities that unfit them for life in Valanga."

Here I let the matter drop, for I suspected that we were venturing beyond our depth into the controversial subject of the relative influence of nature and nurture. Thus, with alternating periods of conversation and silent work, when it was pleasant to feel that Yancoa was close to me as I carried on my task, our weaving proceeded steadily.

Although most of the time it was enough for me just to be near my beloved and to hear her voice or the sound of her loom, I confess that occasionally I was possessed by an almost overmastering desire to ^{embrace} ~~crush~~ her in my arms and cover her face with kisses. But I would rather have submitted to the amputation of both arms than to have disgraced myself by such unrestrained conduct, betrayed the confidence that had been shown to me by her parents, and perhaps irretrievably ruined my chance to marry Yancoa. When I reflected upon the matter, it seemed to me that perhaps this recurrent desire to caress my betrothed was to be attributed to early influences at least as much as to anything inborn in me. I recalled that as I grew to manhood I read poems and novels, saw plays and cinemas, in

which to kiss and embrace one's sweetheart was the approved, almost the only, way of showing one's affection for her. I saw my contemporaries acting in this manner. ^R Later, after Iretanyo and Orovan had made their robes, I questioned them on the subject; and they assured me that they rarely felt an impulse to kiss their betrothed, and easily suppressed it. In Valangan literature, the true lover is always represented as supremely happy merely to be near his beloved and working at the same tasks with her. To lay hands upon her before they have demonstrated their mutual devotion and fitness for each other is considered an insult and a profanation. It is not, I soon became convinced, that Valangan youths and maidens love each other less intensely than those of other lands. On the contrary, they love their partners in robe-making too much to kiss them. The strength of their spiritual devotion vetoes the physical expressions of love, until they have won the right to ^{indulge in} them by proving the constancy of this devotion.

Before Yanco and I finished weaving the cloth for our robes, Iretanyo became engaged to Alestia, to everyone's satisfaction. He and Orovan had from time to time gone with me to Alomia to see Faloris, our host at the Festival of Commemoration, whom I had continued to visit in order to profit by his incomparable knowledge of Valangan history. After Iretanyo and I became too busy with our robe-making to accompany him, Orovan made frequent visits to Alomia alone; and nobody supposed that they were all for the purpose of viewing the great waterfall or studying history. Accordingly, we were not sur-

prised when he announced that he was going to make robes with Rilinia, Faloris's charming and accomplished daughter. It appeared to me that he could not have done better, and it was gratifying to recall that I had introduced him to her. Thereby I felt that I made amends for taking Yanoa from him.

As we were finishing the weaving of the cloth for our robes, the annual ceremony called Dorinama, or the giving of co-guardians, arrived. As a rule, the boys and girls of Valanga exchange promises with their dorins at the first ceremony following their fifteenth birthday; but if they have difficulty in deciding whom they want, they may wait another year. Usually parents encourage their sons and daughters to pair off with other boys and girls, and treat each other as dorins, some years before this. But they are not permitted to make formal promises until they are older and their tastes have begun to form; for it is desirable that dorins should, as far as possible, share the same interests and like the same things, so that they will be much together.

A few weeks before the date of the ceremony, the parents and teachers of the children who will participate in it meet together to draw up the list of co-guardians. As nearly as possible, they give each boy and girl the dorin of his choice; but sometimes one is desired by two others, and the complication must be straightened out. If children who wish to become co-guardians seem not to have a good influence on each other, they may be given their second rather than their first choice. At times a boy or girl is urged to accept as dorin another with whom he has not been intimate and whom he never

thought of taking; and often these partnerships arranged by adults work out to everyone's satisfaction. If a boy or girl is exceptionally backward or wayward, ^{or she} he [^] may be made a co-guardian with two of the most intelligent and virtuous children in his neighborhood, whose special care is to help and instruct the weakest member of the trio. Nearly always dorins live in the same canton, and not far apart; but if a boy or girl has formed a close friendship with a resident of an adjoining canton, the two are permitted to become co-guardians if it is otherwise satisfactory. Although persuasion may be used, no one is forced to accept a dorin to whom he finally objects. Since the boys and girls are younger when they take co-guardians than when they marry, they are not allowed quite so much freedom in the choice of their partners; but in either case, it is recognized that their sentiments must receive full consideration if true friendship, which is one of the chief objects of these institutions, is to grow up between them.

The ceremony which we now attended ^d was, like the others, held under the open sky in the cool early morning. The married people were dressed in their robes, and the boys and girls about to become dorins wore wreaths of foliage and blossoms. On this occasion the people did not, as at the other ceremonies, take their places by families, but everyone who had a dorin sat beside him. This was true not only of the young, unmarried people, for whom the co-guardianship is primarily intended,

but even of aged men and women, who seemed to find particular pleasure in being thus intimately associated with the companions and guardians of their youth. A number of people who after marriage had settled in distant cantons came to Botamia to be with their dorins on this day. Orovan came from Alomia to celebrate the Dorinama with Iretanyo and me. I felt that the events of the last few months had drawn us even more closely together, for they demonstrated how similar we were in sentiments, ideals, and the rôles we must play in life.

Even children too young to have formally taken the co-guardians' pledge often sat with the dorins of their choice. Calpani and Orosmo were together, looking very serious. Of the still younger children, boys usually stayed with their fathers and girls with their mothers when the parents separated to be with their dorins, except in cases where one parent was visiting another canton. Then the parent who remained at home took charge of all the children.

Although many husbands and wives separated in order to be with their co-guardians, the parents of the children who took the principal parts in this ceremony were together, with their children between them, and if possible their dorins beside them. Of each pair of boys and girls who were about to become dorins, one sat with his family on one side of the sparato and the other on the opposite side. Then, while the congregation sang, they went forward in a pre-arranged order, one pair at a time. Of the two boys or girls who were about to become co-guardians, one came down the aisle at one side and the other the aisle at the opposite side, and they continued forward until they met in the center of the stage. Each marched forward between his parents,

who gave
him to his partner by placing their hands together. This continued until all the participants had been brought forward, when fourteen pairs of boys and girls stood in a row, the two sexes mingled together. The parents then returned to their seats.

When the line was complete, the Leader of Ceremonies arose and spoke: "At your consecration a few years ago, all of you who stand in pairs before me made a promise which I must ask you to repeat now, so that you will have it fresh in mind, for it enters into the vow which you are about to make to each other."

The twenty-eight boys and girls here repeated the pledge they had earlier made.

The Leader of Ceremonies continued: "Now let each of you place his right hand in that of his partner and say after me, each to his partner, and with all sincerity in his heart: "I will (ever be) watchful for your safety, that you never break the pledge you have made, nor do anything dishonorable, nor come to any harm. If need be, I will guard your life with my own."

When the children had given this promise to each other, they took their places in the front row of benches, each beside his co-guardian. The Leader of Ceremonies then addressed them: "Boys and girls, first of all I congratulate you. Each of you has pledged friendship to another. Friendship is the most precious thing in the world. Guard it as your very life."

"Until now, each of you has spent most of his time close to his parents and teachers, who were constantly watchful to see that no harm came to you. And we are harmed not only by

the accidents which happen to us, such as falling out of a tree or eating some unwholesome food that makes us ill, but even more by the wrong things which we ourselves do; for these hurt our inmost selves, whereas mishaps of the other sort injure only our bodies. Now that you are older and stronger, you will pass more of your time away from home and be more dependent upon yourselves. The boys will be taking part in building houses and bridges or going to lend a hand at the tile works. You will all be making long excursions to become familiar with every part of your country, and soon many of you will be going up the cliffs to explore the forests and climb the mountains. Some of you may even aspire to reach the top of Mt. Tunima, on whose snowy crest no man has ever been known to set foot. Since your parents have other occupations and cannot always be with you, we have given each of you a guardian to take their place. You know that you are expected to watch over each other with the same loving care that a parent takes of his child.

"What are your obligations as a dorin? The first is to watch over the physical safety of your partner. If you see him unnecessarily exposing himself to danger, entreat him to stop. If he retorts that he is not afraid, that if he gets hurt he can stand the pain, remind him that his parents and dorin will also suffer if he is injured or killed, and he is acting selfishly in taking needless risks. If you go bathing in the Tiritin River and he ventures into deep water although he cannot swim well, call him back. Do not let him dive where the water is shallow, for he might strike his head on the bottom. Do

not try to climb up the cliffs in unusual places, but keep to the recognized ways where guards are posted; they will afford you sufficient exercise and opportunity to display your skill.

"If your dorin is injured, bring help to him as promptly as possible. I wonder how many of you know the story of Sáril and Régnor, two young men who were co-guardians? One day they climbed far up into the mountains, looking for subjects to sketch. While they were passing over a rocky place, Regnor stumbled and hurt his leg so that he could not walk. Saril had either to carry him back or leave him lying alone on the cold mountain while he went for help. Since it was already afternoon, he knew that he could not return that same day, so he decided to bear his friend on his shoulders. The way was long and rough, and Regnor was heavy. More than once Saril rested his burden, thinking that he could go no farther. But after catching his breath he tried once more, and little by little he managed to reach the top of Yoron's Way, just as the sun was settling. He was too exhausted to carry Regnor down the cliff, so he left him there while he went alone to tell the guards. When he reached the guard station he just managed to gasp out 'My dorin is at the top of the cliff with an injured leg,' and then he fell into a swoon. Some of the guards went to rescue Regnor, while the others took care of Saril. After he recovered, and they expressed surprise that he had carried so heavy a burden for so long a distance, he exclaimed: 'I could not have carried so far a log or a rock that weighed as much, but I could carry my dorin.'

"Dorins are expected not only to watch over the bodily safety of their partners; perhaps even more they should watch over their conduct, helping them to remain faithful to their promise to Anga and to avoid any deed or speech which might dishonor them. Dorins must above all help each other to grow in virtue, so that they become men and women respected by all their neighbors. If your co-guardian does anything which you know to be wrong, or uses unseemly speech, reason with him and show him why he should not persist in such practices. If, for all your expostulation, he persists in doing wrong, you must recognize your inability to convince him and go to older people for help, your own parents first of all. Remember that you do not tell them of his misdeeds so that he may be disgraced or punished, but so that he may be corrected before, going from bad to worse, he does something for which he will be sorry for the rest of his life. If your dorin, for all that you can do, persists in acting or talking in a way that makes you ashamed, you may request to be released from your co-guardian's vow; for no one can be the friend of a person of whom he is ashamed. But if at first your dorin does not heed your good advice, you should not be easily discouraged, but persist as long as there is hope in trying to make him a better boy or girl.

"Finally, I shall tell you the story, which many of you doubtless know already, of two dorins, Orosmo and Varándis, who lived in Valanga many centuries ago. Before they became co-guardians, Varandis had contracted the wicked habit of throwing stones at birds and other inoffensive creatures. When he discovered this practice, Orosmo tried hard to stop

it; but Varandis was stubborn and paid no attention to his partner. Instead of going to older people for help when his own efforts failed, Orosmo kept silent; while Varandis, his evil impulses unchecked, grew steadily more callous to pain and bloodshed, until one day, in a fit of temper because his will had been thwarted, he threw a stone at Orosmo and struck him in the head, killing him. Then Varandis, hardly yet a man, was exiled from Valanga, and nobody heard of him again. I believe that we have grown milder with the passage of the generations, for no man now living has known one Valangan to kill another. And I believe that this gradual improvement in the character of our people is due in no small measure to co-guardians, who ever exhort each other to virtue. May those of you who have become dorins today carry on this great tradition, and the friendships you have contracted ripen and deepen through the years. May Anga bless you."

Then, after the usual minute of silent meditation on the reasons we have for gratitude to Anga, we sang another hymn and the meeting closed. From what I have seen of the co-guardianship in my years in Valanga, it appears to me that with young people who have a predominant wayward or evil tendency, the two dorins would only abet each other in their wickedness and become steadily worse. But with boys and girls in whom the inclination to virtue is strong, as is true of practically all Valangans, the co-guardianship provides a unique and powerful stimulus to moral improvement.

CHAPTER XVII
A SUBVERSIVE POEM

While Yanoa and I were making our robes, there appeared a poem which began to attract considerable attention because of the unusual nature of its theme, coupled with the high poetic gifts which the verse revealed. Its subject, romantic or passionate love, is in other countries so commonplace that scarcely any notice would be taken of it; but in Valanga a poem of this sort is most unusual. In the opening stanzas, the reader is introduced to a young man and woman weaving the cloth for their nuptial gowns, much as Yanoa and I, and many another pair in Valanga, were then doing. The girl was extraordinarily beautiful, and one day her betrothed was so strongly attracted by her loveliness that he could not resist stealing up and pressing a kiss on her lips. When her mother entered the room, she found the maiden agitated, and it did not take much questioning to divulge what had happened. Indignant over this indecorous conduct, the girl's parents ordered the young man to leave the house and never return. But the daughter pleaded so effectively that they relented and gave him another chance, after both had promised that if such a thing occurred a second time they would not conceal it from the parents.

Having tasted the sweetness of his lover's lips, the youth was even less able to refrain from them than before. While she sat at her loom a few days later, he seized her in his arms and kissed her many times. Valangans lack proficiency in the art of dissimulation; for we never try to overreach each other in commercial transactions, and being able to

count upon the good will of all our neighbors, we are accustomed to treat everyone with perfect frankness. Accordingly, the girl's parents promptly learned of this second lapse and broke off the robe-making.

In the next canto the young man, and then the maiden, pour forth the usual complaints of thwarted lovers, a theme hackneyed enough in the poetry of other nations, but in Valangan literature so novel that it permitted the poet to display his not inconsiderable originality. But the youth is not lacking in resolution, and the maiden has fallen wholly under his spell. They arrange a clandestine meeting, and since without finishing their robes they cannot become regularly married, they resolve to elope, a procedure practically unknown in Valanga. Ascending the cliffs by separate routes, they meet at an appointed trysting place, whence they proceed into the mountains until they come to a stream, beside which they build a leafy bower. Here they dwell together in bliss, subsisting upon the fruits which the wilderness provides. The poem contains some fine passages describing the beauty and tranquillity of the forest.

When I discussed this poem with Iretanyo, he said that a poet who could write such excellent verse should have known better than to envelop in the rainbow hues of poesy such wicked and foolish conduct. If the man had loved the maiden as much as he loved Alestia, he would not have dishonored her by such outrageous behavior. Probably they would soon grow tired of each other, as they had not yet demonstrated their mutual fit-

ness by completing their robe-making. Although at certain seasons it is possible to find enough food up in the mountains to keep alive, they would before long be reduced to hunger - and then what would they do? Although no one who took the trouble to think clearly would be misled by such a poem, he feared that it might give harmful notions to the shallower sort of young people. He doubted whether the poem would remain long in circulation.

Some days later, I learned that a number of prominent people had arranged to visit the poet, who I am sure would not care to have his name mentioned in connection with this matter, and discuss the poem with him. The group included Charondis the philosopher, Faloris the historian, the Presidents of Botamia and Tanvara, and several others. Since it was known that I was eager to meet Charondis and likewise to learn all that I could about Valangan customs, I was invited to be present. I welcomed the opportunity to discover how, without a censorship, and without banishing the poets as Plato advocated in his Republic, Valanga so effectively prevents the circulation of literature subversive of its institutions.

The meeting took place on the wide veranda of the poet's pleasant home in Tanvara, where his young wife was present and his little daughter romped over the floor. Faloris opened the discussion by quoting with appreciation some of the outstanding passages of the poem, and remarking upon the delicate feeling for nature which it revealed. "But," he concluded, "poetic gifts such as you possess should be devoted to a worthier theme. Valangan poets should support, not subvert, the honor-

ed institutions of their country."

The poet replied: "An artist must choose a subject which gives freest play to his own peculiar gifts, whatever they be, and allows him to express himself most adequately. If the theme which I chose enabled me to compose a poem which you are kind enough to call beautiful, it appears to me that it has justified itself. What other criterion can one apply to works of art?"

"I am sorry if I did not express myself clearly," said Faloris, "I did not mean that I consider the whole poem to be beautiful, but merely that it contains some beautiful passages."

"The distinction is subtle," remarked the poet.

"How would you define beauty?" asked Charondis.

After thinking a minute, the poet replied: "If you will permit me, I shall not attempt to define beauty in the abstract, but undertake the easier task of describing a beautiful object. I call beautiful that object of which all the parts are so adjusted to each other that they form a whole so harmonious that it brings delight to those who contemplate it."

"That is to my mind an excellent definition," continued Charondis. "Would you permit us to discuss your poem in its light?"

"Certainly," agreed the poet.

"Well, then, the first criticism which I have to offer is that your poem does not really form a whole, or perhaps more accurately, treat of a whole, but only of an episode isolated from its context. Your poem, therefore, lacks that completeness

which it would need in order to be truly beautiful. It does not deal with a natural unit."

"Could you give me an example of such a unit," requested the poet.

"The whole of a human life, or a coherent society, are examples," replied Charondis. "My objection to your poem is that by considering in isolation a small segment of a life, or rather of two lives, you manage to cast over it a certain glamor, which is sure to disappear when anyone takes the trouble to examine the whole of which this episode is a part. For those who try to see this whole, your poem is innocuous, or even a salutary warning of the consequences of certain kinds of behavior prohibited by the wisdom of our ancestors. But for those thoughtless readers who do not take the trouble to envisage the whole, it is dangerously seductive."

"I believe that I see what you are driving at," said the poet. "You are wondering what will become of those two lovers whom I left dwelling blissfully in their leafy bower."

"Exactly," said Charondis, "What will finally happen to them?"

"Since I regarded that as extraneous to the poem, I did not feel obliged to consider the question," explained the poet.

"They would certainly be most miserably cold and wet up there in their leafy bower when the great rains come," remarked the President of Botamia. "They would be thinking longingly of their comfortable homes down in the valley, and perhaps finally creep back in disgrace."

"If they did not starve to death, or fall victims to some

wandering band of savages before that happened," added the President of Tanvara.

"We believe," said Charondis, "that you owe it to your readers to tell them precisely what happens to the lovers after their first passion has burnt itself out. That would give your work a certain completeness which in its present form it lacks. It would then become more beautiful as a work of art and at the same time point out a moral truth. No man in his senses would then imitate your passionate lover."

"A great poet who wrote in my native tongue declared that beauty is truth, truth beauty," I remarked.

"May I ask," queried the President of Botamia, "whether when you made your robes you behaved like the young man in your poem?"

"He certainly did not," indignantly exclaimed the poet's wife, the color rising to her cheeks. "If he had done that, I would not be here in this house. His conduct while we wove our robes was exemplary."

"And would you wish this little girl to be courted and abducted in the whirlwind fashion of your hero?" asked the President of Tanvara, indicating the poet's daughter on the floor. "Perhaps, not many years hence, some gallant young man who knows your poem will infer from it that you approve^{of} such proceedings."

"My friends," replied the poet, "you have said enough to make me aware of certain defects in my poem. I must see what can be done to remedy them."

"To return to your definition of a beautiful object as one

all of whose parts are so adjusted to each other that it forms a harmonious whole which pleases those who contemplate it," said Charondis, " it seems to me that Valanga is an excellent example of such an object. Here, thanks to the genius of Stenoril our founder and Deodan the great reformer, and to many others who made smaller contributions, we live in accordance with institutions which weld the several stages of life and the numerous members of our commonwealth into a harmonious whole. Moreover, we are so well adjusted to this lovely valley itself and the other life which it supports, that here ^{humane} men and the rest of nature form a coherent community. All the parts and aspects of this great whole exist in such perfect equilibrium that it has continued to flourish, without signs of deterioration, for well over two thousand years. It is true that there are still certain defects and blemishes in the structure which we strive to remedy, but they are not so glaring as to distract our attention from its beauty. This is a beauty which we perceive with our minds rather than with our senses; although the physical charm of our country, with its clear streams and countless flourishing trees, does much to heighten the effect.

"Thus we must recognize that, for us, Valanga is the supreme work of art, by its relation to which every lesser artistic creation must be tested. If a poem or a picture or any other product of art blends with this fabric which gave birth to it, so that it enhances the harmony of the whole, we acclaim it as beautiful. If, on the other hand, by clashing with our ideals and institutions it diminishes the harmony of Valanga,

we with difficulty discern beauty in it, whatever small merits it might possess when considered in isolation. The first principle of artistic criticism is that an object must be judged by its congruity with its actual context, and for us the Valangan commonwealth is that context. If it does not fit here, we must disapprove it."

The poet's wife now served us refreshments, and soon afterward we left. As we rose to go, the President of Tanvara asked the poet; "My son, could you find satisfaction in the production of a work which caused a single one of your countrymen to follow a course which he might lastingly regret, or one which excites ignoble passions, or one which tends to cause disrespect for institutions whose worth you recognize? Certainly gifts such as you possess might be applied to worthier themes."

A few days later, the poet called in the half-dozen or so manuscript copies of his poem which had been distributed, with the explanation that he wished to make certain corrections in the text. Although this happened nearly two years ago, the work has not yet re-appeared, and no one expects that it will. But in this interval we have seen some other delightful compositions, of a different tenor, from the same gifted pen.

When I spoke to Charondis about this affair some weeks ago, he said that he did not expect any other result of our visit to the poet. One of the first principles of Valangan policy is to make the country safe for children and adolescents, shielding them from every evil impression and disturbing opinion. We would resent the imputation that we impose hardships and sacrifices upon ourselves to this end, for we

believe that what is harmful as an example to youngsters cannot be wholesome for adults either. We show our gratitude for what we owe to the loving care of our parents by being equally careful for our children's sake. We are convinced that by giving them proper instruction at the proper time, we can prevent their going astray and committing acts which will bring regret in later years.

When I asked Charondis if he did not think that people who grow up without knowledge of evil would be defenseless when finally it confronts them, he replied: "There are two great sources of moral peril. We have on the one hand to guard against impulses and appetites which surge up within us and drive us to commit lawless or dangerous acts, and on the other hand we must resist seductive external influences. These external influences would of course be powerless to excite us if they did not appeal to appetites already within us, but perhaps lying dormant; so that it is the combination of these two factors, the internal and the external, that constitutes the real danger. If you can guard young people against evil solicitations until they have become strong in self-control, they will be fairly invulnerable to such influences. And our system of education, mild as it is, provides much training in self-control. We expect the children to apply themselves diligently to their studies. One does not learn by heart a canto of the Charata without intense application, and many of us can recite the whole epic. Almost from the time he can toddle about, every child is required to help his parents in ways suited to his strength. Finally, robe-making is a rigorous training in

self-control, as all of us who have been through it can attest."

"Besides," I added, "when a Valangan youth leaves the sheltered atmosphere of his home, he does not suddenly enter an ambience where moral perils lurk on every side, as so frequently happens in other lands. Wherever he goes within the limits of his country, he will find only other homes as orderly as his own, other men who treat him as a son or a brother. He does not need to be constantly on guard against seductive influences, but merely to keep watch over his appetites, which immensely simplifies his task. And that Valangans are well able to do this, the decorum prevailing throughout the country attests. But I wonder what would happen to a Valangan, brought up in ignorance of evil, who suddenly found himself in the midst of all the wickedness and opportunities for debauchery which he would find, for example, in any great city?"

Charondis replied: "The narratives of the travellers who in past centuries went forth to search for useful trees, or to gain knowledge, contain the answer to your question. Naturally, these young men were not permitted to set out for foreign lands without some forewarning of the conditions they would encounter, which was given them by those who had returned from their travels or by scholars who had studied the customs of other countries. Still, the first actual contact with ugliness and evil was usually extremely disturbing to these young Valangans, some of whom it threw into a state of melancholic depression from which they were long in recovering, while a few were so severely affected that they were obliged to return home. Still, they rarely succumbed to evil; for it is not

what disgusts, but what has at least the appearance of good, that leads us astray. Most of these travellers came back to Valanga as uncorrupted as they went forth. In our view, innocence is far more precious than experience. Of what use is the accumulated wisdom of the ages, if each of us must discover afresh the value of ~~the~~ rules of conduct by experiencing in his own person the disastrous effects of transgressing them?"

1778 298

CHAPTER XVIII
THE WEDDING

The weeks passed swiftly in happy companionship with Yanoa and pleasant anticipations of a still more intimate association. After the cloth for the robes had been woven, Yanoa undertook to make them with her mother's help; for she feared that without the aid of one more experienced than herself, she might ruin our so carefully woven fabric by cutting it wrongly. I was not expected to assist with this, as men rarely sew in Valanga, although all of them weave, at least their marriage robes. While Yanoa was sewing I did some necessary work at Avrano, for I did not neglect my parents during our robe-making. Since it now appeared that we would finish our garments with time to spare, we made some pleasant excursions through the valley with Iretanyo and Alestia. Orovan now spent so much time in Alomia, making robes with Rilinia, that we saw little of him and missed him greatly.

We were relieved when our robes were praised, not only by our parents and closest friends, who might be prejudiced in our favor, but by the inspectors appointed for this purpose by the President of the canton. If the robes do not pass this examination, better ones must be completed before the marriage can take place; for it is held that if a young couple are incompetent to make presentable robes, they are unlikely to succeed in the more difficult undertaking of raising children who will be faithful servants of Anga and responsible citizens of the commonwealth. As the six months' probationary

period drew to an end, Alvandris and Ilinissa expressed their satisfaction with the manner in which we had conducted the household, and their appreciation of the partial vacation they had enjoyed. There remained no further obstacles to our wedding.

About one robe-making in thirty fails to lead to marriage, because the youth and maiden discover that they cannot work harmoniously together; and this of course represents the avoidance of so many unhappy unions. Although the young person who, because of incompatibility, fails to bring his robe-making to the usual conclusion is deemed to have lost nothing, or very little, in eligibility for marriage, one who has twice broken off the engagement is looked upon as a poor risk. For fear that he or she will be merely wasting time in making robes with her or him, a young man or woman hesitates to become engaged to such a person, who is likely to have an unfortunate disposition or to be lacking in seriousness. As to Yanoa and I, we were now quite certain that we were made for each other. We viewed our approaching marriage with no misgivings, but as two travellers who, having proved each other's worth on an arduous journey, are about to set forth on another which they hope will be much longer.

Unlike the ceremonies of dedication, consecration, and giving of co-guardians, which are held semiannually or annually at a fixed date in all the cantons simultaneously, the marriage ceremony is performed three or four times a year, as occasion may demand, and on different days in the different cantons. The object in holding this ceremony more frequently

is to avoid making young couples who have successfully terminated their robe-making wait many months for their marriage; and the weddings take place on different days in different cantons because unions between residents of separate cantons are encouraged, and numerous people wish to attend the ceremony in a neighboring canton without missing that in their own.

Like the other sacraments, the marriage ceremony is not performed for a single person or couple but for a number together. If, three months after the last ceremony, few couples in a canton are ready to be wedded, two adjoining cantons may hold the marriage ceremony together, in order to have a larger number of participants and make the ritual more impressive. In Valanga, a wedding is not considered a proper occasion for a young man and woman to deck themselves out in their best finery and become the center of attraction of a large gathering. With them, the sanctification of a nuptial union is an event too solemn for any display of vanity. A number of couples are married together to impress upon them that their marriage is not merely for their personal convenience or delectation, but part of a larger enterprise in which their whole country is concerned.

No man or woman who has been unchaste is permitted to be married at these public ceremonies, as their sacred nature demands purity in all the chief participants. Even if his transgression were known only to himself and his partner in guilt, I doubt whether any Valangan would be so shameless as to be married at the public ceremony when not entitled to do

so. If a young couple, unable to wait for the sanctification of their union, have indulged in precocious sexual relations, they may be married before the President of their canton and a few witnesses, but not at the general ceremony. If a child is born out of wedlock and its parents consent to become husband and wife, they likewise are married before the President and witnesses. Since the President rather than the Leader of Ceremonies officiates in these instances, the marriage has a civil rather than a religious sanction, so far as this distinction is made in Valanga. In both of these cases, the man and woman cannot wear robes at their wedding, even if they have already made them. But if they thenceforth live together as a husband and wife should and are faithful in the care of their children, they are entitled to wear robes at the public ceremonies after their first child has passed the age of two years. This is permitted so as not to put them to shame before their children; to prevent the latter from becoming aware that they are different from other children by noticing that their parents are clad differently from other parents at the ceremonies; and to avoid penalizing the parents indefinitely for a youthful transgression whose consequences they have accepted.

If, however, a woman bear a child out of wedlock and refuse to divulge the name of its father, she is sent into exile with her baby; and the same penalty is applied to a man who will not acknowledge his child and care for it as a father, provided his fatherhood can be proved beyond doubt. The expatriate may find refuge with some neighboring tribe, but failing this he will soon perish. This penalty is severe, and surprising in

a people so gentle and forgiving. But Valangans hold that to give life to a human being without making proper provision for his welfare is, from certain points of view, a crime more serious than murder; for when one kills a man he puts an end to all his pains; but if one gives life to a human without making adequate provision for his welfare, he condemns his offspring to more than the usual measure of the sorrows that mortals must bear. Hence the Valangan commonwealth, which above all demands responsibility in its citizens, punishes irresponsible parenthood almost as severely as other nations punish murder.

In recent centuries, there have been exceedingly few instances of the application of these penalties; for in Valanga unchastity of any sort has become rarer than homicide in most other countries, while adultery is unknown. If this and other things that I have to tell about my adopted country appear incredible to the reader, I ask him to bear in mind that when an intelligent and strong-willed people adopt a comprehensive ideal of life, and impart it to all ~~of~~ their children, and hold it steadily in view for nearly a hundred generations, and are permitted by uninterrupted peace to cultivate it without distractions, they come fairly close to the realization of this ideal; although its full attainment would be too much to expect of fallible ^{humans} men. The trouble with most other countries is that they have never set for themselves a sufficiently elevated and comprehensive ideal of conduct; or if they did, it was confined to a small elite; or they were distracted from it by recurrent wars; and in any case it was rarely kept in

view for many generations. Perhaps only an aristocracy can accomplish this. Although Valangan society comprises only one class, that appears to be the highest class; hence it deserves to be called an aristocracy. Founded by a people of exceptionally high character, it has managed to preserve this character throughout the centuries.

On the day before our wedding, Calocar said to me: "On the eve of their marriage, it is customary for fathers to give certain instructions to their sons, and mothers to their daughters. I am glad that you have been chaste, for only those who are can give or receive instruction in these matters without shame. We do not bring up our children in ignorance of the mode of generation of humans and other animals. When they ask whence babies come, we tell them that they are so precious, and it is so important that no accident mar their perfect development while they are very small and tender, that they grow for nine months within their mother's body, where they find warmth, nourishment, and protection, and are safer from all harm than they could possibly be in the outside world.

"When boys become curious about the use of certain organs of their bodies, we tell them that in those parts are formed seeds which, when planted in their wife's womb, will give rise to new life; that in entrusting them with these seeds Anga has placed upon them a great responsibility, and they must be careful of them. We encourage our children to talk freely about these delicate subjects with their parents; for it is important that they acquire right ideas from us rather than wrong and often harmful ones from contemporaries almost as ignorant as

themselves, as will surely happen if their natural curiosity about their own bodies is consistently thwarted. We wish to avoid their thinking that the reproductive functions are more evil and shameful than any other functions of the body; although, like nearly everything else we do, they may become shameful and evil if carried to excess, or performed in improper circumstances. For how, if logically consistent, can one regard the act which initiates life as wicked or shameful, without holding that the creature which springs from this act is tainted by it? Life thereby seems to be poisoned at its source, and we must despise each other because of our shameful origin. Since we look upon life as sacred, consistency requires that all that has to do with its generation must likewise be held sacred. Because we are from an early age imbrued with this attitude, I ^wshould be very much surprised if you have ever heard a Valangan making jokes or crude remarks about matters of sex, as some of the backward tribes which surround us do."

"No, I have not," I said. "Iretanyo, Orovan, and I have now for two years lived together in the greatest intimacy, and we keep nothing secret from each other; but I have never heard either of them make a single coarse or indelicate remark. I ^wshould not be ashamed if Yanoa heard all the conversation that has ever passed between us."

"Well," continued Calocar, "although we tell our children how life begins, we do not dwell at unnecessary length upon the details of generation, but on the contrary we strive to turn their minds to things of more immediate importance to them. If they become unduly curious, we try to make them aware of

their ignorance of other matters which it is more pressing for them to know, and stimulate them to remedy this defect by timely study. Hence, when they are about to marry, we find it necessary to tell them in some detail how to beget children. Nature seems to have equipped all other animals at birth with all, or most, of what they need to know to carry on their lives and reproduce their kind; but to men she has given only the capacity to discover, to teach, and to learn. Since what anybody can discover in his own lifetime is relatively slight, we are largely dependent for the direction of life upon what we can learn from the accumulated experience of past generations."

Here Calocar paused, as though uncertain whether to instruct me as a Valangan father instructs his son. Since I was without experience in these matters, and did not know to what extent I could trust the information which, before coming to Valanga, I had more or less accidentally picked up from sundry sources, I encouraged him to proceed. At the conclusion of his instructions, he said: "Our first embraces should always be for the purpose of begetting offspring, for thereby the nuptial union fulfills its purpose and is sanctified. But you will probably still be young when you have your quota of children, and you will not be expected to live thenceforth as a celibate with your wife. Hence in due time you must learn how to avoid begetting children. You and Yanoa are fortunate, for those marrying in the present year are permitted to have three children, although for several years past the allowance has been two. If Anga wills, you will have the joy of watching

three young bodies shoot up like growing trees, and three bright minds expand like opening blossoms, under your careful guidance. And they will bring to this home what it has long lacked; for we believe that that household is happiest which is most complete, with all the stages of life, from the earliest to the latest, represented in it. ^{It} It does not seem quite fair that some couples are allowed to have three children and others only two. But the mathematicians who study the biennial census reports say that if every family were allowed three children, Valanga would before long have more people than it can support, while if the allowance were reduced to two, the population would slowly dwindle away. Since one cannot have a half or a quarter of a child, these annual variations in the quota appear to be the only way out of the difficulty."

At the marriage ceremony, the bride and groom are given to each other not only by their respective parents but likewise by their co-guardians. I wondered whether Orovan would not find it painful to lead me up to the girl he had loved and lost, and whether he would prefer to remain absent from our wedding. When I expressed my doubts to Iretanyo, he made me ashamed of them: "Why shouldn't Orovan give you to Yancoa?" he exclaimed. "He loves both of you and believes that you will make each other happy. What is more natural than to wish to give happiness to those whom we love!"

Six other couples were to be married at the same time as Yancoa and I. As the bright sun floated up above the crests of the surrounding trees, whence emanated the songs of many birds and the delicate fragrance of flowers, the people poured into

the sparato of Botamia, until the congregation was larger than I had seen it; for many came from other cantons to attend the marriage ceremony. Faloris and his family honored us by walking all the way from Alomia to see us married. Our comrades at the guard station, Theonis and Camildo, Sestorin and Chlorodel, were also present.

The order in which the couples are led up to the stage is determined by lot, and it fell to Yanoa and me to be first. Between her parents, with Alestia following, my bride came forward at the left side of the amphitheatre, looking indescribably lovely with a chaplet of white flowers on her head, her dark tresses flowing over her shoulders, and her lithe body covered by the graceful folds of her newly made white gown. At the same time, likewise clad in my new robe and with a wreath of blue flowers on my head, I advanced along the opposite aisle, between my adoptive parents Calocar and Alcira, with Iretanyo and Orovan following us closely. When we met in the center of the stage, our right hands were placed together by our mothers. Thus bride and groom were given to each other by those who had chiefly watched over them in their formative years, their parents and their dorins. Our escort now returned to their seats, leaving Yanoa and me standing alone.

We felt most self-conscious as we stood side by side in front of the whole congregation, while the next couple was led forward in the same fashion. With them beside us, we were more at ease while the other pairs advanced. The brides were all so lovely, the bridegrooms all so handsome, that I wondered

whether in any other country in the world a dozen such comely people had wedded at the same time; but to my perhaps partial eye, Yanoa was the most exquisite of all the brides. When the last had arrived, and all seven couples formed a row across the stage, the Leader of Ceremonies directed: "Now let each in turn give his partner the marriage pledge."

Taking Yanoa's hand in mine, I said to her, in a voice which I hoped that all present could hear: "I promise to strive diligently to guard you from every ill, to make with you a home where love and order reign, and to live together all our lives as harmoniously as while we made our robes." Then in her clear, sweet voice, Yanoa made the same promise to me. Next the groom of the second couple pledged himself to his bride and then she to him, and so on until the last of the seven couples had exchanged vows.

When this had been done, the Leader of Ceremonies proclaimed: "According to the customs of the Valangans, and the rites which our fathers have practiced since the time of Deodan, the following couples have been wedded and are now publicly recognized as man and wife: Wilyo of Avrano and Yanoa of Nardan,, and they are entitled to wear their robes at all public ceremonies."

After this, we took the seats which had been reserved for us in the front row, and the Leader of Ceremonies made a short address: "This is an occasion for rejoicing and gratitude. For those who have this day entered matrimony, it is a time to rejoice that you have found a partner whom you love. For Valanga as a whole, it is an occasion for gratification

because it is able to produce such noble and generous youths, such lovely and accomplished maidens, as we see before us.

"For you who have won the partner of your choice, this is above all an occasion for gratitude. The youth or maiden whom you have taken as your life's companion did not spring up untended, like a weed by the roadside. Those moral qualities which make him^{or her} or her worthy of your friendship, those mental endowments which make him^{or her} an engaging companion, those practical accomplishments which fit him^{or her} to carry on the work of a household, are the fruit of careful nurture. Your partner is delightful and valuable to you because of the loving attention which his^{or her} parents and teachers and co-guardian have devoted to the formation of his^{or her} character and the cultivation of his mind. Without this, he^{or she} would be no better nor more pleasing to you than a man or woman of the most savage of the tribes which surround us. All that we are given by nature is the capacity to grow, to learn, and to prefer what is best. Without parents to feed him, the child would lack the nourishment necessary for growth; without teachers, the most capacious mind would be furnished with only the few scraps of information one could pick up from his own observation; without moral guidance, we^w should thirst for a good life without knowing how to lead it. We must be grateful not only to those who have given these gifts to ourselves^{us}, but likewise to those who have bestowed them on our life's companion.

"Your gratitude must extend not only to those from whom you and your partner have directly received these advantages. For

the most part, they were merely passing on to you what they themselves derived from their elders, and these in turn received from the preceding generation. The advantages we enjoy in this fortunate land we owe in the first place to the broad vision of Stenoril, who not only led our famished forefathers to this fruitful valley, but established in its main outlines the form of our society. We owe them also to all those who, like Deodan, refined and improved our original institutions, and to the multitude of forgotten men and women who faithfully preserved, and transmitted from generation to generation, our increasingly rich heritage. Without this devoted service of the people as a whole, the most inspired lawgivers, the wisest leaders, can accomplish nothing.

"How can we show the gratitude which at this time we feel toward those to whom we owe such immeasurable advantages? Most of them have long since passed beyond our ken; and those who are still with us, our living parents and teachers, ask no payment for what they have done for us. What recompense of equal value could we make to those who gave us life? And if we attempt to repay with knowledge those who furnished our minds, we ^would for the most part merely return what they gave us. We can demonstrate our gratitude for the heritage we have received from past generations only by passing it on unimpaired, and if possible with increase, to succeeding generations. If you are thankful for the happy childhood and youth which all of you have enjoyed, you can show your gratitude in no better way than by making your own children as hap-

py as you have been. If you feel indebted for the charming youth, for the lovely maiden, you have this day taken as your companion, you can repay your debt by some day giving a no less worthy youth or maiden to the partner of his ^{or her} choice. These are the only ways ^{that} in which it is possible for you to discharge your obligation to your more distant ancestors. To those still living, no form of repayment for the benefits you have received from them could be more pleasing. May Anga bless you and make your union fruitful."

After this discourse, as is customary at every marriage ceremony, all of the older married couples who were present renewed the promise they had given to each other on their wedding day. Then, after silent meditation on our reasons for being grateful to Anga, everyone joined in singing a hymn. The meeting dissolved while the morning was still young.

As we walked homeward, Calpani pleased me greatly by slipping his hand into mine and saying shyly: "I'm glad you're now my brother, Wilyo. Now I am sure that you will never leave us."

After our return to Nardan, Yancoa and I walked by ourselves in the orchard, beneath whose spreading trees we exchanged our first kisses. In the afternoon we stayed in the house, where many visitors arrived to congratulate our parents and ourselves. All were given refreshment from the great stacks of food and the pitchers of fruit juices we had prepared for the occasion. Except for the ^{bed} sheets which Alcira, Ilinissa, and Calintha wove with the doruva fibers that we supplied to them, we received no wedding gifts, as we re-

ceived no dowry. These are considered superfluous in a country where every newly married couple goes to live in a house already provided with every necessary article, where if one needs something, he either makes it himself or asks a neighbor, who furnishes it without payment. Sometimes, when a craftsman notices that a friend is in need of some article for which he hesitates to ask, he makes it and brings it to him as a surprise. Otherwise, the only present-giving in Valanga is to the children on their birthdays and sometimes also at the Festival of Commemoration. Much waste is avoided by restricting the giving of gifts to the very young, from whom no return is expected.

In the evening, after all the guests had gone, we of the family sang and played music on the veranda. That night, as is customary, Yanoa slept with her dorin, I with mine. Thus bride and bridegroom are mercifully spared the necessity to adjust themselves to a new relationship at the end of a day which exhausts them by the publicity to which they are exposed and its many demands for tact and courtesy. Next morning, our co-guardians and the members of our families escorted us to Avrano, carrying along our clothes and few personal possessions. ^{at} ~~on~~ this beautiful old homestead, which would thenceforth be our home, Yanoa and I began our new life as husband and wife.

Three months after our wedding, Iretanyo and Alestia were married in Botania; and Yanoa and I, clad in our new robes, had the pleasure of giving them to each other as their co-guardians. A few weeks after this, Orovan was wedded to Rilinia

in the magnificent sparato of Alomia, so situated that the congregation faces the narrowing cliffs at the head of the valley and looks upon the great waterfall flowing down behind the stage, with the white summit of Tunima rising into the sky above it. Everyone from Nardan and Avrano, as well as many others from Botamia, attended the ceremony. It was a great joy to me to join with Iretanyo and Orovan's parents in escorting the groom to his lovely bride.

After their marriage, Orovan brought her to dwell in the home of his ancestors in Botamia. Iretanyo likewise brought Alcira to live at Nardan, as her married brother had settled on her family homestead and would succeed to it. If Calpani weds a maid whose childhood home is already occupied by her married brother or sister, Calpani and his bride will have to dwell on either his or her parental homestead until some other place becomes available to them, as sometimes happens when a family rears only a single child, or none at all, to the age of marriage. Meanwhile, they would probably live with Iretanyo and Alestia at Nardan, to which Calpani has equal right; as every homestead belongs equally to all the members of a family who have not through marriage or adoption acquired another. More correctly, there is no individual ownership of real estate in Valanga, but each homestead is the inalienable possession of a family line - whether continued by birth or adoption - and its several members have jointly the usufruct of it. When a homestead is inhabited by two couples with young children, together with grandparents and possibly a great-grand-

parent or two, it sometimes cannot supply enough food for all its occupants. In this case, neighbors with smaller households gladly contribute their own excess production, as no Valangan will permit another to lack food if he can help it. If a significant number of households must be occupied by two couples with young children, the Council prevents the continuance of this situation by reducing the number of children which it is permissible to have.

CHAPTER XIX
TWO VALANGAN CEREMONIES

Soon after our marriage, Yanoa and I attended the Benitráma, or dedication of products, a religious ceremony which, as far as I know, is peculiar to Valanga. On this occasion, everyone who has made or created anything in the course of the past year brings what he considers to be the best of his productions as an offering to Anga. The objects so dedicated are of the greatest variety. Each craftsman brings a carefully selected piece of his handiwork, a bowl or pitcher, a tool, an article of furniture, a fabric or garment, or even such humble articles as buttons, shoes, and brooms. It is not the use to which the object is applied, but the loving care which went into the making of it, that renders it worthy to be offered to the deity; and the smallest and simplest of artifacts is as eligible for presentation as the greatest and most elaborate, if it was made as well as such things can be made. The only limitation placed upon these offerings is that of size, as some articles are too difficult to transport and would take up too much space in the sparato; a furniture-maker, for example, must be content to bring a chair or small table rather than a large table or bedstead. It does not matter that the object has already been given to the person for whom it was made and is in use by him; the owner is proud to lend it for dedication, as this signifies that its maker ^{sets} it as the best piece of work he has done in the course of the year.

In addition to the creations of the craftsmen, artists and

men of letters also present the best of their productions, a picture, a small statue, the score of a song, the manuscript of a poem or of a historical or philosophical work. Since many artists and writers also practice a handicraft, each person is permitted to offer a single object in each of the fields in which he has worked, but not more than one, as this would overcrowd the *sparato*. Thus *Faloris* dedicated at the same time a manuscript and a set of buttons he had cut from the ivory-like nut of a palm tree, and *Verenda* the poetess brought a copy of her latest book of lyrics as well as an example of the fine cloth her hands had woven while her mind composed her incomparable verses.

The children no less than the grown people participate in the *Benitrama*. Each schoolchild may dedicate the best of the compositions he has written in the past year, as well as the finest drawing he has made or the best mathematical demonstration he has worked out, if his teacher approves its quality. If a tree which a child has planted first bears fruits at this time, he may offer some of these to *Anga*. Older people, however, do not bring the recurrent products of their orchards and gardens, as this is not a harvest festival; but if they have developed a new horticultural variety which blossoms or fruits opportunely, they may offer its earliest flowers or fruits.

The purpose of this unique ceremony is to recall to us that *Anga*, the creator of the world, is likewise the primal source of all creative effort in man and other animals. We are creators by virtue of the divine creative energy coursing in and through

us. Although agents of this universal constructive force, we are not its passive tools; we are co-workers who must bring intelligent support and earnest effort in ^{so} order that it may reveal itself through us. Only by the most diligent application can ^{people} ~~men~~ produce things wherein we seem to detect some expression of the highest creative power. Each year, every Valangan is reminded, in the ceremony celebrated simultaneously in the thirty cantons, of his obligation to make every product of his hands and mind fit to be presented to Anga.

The objects brought for dedication commonly overflow the stage and spread to the front tiers of benches, which are reserved for them. After the Leader of Ceremonies has given a brief discourse, recalling to the people the purpose of this gathering, reminding them also that some creative efforts produce results which, being intangible, may be offered but not displayed in the sparato, everyone is free to examine the things which his neighbors have brought. At the first of these ceremonies which I attended, I was amazed by the variety of objects which had been produced without the use of machinery, or with only the simplest of machines, either in homes or in little factories set amidst the fruit trees and operated by a few people, who live close by and spend in them only such time as they can spare from their homes and orchards. ¶ I was agreeably impressed, too, by the uniformly high quality of the handicrafts that were represented. Here was no shoddy merchandise poured upon the market merely to catch the eye and enrich the manufacturer. Everything presented was made because it was needed

or because it was truly beautiful; and it was produced with the greatest care, to give as much service as can be obtained from an article of its ^{kind} class. Since I have taken to making brooms, I have discovered that much satisfaction is to be derived from the manufacture of one of the simplest and most utilitarian of household necessities, provided that one puts his heart into it and makes it of the highest quality. Even a broom, I am convinced, is fit to be offered to Anga, if one has put some honest effort into it. And to keep this constantly in mind as one labors is a stimulus to the application of such effort. Thus, I can from personal experience bear witness to the great value of the Benitrama, which reminds us annually that everything we create must be worthy of dedication to the highest Power.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, all of the objects which have been dedicated are carried home and put to the uses for which they were intended.

The last of the religious ceremonies which I shall describe is the Sathinama, or consecration of teachers. It is last also in the sense that it is the latest of the ceremonies in which one is an active participant in the course of his life; for the great majority of those who become teachers have long been married and have grown-up children, and of course they were earlier dedicated as infants, and consecrated as children, and took co-guardians at the Dorinama.

In Valanga, where, as I have already said, there are no schoolhouses, teachers are selected by the parents of the children they will instruct. Parents who have children ap-

proaching the age of six or seven, and who live in the same neighborhood, meet together and by mutual consent form their boys and girls into a class, which consists of from four to seven individuals. Five or six is considered the ideal number; and if there are eight children of the same age in the neighborhood, they will be divided into two classes of four. It is the intention of the parents that the four to seven children who comprise a class will remain together through the ten years devoted to what may be called their basic education. Only if a child learns so slowly that he falls far behind his classmates, or if he proves incompatible with them or antipathetic to the teacher, is he transferred to another class; but the parents as well as the teacher of this other class must consent to his admission.

Having formed the class, the parents look about among their neighbors for a teacher, who undertakes to instruct these same children throughout the ten years of the course. Since in Valanga the development of the child's character takes precedence over the facts he absorbs, it is considered far more important that the teacher know his pupils thoroughly, as is possible only if he is closely associated with the same ones throughout the years, than that he have special familiarity with the subjects taught in any particular grade or year. For a Valangan of sufficient mental capacity to be considered eligible as a teacher, the whole content of the basic course presents no difficulties. It is only a small portion of his total fund of information; and if in the many years that have passed since he was himself

a schoolchild he has become "stale" on certain subjects, he has ample time to refresh his memory during the decade which the course occupies.

The teacher, who may be either a man or a woman, has generally passed his fiftieth birthday and has relinquished the active superintendence of his homestead to his son and daughter-in-law, or daughter and son-in-law, who are rearing young children of their own. Although as a rule he still plies his handicraft and takes a share in attending the orchard, he is approaching the period of life when waning strength will reduce his capacity for physical labor, and he will be glad to devote more of his time to sedentary and intellectual occupations. Often the teacher is grandparent of one or more of the children in his class, for to have direct descendants among his pupils is most gratifying to him. To be chosen, by neighbors who know him intimately, to form the minds of their children is looked upon as one of the highest marks of confidence which a man or woman can receive, an honor scarcely inferior to election to the presidency of a canton. Few Valangans who are offered a class to teach ~~ever~~ refuse it. Many teach two classes, successively, and a few have ~~even~~ taught three, which occupies a period of thirty years.

As a rule, the teacher in charge of a class does not undertake to instruct his pupils in music and drawing, for which persons with special aptitude in these subjects are chosen by the parents, often in consultation with the principal teacher. These instructors of drawing and music may teach two or more

classes concurrently, which the principal teachers, with their greater range of subjects and more intimate responsibility for the development of their pupils, never do. Often the class meets in the teacher's home; but if this is not centrally located with reference to the pupils, a room in the home of one of them may be set aside as classroom, so that none of the boys and girls will need to walk far to attend their lessons. Rarely parents undertake to teach their own children; but since parents have many other claims upon their time, this is not considered to be the best method.

After being offered and accepting a class, the teacher becomes a member of the Teachers' Association, which with nearly four thousand members is the largest and most influential organization in Valanga. It holds meetings several times a year in the sparato of Bellucia. Its purpose is to preserve uniformity throughout the country in the subject matter included in the general course, to establish the standards of attainment for which each teacher must strive in his classes, and to keep him informed of the best and most successful method of imparting instruction in each subject. But the Association sets only minimum standards and requirements, giving each teacher much freedom to develop his courses conformably to his own personality and experience and the varying interests and aptitudes of his pupils. ~~But~~ The final authority as to the content of the course rests with the parents; and once when they disapproved of an innovation which the Association had made, those of several cantons withdrew their children from classes.

Although no single family can deprive its children of schooling, when the majority of those in a canton keep their boys and girls at home, there is no power to compel them to send them back to their classes. The course must conform to their wishes; and since the parents are educated and thoughtful, their demands in this matter are usually well founded.

All that I have been saying applies only to the general course. For advanced study in any subject whatever, the method of choosing teachers is wholly different. Such studies are pursued only by young people who freely elect to do so; and they choose their own instructors, usually in consultation with their parents and older friends who are well informed in the subject they propose to follow and know who is best able to teach it. In the Museum in Bellucia are posted lists of names of experts in various fields who are willing to accept properly prepared students, and how many they can take. After acceptance by such a scholar, the youth or maid goes to live in his home or, if room is lacking, in that of a neighbor, and stands in a filial relationship to the older people of the household where he resides. He studies with this expert as long as he feels that it is profitable to him, or until the teacher himself suggests that he can do no more for the student. These instructors of advanced students do not belong to the Teachers' Association, although they are often members of a learned society in their special field. Thus neither the commonwealth, through the Council of Presidents, nor the Teachers' Association attempts to control the teaching of advanced subjects; and the doctrines of each scholar are judged only by those whose special interest and training prepare them to do so.

After the teachers of the young children have been chosen, they are consecrated to their task at the annual ceremony known as Sathinama; for in Valanga all great undertakings are begun with mindfulness of the supreme Power, and the education of the children is held to be the most important undertaking in the commonwealth. At the last ceremony, nine new teachers, including those of music and drawing, were consecrated in Botamia, to instruct the five classes into which the twenty-seven children about to begin their schooling were grouped. The remainder of the teachers for these new classes, five in number, were veterans who had already completed one course of instruction and were about to undertake another. All of the old teachers occupied the front benches of the sparato, and the rest of the congregation sat behind them. At this ceremony, the people did not, as at most of the others, take their places by families, but they sat by classes. Older people who after marriage had settled in other cantons came for this reunion with their classmates. The children of each newly formed class sat together; but those still younger stayed with one or the other of their parents, and sometimes with both together, for classmates not infrequently marry. The new teachers were at first scattered through the congregation with their classmates of long ago. All the teachers, old and new, wore chaplets of the glossy, sweet-scented leaves of a shrub called clusin; and of course all who were married or otherwise entitled to do so were dressed in their white robes.

After everyone had taken his place and a hymn had been sung, the Leader of Ceremonies called the new teachers to the

stage. All of those whose parents survived were escorted forward by them, for this would in all probability be the last time that these aged people could take an outstanding part in a public ceremony. Of the nine new teachers, only four marched between both of their parents. Three others walked beside an ancient father or mother who had survived to know their great-grandchildren, while the remaining two teachers were alone.

When the new teachers had taken their places on the stage, facing the congregation, the Leader of Ceremonies came forward and asked them to repeat in unison the teacher's pledge: "I shall look upon my pupils as entrusted to me by Anga for the unfolding of the faculties which he has placed in latent form within them, especially memory, which preserves the past, intelligence, which controls the future, love, which binds us to our fellow creatures, and compassion, which makes us forbearing toward all beings. I shall endeavor to instil in these children a high regard for truth, beauty, and virtue, and firm adherence to the customs of their country, because they know the reasons for them and their value in creating a good and happy life. May Anga help me in my sacred task."

After they made this promise, the new teachers went to seats reserved for them in the front row; and then the old teachers, to the number of a hundred and twenty-two, arose to renew their pledge, as they do yearly.

The Leader of Ceremonies then gave a discourse which seems to me worthy of repetition in full, as it sets forth clearly Valanga's attitude to education: "Teachers and friends, it is

hardly possible for us to exaggerate the importance of the present occasion; for the men and women chosen to be teachers are the preservers of our commonwealth, which without their devoted efforts would soon lapse into savagery and lose all that is distinctive of it. To appreciate the role of education, one must contemplate the human animal in its natural state, as it comes into the world, and compare it with animals of other kinds. Other animals, as the naturalists among us can attest, appear to be formed complete by nature, so that with no instruction from their elders, or at most by spontaneously following their example, they are able to lead the life which is appropriate to their kind and seems to be best for them. And those of us who have attentively observed that life, especially in the more highly endowed animals, seeing how carefully many of them provide for their young, how attached they are to their mates, and how peaceably, on the whole, they dwell with others of their kind, will not lightly scorn it, calling it low and mean.

"But with man it is far different. As equipped by nature, he has none of the habits which fit him to dwell in harmonious association with his fellows, nor even the aptitudes necessary for his survival, on however low a plane. If he could live at all, it would be in the utmost squalor and disorder, in a state ~~far~~ more degraded than we witness in the birds and beasts around us. Although we sometimes boast that man is the highest of the animals, we must admit that as formed by nature he is perhaps the lowest. It is only ^{by} ~~through~~ education, whether formally given or received informally from those around him, that

he is raised to a state which can in any sense be deemed higher than that of the other animals. One might say that nature, through organic processes over which we have little control, half forms a man, and in this raw and unfinished state turns him over to his elders to be endowed with what he needs for his completion and perfection. The finished product, the complete man, is created by the combined efforts of the parents who gave him a body and the teachers who furnished his mind and formed his character - among whom are included the parents themselves, if they have been all that they should be.

"The great advantage of this system is that we can transmit to our descendants the cumulative effects of our truest insights and highest aspirations, so that they can become better than their ancestors at a rate which is scarcely possible to an animal whose habits are formed, so to speak, by nature itself. Unfortunately, this system also permits our children to acquire the vices and falsehoods, no less than the virtues and truths, of their elders. But since the wicked sooner or later destroy themselves ^{by} ~~through~~ their own excesses, since moreover ^{humans} men have a quenchless thirst for a better life, the transmission of our acquisitions to our children is a system whereby humanity is more likely to improve than to degenerate.

"If in any society education of some sort, and a great deal of it, is necessary to complete a human being and fit him to live with some satisfaction to himself and those around him, in Valanga it is of special importance. In practically all other societies which have advanced beyond the most primitive state, there is, as far as I can learn, a ruler or government

which makes many laws that the people must obey, and by means of special agents and a machinery of punishment, imposes obedience upon all, removing from society by incarceration or even death those who transgress these regulations. Thereby deficiencies in early training and education, which are perhaps the chief source of all misconduct, are compensated ~~by the use of~~ ~~force~~ in later years by the use of force, which alone can preserve some sort of order in these societies. But with us it is different. We have no armed guardians of public order, nor a long list of penalties to be applied to those who depart from our customs or refuse to abide by the decisions of the Council of Presidents. On the contrary, it has for centuries been the purpose of our institutions to equip every man and woman to govern himself; and experience has shown that this requires a long and painstaking education. Moreover, each of us is judge of how much he will do for, and ask of, others; and for this a carefully trained judgment and refined conscience are necessary.

"Certainly until a man is able to govern himself, with complete control over his appetites and passions, it would be preposterous of him to attempt to rule over others. Yet in countries whose inhabitants are deemed incapable of controlling themselves, so that they need many laws and regulations and vigilant guardians to keep them in order, we find certain men undertaking to govern them; and one wonders how these individuals have advanced ^{so} far in self-control and wisdom beyond all their neighbors as their assumption of authority implies. These nations seem to reason somewhat as follows: 'Men are in-

capable of governing themselves, therefore they are ^{capable of} able to rule ^{ing} over others.' Any child can see that the conclusion does not follow from the premise. It is our belief that in a community where the majority of men have not learned to control themselves, it will be scarcely possible to find any one competent to govern them; whereas in a society where nearly everyone has been adequately schooled in self-government, it is unnecessary to place rulers over the people. Hence compulsive government is either inadequate or superfluous, or at best a crude, inefficient method of preserving a minimum of order in a society until some better system can be evolved.

^{"Humane}
 "Men do not require government so much as education. In Valanga, we try to teach every child a way of life so reasonable, so equitable to all, so well adapted to his needs, and so intrinsically attractive, that thenceforth he follows it freely, without compulsion. And it is our experience that when children are so taught, breaches of order and decorum are so infrequent that there is time to consider each one as a special case, springing from peculiar circumstances, and to apply an appropriate remedy.

"For all these reasons, it is fitting that in our country more people serve as teachers than in any other special occupation. Of every man and woman among us, more than one in three will at some time of his life give instruction, either as a principal teacher of the general course or as an instructor of music or drawing, or else as a scholar guiding advanced students. And if we add to these those who pass on their handicrafts and skills to their children or other ap-

prentices, it appears that nearly every one of us finally becomes a teacher of some sort. We are first of all a nation of horticulturists, for every one of us attends his fruit trees, and after that a nation of teachers. The teachers, especially the principal teachers in the general course, are the greatest power in the land. In the long run, they wield far more power than the Council of Presidents; for the Council lacks means to enforce its decrees and is obeyed only when the majority of the people approve them; and whether the people accept or reject the decisions of the Council depends largely upon the education they have received. Our teachers are the shapers and preservers of our commonwealth; what it will be like in future years depends upon how they educate the children now under their guidance.

"We entrust to these teachers young animals which nature, as by a strange oversight, has neglected to equip with the habits and aptitudes necessary to guide them through life, as she has done in the case of so many other animals, but which by way of compensation she has endowed with a marvellous capacity for absorbing knowledge, attitudes, and habits, those which are ugly, evil, and harmful no less than those which are beautiful and good. We ask their teachers to use their utmost vigilance to hold aloof all wicked and seductive influences, filling these tender young minds with love of truth and goodness and beauty, so that they may lead happy and satisfying lives and do their share in carrying on the great work which Anga entrusted to our forefathers long ago."

At the conclusion of the ceremony of Sathinama, it is customary for each teacher to be accompanied to his home by all his pupils, past no less than present. I thought it fitting that I walk with Elindro, whose classes I had attended with Calpani during my convalescence, soon after my arrival in Valanga. His escort consisted of Calpani and five other boys and girls, who comprised his second class, and Crovan, Iretanyo, and four others who formed the first class which he had taught. Yanoa and Alestia accompanied their teacher Melisana, Alestia's grandmother.

"I suppose," said Elindro to me as we walked along the shady path, "that on an occasion like this your thoughts turn with gratitude and affection to your own teacher in the distant land where you grew up."

"I had so many teachers that there is no particular one who occupies my mind just now, so that I think of them all rather vaguely and confusedly."

"So many!" exclaimed Elindro. "You do not appear to me to be the kind of person who is bandied from class to class because he cannot fit into any of them."

"Oh, no, I do not suppose that I was a particularly difficult pupil; but there the system is different. As a rule, each year the same class, as it advances to new subjects, has a different teacher; and in the upper grades there is generally a separate instructor for each subject, as one for literature, another for history, a third for mathematics, and so forth. I must have had at least twenty teachers in the nine or ten years of my schooling that corresponds to the general course

in Valanga, and for my more advanced studies at the university I had many more."

"I do not wonder that you can hardly remember them all. I suppose that you had different teachers for different subjects because the factual information which they imparted was considered to be of greater importance than training the child's mind and perfecting his character."

"There is no doubt that in my native land the ability to remember and repeat facts, no matter how mechanically and with how little understanding, was the measure of the pupil's accomplishment, and by this the teachers gauged the success of their efforts. Of course, there were exceptional educators who held that to teach a child how to think is more important than cramming his mind with half-digested facts. But the system generally followed was inimical to such careful training. In the first place, there were too many pupils to each teacher, and then there was the matter of preparing for examinations, to pass which the pupil must have numerous facts at his finger-tips, even if they have acquired so little significance that he forgets them soon afterward."

"How many children form a class in your native land?" asked Elindro.

"In the better of the schools to which wealthy people pay to send their children, there may be only twelve or fifteen; but in the schools supported by the State, where instruction is free, there are often twenty and at times thirty or even more."

"But how can a teacher with such large classes, and who moreover has a different one every year, know each of his pupils intimately, and develop a paternal affection for him, and follow the unfolding of his mind, and train his character, and moreover establish a personal friendship with the child's parents, so that they and the teacher may work together to bring out the best that is in him? Are the teachers there much more capable than with us, so that they can do for ~~so~~ many pupils what we try to do for a few?"

"On the contrary, they are on the whole far less capable and well prepared than Valangan teachers. In the first place, they average much younger, and even the older ones have hardly had the leisure for study and thought which we enjoy in Valanga; ~~so that~~ they are less learned and it may be all that they can do to teach a single subject. Far from knowing each pupil thoroughly, and knowing the pupil's parents, it sometimes appeared to me that it taxed their memory even to learn so many new names each year. I used almost to feel sorry for them. Since I, who had ~~few~~ fewer teachers than each of them had pupils, find it difficult to remember most of them clearly, I suppose that the majority of ~~my~~ teachers have quite forgotten that they ever taught a boy whom they knew as William Manning."

"The great satisfaction in teaching," said Elindro, "~~consists~~^{is} in watching the slow unfolding through the years, under the teacher's careful guidance, of the mind of a child whom one knows intimately and loves as his own. To teach without being able to follow the results of one's effort is like planting a crop without being permitted to harvest it. I

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should not care to teach if I had to relinquish all my pupils at the year's end. But how do the products of the system you describe compare with what you have observed among us?"

"Most inferior," I asserted. "The average citizen of my native land would in Valanga be looked upon as a half-educated boor; the average Valangan would there be considered a scholar. Then, too, in my native land, as well as in most other countries of the outside world, there are huge buildings filled with the unfortunates who must be confined in cages because of the crimes they have committed. And of the many factors which breed criminals, the chief is, in my opinion, faulty upbringing and education."

"But why do these countries persist in such inadequate methods of education?"

"I suppose the reason is that they are too poor to give the children the kind of education they get here. Valangan children receive an education such as, in past times, cultured aristocrats, who could afford tutors, provided for theirs; but I believe that now few even of the nobility can support tutors."

"Too poor!" exclaimed Elindro. "But you told me once that your native land counts its annual revenues in billions of whatever monetary unit they use - I forget its name. Here we have no money at all; and in the Council's chest in Bellucia there is at present no more gold for external trade than I can myself carry."

"The fact is that, by one who knows the true meaning of wealth, Valanga would be reckoned as, for its size, the

wealthiest country in the world. Of all the countries of which I have any information, Valanga alone is opulent enough to provide for every inhabitant the education, the housing, the diet, and the leisure for self-improvement that he should have. And if wealth does not mean this, I do not know what the word signifies."

"But that is strange, considering that here we perform ^{nearly} all our tasks by slow hand labor, while there they use machines which, as you tell me, do the work of a hundred or a thousand men."

"That is true, But Valangans are frugal, and excellent managers, and make every effort count. There the waste of time and effort, resulting from the competitive system, is enormous, and it cancels a large share of their productive skill. Much of their wealth is squandered in barren and often injurious luxuries, and incredible quantities are dissipated by war. To confine ourselves to our present subject, I might point out that in many countries a large proportion of the funds devoted to education are spent on huge and costly edifices, to which hundreds or thousands of children are daily transported, often from distant homes, at further considerable expense. By making each family dwelling large enough to set aside a room for teaching, the Valangan system avoids this vast overhead for buildings and transportation, so that the funds - if not of money, then of time - which it can spare for education are devoted almost wholly to instruction itself, with the excellent results that we behold. In foreign countries, after all the

other expenses involved in public instruction are deducted, relatively little is left to pay the teachers, who are perhaps the most poorly rewarded class in a society where success is measured by one's income. Being poorly remunerated, they are not sufficiently respected. And the result is that few of the more enterprising and intelligent young men and women care to eke out a meager existence as teachers."

"Fancy a teacher having to be paid!" exclaimed Elindro in amazement. "To teach in one form or another is the fulfillment of one's life. We must spend many years taking in, in order finally to have a little to give out. Before we go on to the great beyond, we round out our earthly existence by passing on to others a little of the knowledge and wisdom we have accumulated, as the biril palm flowers and fruits before it dies. I hope that I shall be spared to teach one more class after Calpani's, making three in all."

When I looked at the bright, lovable faces of the pupils who surrounded him, and observed their good behavior, I readily understood why Elindro had not grown tired of teaching, and I hoped that some day, when I am old, my neighbors will form a class for me to teach.

CHAPTER XX

THE RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY OF VALANGA

I have now described the principal religious ceremonies of Valanga, including the Festival of Commemoration, the Dedication of Infants, the Consecration of Children, the Dorinama or Taking of Co-guardians, the Marriage Ceremony, the Benitrama or Dedication of Products, and the Sathinama or Consecration of Teachers. All of these ceremonies are held annually, except the Dedication of Infants, which is semiannual, and the Marriage Ceremony, which takes place about every three months. Other annual ceremonies are the inauguration of the President of the Canton and the Leader of Ceremonies and other officers, Stenoril's Day, and Deodan's Birthday. At each of the last two, a speaker, often from another canton, addresses the congregation on the life and significance of the great leader whom they commemorate. All thirty cantons hold the foregoing ceremonies simultaneously, except in the case of the weddings. In addition to these, each canton commemorates by appropriate rites the anniversaries of some of its revered citizens who are not of national importance. Thus, there are about sixteen religious meetings in the course of the year; and the people of each canton gather in their separate several times more to discuss civic affairs and elect officers.

The rites for the dead are carried out in a religious spirit but are not set ceremonies. When a man or woman lies on his deathbed, his friends come one by one and remind him gently of the good deeds he has done, and of the accomplish-

ments for which he will be remembered. They do not embarrass him by fulsome praise but let the facts speak for themselves. One will say: "Do you remember the beautiful bowl that you made for us twenty years ago? We still use it every day, and it constantly reminds us of you." Another will tell a dying woman: "I shall never forget how you helped us to nurse Miralvo when he was a baby and we despaired of his life. He knows what he owes to you." One who has served as President might be reminded of a particularly brilliant speech that he made in the Council. And so the person who is departing from our midst is made aware of how much of himself will remain with us.

Because they love the soil which has supported them and their ancestors for many generations, Valangans are not repelled by the thought that it will cling closely to their lifeless bodies. They would deem it grotesque to enclose the corpse in structures of wood or stone in order to hold the life-giving earth aloof from it. Wrapped in the robe which he wore before his marriage, and with no other covering save a cloth over his face, the dead person is interred among the fruit trees on the homestead where he lived. Gentle hands sift the soil tenderly and carefully over the motionless body. The members of his family and his closest friends attend the burial, and nearly always the President of

the canton and the Leader of Ceremonies lend dignity to the occasion by their presence. Now it is the custom, not to praise the deceased, which might only increase the survivors' sense of loss, but to help the bereaved to remember how attentive they had been to him. No man can be certain that he will have for another day the one whom he most loves; but the consciousness that he was always gentle and kind to a parent, a husband, a wife, a brother or sister, a child, or a friend, is a possession which will endure as long as memory itself; and this calm recollection does much to soften the feeling of bereavement, covering it over with comforting thoughts. To serve those we love is within our power; to keep them always with us is

beyond it; and it is consoling to know that in all which lay in our power, we did not fail our loved ones.

Within a year of the burial, a fruit tree is planted upon the grave, so that the land where the dead are interred may also serve the living. This sharing of the same soil is a bond between the living and the dead, and it prevents the past generations from gradually dispossessing the present generations of the land which they need for their support.

Although the ceremonies that I have mentioned, and in most cases described, constitute our only rituals, they are by no means the whole of our religion, which is more extensive and important in its inward than in its outward expressions. The Valangan religion is above all a steady and pervasive love of Anga and his creation, and a readiness to advance his cause in every possible manner. To preserve the beauty and fruitfulness of the land which Anga gave us and promote the welfare of all the living things it contains, are our prime religious duties. Thus charity, in its original sense of love of God and his creatures, is for Valangans the first of the virtues. Of charity in its derived and narrow sense of almsgiving there is little, as there is not a single beggar or destitute person in the whole land. For one man to depend for his daily bread upon the impulse of another would seem to us a degrading and intolerable situation, of which both the giver and recipient of alms would be equally ashamed. A Valangan who happens to have an excess of food or some other commodity never feels that he is giving it to others who at the moment happen to have less, but that he is sharing with them the bounty which

Anga has provided for all.

At the public ceremonies we never pray, but meditate in silence, with gratitude in our hearts, upon all that we owe to Anga. In private, some Valangans pray but perhaps the majority do not. Iretanyo, Yanoa, Orovan, Alestia, and I sometimes discussed this question, and we concluded that there is no point in praying. It is not reasonable to suppose that God's power is such that he can alter the course of natural events at our request, without also believing that he is immediately aware of what is in our minds. And if this is true, he should know, better than we can, what is ultimately good for us. If we hold that the Universe is pervaded by a beneficent governing Power, we must, to be consistent, conclude that, without importuning, this Power constantly does what is best for every creature. If we suffer or are thwarted, this must be because such sorrows are to our own ultimate advantage; or else because, in view of the multiplicity of interests he has to reconcile, God cannot be more favorable to us without causing greater distress to other beings. No other view seems compatible with a religious attitude toward the world. ⁷ It is often held, even by those who doubt that petitions to the deity can alter in the least particular the course of external events, that prayer is beneficial because it helps one to clarify his own thoughts and reconcile himself to the inevitable; but for us, who have such close and understanding friends with whom to discuss our perplexities, such silent expostulation with an unseen hearer seems superfluous. Accordingly, we never pray, but try to be

constantly grateful for all the blessings we have received, and to bear with patient resignation our pains and disappointments.

After our marriage, Yanoa and I often went to speak with Charóndis, the philosopher who dwelt in the neighboring canton of Pomália. His interpretations helped me greatly to understand the significance of Valangan institutions. Puzzled that in my long ^{residence} ~~stay~~ in the country I had heard not a single dogma proclaimed by this most pious people, I one day requested him to tell me what beliefs underlie the national religion.

"Simply the belief that Anga is beneficent, and that holiness consists in loving and preserving what he has created," he replied.

"But what," I asked, "do you understand by Anga? How would you describe him?"

"Let your wife answer that question. I am sure that she can do it as well as I. Tell us, Yanoa, what Anga is."

"Anga is the Power which made the world beautiful and fruitful, and created us, and causes us to love each other. When love compels us to perform a good deed, we feel Anga within us."

"There!" exclaimed Charondis triumphantly. "I defy the learned theologians of other lands to tell us more about the nature of the deity than almost every Valangan can tell us. We base our religious thought upon the first principle of natural philosophy, that for every effect there must be an adequate cause. We gaze into the heavens and behold the shin-

ing celestial bodies moving in an orderly fashion, each in its own course and performing its special part in the economy of the cosmos. We look upon this valley in which we dwell and find it beautiful and friendly. Beyond it the earth, as far as we know it, is almost equally beautiful but far less friendly, for it contains hostile forces and much evil, whose origin we must attempt to explain. The presence of order and beauty in the Universe leads us to postulate a beneficent cause, and we cannot escape from such a conclusion. Even if we concede that the world and all it contains grew out of the collisions of vibrating atoms, as some of our cosmologists have taught, we must hold to our belief in a beneficent cosmic principle. For nothing but confusion could grow out of the concourse of darting particles, unless they were equipped with attractive forces which cause them to cling together in coherent patterns capable of further growth; and whatever endows them with such forces is the beneficent principle which we seek. Whether creation proceeded in a direct or an indirect manner, we cannot avoid recognizing some creative power.

"If our knowledge of the beneficent creative Power were limited to what we can learn by observation of the external world, our understanding of it would remain slight indeed. But we find within ourselves certain stirrings which correspond to the creative movement in the Universe at large. I refer to love, friendliness, thirst for moral improvement, and all those affections which impel us to cultivate harmony with the beings that surround us, and to make this harmonious

association as perfect and comprehensive as we can. The growth of social order, which we ^{Promote by} bring about through our own endeavor, corresponds to, and carries to a higher level, the growth of our bodies themselves; for in each case smaller units are bound together by attractive forces into a larger pattern. In one case, the units are the particles of nourishment of which organic bodies are formed; in the other case, the units are living beings as wholes. Hence we feel justified in saying that love and our thirst for order and goodness, which prompt us to engage in moral endeavor, are an expression of the same creative energy which made our bodies, the external world, and everything in it. When impelled to do good deeds by love or moral zeal, we seem to feel Anga at work within us; and thereby his nature is revealed ~~far~~ more adequately than through observation of external events, of which our knowledge is exceedingly superficial. We believe that the most adequate expression of Anga is love; although love in him must be different from love in organic beings like ourselves, so that our love must be an imperfect and incomplete expression of God's nature."

I must explain at this point that Charondis never referred to Anga by the masculine pronoun "he", neither did he use the neuter pronoun "it". The first is properly applicable to an animal of the male sex, the second to an inanimate object devoid of sex; and in the view of Valangans, neither should be used for the creative Power. Our language contains a special pronoun which we employ for Anga alone, to avoid the tiresome repetition of the name. But since the language in which I now

write lacks a corresponding pronoun, I am constrained to follow its usage and write "he" when referring to the deity.

"That all seems clear and reasonable enough," I said when Charondis had concluded his explanation, "but what do you conceive Anga to be, a spiritual or material being, personal or impersonal, infinite or finite, eternal or temporal, omnipotent or of limited power? In philosophical terms, what is Anga's essence, and what are his attributes?"

"How shall the creature comprehend the Creator?" asked Charondis. "We are content to know that Anga is a beneficent Power which pervades the Universe. We hold it self-evident that he cannot be both perfectly good and omnipotent, for in this case there could be ^{neither} ~~no~~ evil nor ugliness anywhere. Not to believe that he made the world as good as he possibly could is to cast doubt upon his own goodness; and how could one be loyal to a deity who did not even try to create a perfect world? There must be at the root of things something which stubbornly resists Anga's beneficent power, otherwise the whole world would be as beautiful and happy as Valanga, or rather far more so, for ugliness, crime, and disease are not unknown among us.

"But when we attempt to define Anga in more detail, to say whether he is spiritual or otherwise, personal or impersonal, eternal or temporal, we enter a region wherein uncertainties abound and there is room for divergence of opinion among reasonable men. Hence a religion which attempts to define its god in some detail cannot avoid becoming dogmatic; and Deodan warned us long ago against the danger of dogma. Even

philosophers accustomed to dealing with abstract notions find great difficulty in expressing religious truths in intelligible language. Concepts of deity become almost grotesque when presented in a manner which the ordinary man can grasp. For the mass of men, religious feeling is best expressed in moral conduct rather than in creed and dogma."

"What is the great objection to dogma?" I queried.

"Dogma inevitably leads to schism, and schism to religious persecution, than which there is nothing more hideous," he replied. "Deodan wished Valanga to be united in a single re-

ligion, which would be acceptable to all reasonable men who love their fellow beings. He doubted, as I doubt, whether our system of living could be preserved if we did not all gather from time to time to renew our common allegiance to the ideals which inspire us. Therefore he limited our religion to the single proposition that there is a beneficent power at work in the external world no less than in the depths of

our own being, and to certain ceremonies, intended to remind us of this, which are demonstrably beneficial in their effects on our lives. If anyone is inclined to believe more than this, or to engage in further rituals, our national religion leaves much room for doctrines and practices which do not clash with it. But we expect every citizen to participate in our public ceremonies, not perfunctorily but with conviction, and to conduct himself in all the details of his life as though the Supreme Being were watching him."

"Now," I said, "I believe that I understand what at first surprised me: Why the Valangan religion, unlike practically all other modern religions, has nothing to say about a future life."

"Religions which promise a blessed future life to their

faithful generally tell them how this is to be attained," explained Charondis. "But, as far as I know, no one has returned from paradise to inform us what means were effective in taking him there. Since it seems impossible to demonstrate what beliefs, rites, or moral practices lead one to heaven, this whole subject is necessarily bound up in opinion and conjecture, and certainty cannot be reached. Hence in this field the views of reasonable men may clash violently and schism is inevitable. Accordingly, our religion, which we try to make acceptable to all reasonable men of good will, is silent on this subject.

"Nevertheless, most of us believe that we do not wholly perish, but the most essential part of ourselves survives our body's decay. The foundation of this belief is our conviction that Anga is beneficent. As far as we can see, his beneficence could find no expression more perfect than the creation of incorruptible spiritual beings who abide in flawless harmony with each other and with him. Therefore, we have faith that if such a mode of being is not made intrinsically impossible by the constitution of reality, Anga must sooner or later establish it. Moreover, we are driven to yearn for, and even to expect, spiritual existence by the most authoritative aspect of our being, our moral nature, which impels us to strive ceaselessly to perfect ourselves so that we may dwell in ever greater harmony with all the beings that surround us. Since the demands of the flesh, which force us to compete with other creatures for the means of subsistence, are incompatible with perfect and enduring harmony, to reach a spiritual realm,

where alone such harmony is attainable, must be the goal and fulfillment of all moral endeavor. ^{It} As to the means of gaining such a blessed state, if indeed it is in store for us, most of us believe that to become the kind of man or woman which our national institutions are intended to create, is the best possible preparation for it. However, the subject is difficult and no one can pretend to finality in his conclusions. Some people believe that certain special practices are necessary to prepare us for a blessed immortality; and these are not necessarily incompatible with our national religion, although they do not form part of it."

"This situation," I remarked, "is much like that which prevailed in ancient Greece, where in addition to the civic religions, whose primary purpose was the preservation of the state, there were the ~~Mysteries~~, Eleusinian, Orphic, and others, which prepared men's souls for future bliss; and as far as I know, these two so different cults did not clash with each other."

"To be acceptable to Valangans," continued Charondis, "the method proposed for winning heavenly bliss must be reasonable. More than a thousand years ago lived a man who proclaimed that to gain a blessed immortality one must retire from society to lead a celibate life devoted wholly to fasting, penances, and meditation. He won a few adherents, who withdrew with him to certain caves near the foot of the cliffs; and they let it be known that those who brought food to them would win merit which would improve their condition in the next world, although it would not suffice to gain for them the highest bliss, to which only the ascetics could aspire. But this cult was never

popular and it soon died out, without any persecution, simply because it did not appear reasonable. The people argued that if Anga had provided a blessed immortal state for us, then the greater the number of individuals who attained this bliss, the more pleasing to him it should be. Not the people who refused to beget children, but those who brought additional souls into the world and set them on the way to winning blessed immortality, would seem themselves most to merit this great reward, if their lives were in other respects blameless.

"It is hardly possible to establish a higher religion except on the assumption that the Power which governs the world is reasonable and consistent, in addition to being well disposed toward creatures. A reasonable being, if he established stages by which creatures might through their own efforts ascend to the highest and most desirable state, would make the successive stages conformable ~~to each other~~ rather than anti-thetic. Each should provide us with experience indispensable for attaining the next. In this case, not by stubbornly resisting the conditions of one stage but by freely accepting them, one would best prepare himself for that which follows. Hence we must suppose that if there is a happier state for us in the future, our surest way of reaching it is by fulfilling cheerfully and well all the duties pertaining to our present state, and making the best of all the opportunities it offers for intellectual and moral growth, which is the ideal we set for ourselves in Valanga. To believe otherwise is to impute irrationality and inconsistency to the governing Power; and if we do this, we throw everything into confusion and have no

reason for preferring one proposition on this matter to another, however absurd it may appear to us."

"Why," I asked when Charondis had finished this long discourse, "is it held to be so important that everyone profess the same religion? Most modern countries consider this unnecessary, and nothing is more stubbornly resisted than the attempt to make everyone conform to a national church. That is, the attempt is resisted by everyone except adherents of the religion which feels itself sufficiently powerful to impose itself upon the whole population."

Charondis replied: "The proposed national religion is probably unacceptable to many people because of its undemonstrable dogmas. It has not restricted itself to those truths which must form the bedrock of all religion, but it has heaped up an elaborate superstructure of unprovable tenets in order to dazzle and captivate uncritical minds. It is one of the greatest of tragedies that men must so often pile a mountain of rubbish on their true insights ~~in order~~ to feel confidence in them."

"That is all very true," I agreed.

"A country whose inhabitants are not bound together by a common ideal is not, properly speaking, a society, but merely an aggregation of ^{people} ~~men who are~~ drawn together by certain natural advantages of the ~~region~~ and the prospect of exploiting each other; as little creatures of many sorts are attracted to a rotting log by its fecund humidity and the possibility of preying upon the weaker kinds. Only a religion, or something very like it, seems capable of supplying an ideal which draws the whole community together in a single aspiration. Without

such a religion, the inhabitants of a country are truly united only in the face of a peril which threatens all alike, as, for example, the threat of foreign invasion. At other times, it falls into conflicting parties and factions, each driven by its selfish passions.

"The more primitive religions, as those of our ancestors the Bialomins and some of the tribes which at present surround us, are largely concerned with preserving the tribe from the perils which threaten to overwhelm it, whether these be hostile races, ~~or~~ natural forces, or the failure of natural processes to operate in the usual manner. Since we can trace the evolution of our religion from such a primitive cult, we must admit that one of its principal functions is the preservation of our race. But in this fruitful valley, within the shelter of our encircling cliffs, its chief interest has become the moral preservation of our nation by giving it ennobling purposes, the guardianship of Anga's creation and the spiritual perfecting of every member of our commonwealth. This national ideal, shared by each of our citizens, unites us more firmly in peace than other nations, which have no ideal save possibly aggrandizement or the accumulation of wealth, are united in time of war. Our national religion has the right to claim the adherence of every one of us because its worth in creating good ~~men~~ ^{citizens} in a harmonious society and advancing Anga's cause on earth has been demonstrated by our national experience. But a religion which promises results in another world must be based not on social but on individual experience; for it

is as individuals, not as societies, that we shall be saved. Each of us must accept or reject such doctrines according to the promptings of his own spirit, the strength of its striving toward an ampler realm."

CHAPTER XXI
HAPPINESS AND FREEDOM IN VALANGA

On our next visit to Charondis, I remarked: "Valangans have far fewer amusements than most other peoples. Here are scarcely any sports, shows, contests, dances, and similar diversions. Yet Valangans are certainly the most cheerful people I know. Nearly everyone seems to be pervaded by a happiness which springs from the very core of his being; and since becoming a Valangan, I myself have experienced a joy such as I never knew. To what do you attribute this?"

"The gay diversions to which you refer," replied the philosopher, "are no essential component of happiness. On the contrary, people often seek them to mask, or to make themselves forget for a brief hour, the doubts and misgivings, the fears and anxieties, which gnaw at their souls. It has been truly remarked that if we could interrupt men in the midst of their wildest carousings and force them to display what is in the depths of their spirits, black sorrow would gush forth. I believe that it is precisely because we are so joyous that we feel so little need of public amusements. And this, too, seems to be the reason why our literature, so rich in poetry and philosophy, contains few novels and dramas, by means of which people live vicariously lives more exciting or satisfying than their own. Our actual lives, our creative tasks, our contacts with nature and the real people who surround us, are so satisfying that we crave neither gay diversions nor books which substitute another existence for our own."

"And what, ultimately, is it that makes our lives here

more satisfying than the on the whole not greatly dissimilar lives of other peoples; for all men everywhere have more or less the same needs and fill them by their toil."

"I believe," replied Charondis, "that this is largely because, thanks to our religion and its vital ceremonies, we see nearly everything we do in relation to a whole which is beautiful, because it is Valanga. And we view Valanga itself not as an isolated entity but an expression of the highest Power in the Universe. Beheld in this context, no task necessary for the continuance of our society and its institutions can appear trivial or mean. Our lives are endued with a great and noble purpose, that of preserving in its original loveliness this fertile valley with all the varied life, including our own, which it supports, and moreover of making ourselves worthy of the blessings which we enjoy. Men inspired by such a purpose rarely find existence insipid or meaningless, as you tell me is increasingly true of people in the outside world."

"This appears to me the chief reason why we are a happy race, but other causes might be mentioned. One of them is the friendship, founded upon nobility of character, which prevails among all of us. We have no enemies, hence our minds are never inflamed by that most corrosive poison, hatred. We are almost devoid of envy, because nobody lacks what he needs, and our whole training makes us indifferent to those empty honors or distinctions which can be won by showing our superiority to our fellows in some relatively trifling particular, such as running faster, speaking better, or wearing finer clothes."

Then, too, the simplicity of our lives makes it unnecessary for us to push ourselves at our tasks until we grow weary; ~~and~~ fatigue is one of the greatest adversaries of joy."

When I asked Charondis whether men are fundamentally good or wicked, and if good, how it happens that they have so many vices, he replied: " Our ancestors, the Bialomins of Manotar, invented a myth to explain this puzzle. The story goes that Anga - the anthropomorphic tribal god who by the slow evolution of thought has become for us the beneficent creative force that pervades the world - set about to fill with living things the earth which he had newly fashioned. But it required so many of them to populate the vast expanse of sea and land, that while they were still very empty he grew bored with the tedious task and began to think. Finally, he struck upon the idea of creating animals and plants endowed with the capacity to reproduce themselves. Then it was necessary to make only two individuals of each kind of animal, which he commanded to multiply until they filled the earth. But unfortunately he forgot to ^{tell} ~~instruct~~ them ~~as to~~ what ~~they must~~ ^{to} do after the world began to be crowded.

"This oversight had unfortunate consequences. At first all creatures were gentle and pacific, and even kinds now carnivorous subsisted wholly on fruits, herbs, and the like. Man, the animal to whose creation Anga gave most careful thought, was outstanding in his tender solicitude not only for his own kind but for every living thing. He was temperate, self-controlled, truthful, perfectly just, and devoid of guile. Each kind of animal continued in its pristine innocence until

it became so abundant that its food supply began to fail and it was driven into competition with other creatures to satisfy its hunger. With man, precisely because he was the most intelligent of all the animals and could devise the most ingenious means of procuring what he craved, the resulting deterioration of character was the most shocking and pronounced. He became deceitful, cruel, grasping, and gluttonous, and he devised the most diabolic means to kill and torture his fellow creatures of all kinds. Then Anga, partly to relieve the situation and partly to punish creatures for their harshness, brought death into the world, afflicting with mortality beings which he had originally made immortal.

"There is little doubt that Stenoril was familiar with this myth, and with his usual foresight he planned to make the commonwealth which he founded one from which this cause of human depravity would be excluded. The magnificent natural defences provided by our cliffs would permit the growth of a perfectly peaceful society, in which warlike qualities would be superfluous; and he expected a gradual improvement in the character of his people, which he had in the first place selected for their high moral quality. A famous passage in the Charata represents him addressing the newly settled immigrants in this wise:

Let many boys and girls with merry laughter grace
This land to which I led you. But remember still
That after many years our race will fill its bounds;
Then let each happy mother fewer children bear,

Lest future generations know the countless woes
That drove their forebears forth from starving
Manotar.

Stenoril's advice has been followed, thanks largely to the wise innovations of Deodan; and the outcome seems to prove that the ancient myth had a foundation of truth, as such myths usually have. No one who has carefully studied the history of our country can doubt that, living in perfect peace, with the passage of the generations we have gradually shed those revolting qualities which fierce competition forced upon humanity, and that the original goodness of our kind is coming to the surface again."

"The experience of Valanga," I remarked, "supports the contention of a famous English philosopher of the last century, that it requires only the continuance of peace to make men morally perfect, or nearly so. He did not, however, see the necessity of abolishing commercial competition and the struggle to accumulate private property, no less than dynastic and national rivalries, in order to bring about this improvement in human character. His evolutionary views led him to fear that the absence of all competition would lead to the deterioration of mankind."

"Since warfare and competition for material goods were simultaneously abolished in Valanga," said Charondis, "it is difficult to assess the influence which each of these changes has had upon the formation of our national character. It is certainly absurd to hope for perfectly good men in a warring

society; for it is too much to expect of human nature that the same man who in battle breaks the most important rules of morality, and gives free play to all those fierce passions which virtuous men everywhere have made it their foremost care to control and suppress, can by a miraculous transformation become a model of goodness the moment he lays down his arms and resumes his peaceful pursuits. The civilian population of warring countries also becomes infected with hatred and lust for destruction, which twist and warp the soul. But I believe that commercial no less than national rivalries must be abolished, before your English philosopher's dream of a morally perfect race can be realized. These rivalries spring from, and foment, selfishness, greed, and callous indifference to the needs of our fellows; while those who are worsted in the economic struggle are filled with resentment, envy, and hatred, passions which corrode our minds. And I should add that for the attainment of a high moral level, it is also imperative to avoid the killing and exploitation of animals, and even all unnecessary destruction of vegetable life. But it would be wrong to infer that social institutions and moral injunctions are the source of human goodness. On the contrary, our innate thirst for goodness^{slowly} gives birth to these institutions and rules of conduct, which then help to make our outward life a more adequate expression of our highest aspirations."

"Do you not fear that the absence of all competition among men would lead to the softening and deterioration of the race?" I asked.

"Do you detect such a deterioration in us, who for twenty-three centuries have not competed with each other for material goods? From what you tell me, I infer that in other countries the section of the population which is least successful in the economic struggle breeds most freely; hence if it is true that the most desirable qualities are those which bring success in the contest for wealth, the stock can hardly be improving. What in my opinion would lead to the deterioration of mankind is the failure to exercise our capacity to create, with our minds no less than with our hands - that attribute in which men most resemble God. In Valanga we give fullest play to our creative power; and the prenuptial trial which we call robe-making renders it impossible for a person who lacks at least a modicum of creative ability to win a mate and leave progeny. I ^wshould think that it is just the nations which set the highest value upon commercial and industrial success, in which countless men who might be exercising their creative abilities are reduced to the status of mere attendants of machines or distributors of their products, that are most in danger of deteriorating, in mind no less than in body."

The more I reflected upon the philosopher's views, the more convinced of their soundness I became.

One day I remarked to Charondis: "There is one thing about Valanga which puzzles me greatly. I was brought up to believe that freedom is peculiar to those countries where there is a variety of social arrangements, where diverse religions flourish, where ^{individuals} men are unattached and at liberty to drift whither

they will. None of these conditions is true of Valanga. Here society is in every respect uniform; everyone professes the same religion; everyone has his fixed place in the social fabric, which he can hardly abandon without leaving the country. Yet since coming here I have felt far freer than ever before. This is a paradox which calls for explanation."

"Thank heaven we have achieved uniformity in these matters!" Charondis exclaimed with feeling. "Nothing is more destructive of instinctive happiness and domestic tranquillity, nothing makes the attempt to give the children a proper education so difficult and I might almost say futile, as the presence in the same community of diverse and often conflicting cultures, religions, customs, and opinions on fundamental practical questions. These diversities are instructive to the philosopher and provide fuel for the demagogue's fire, but they are devastating to almost everyone else. Doubtless it is inevitable that there ~~should~~ be diversities of these sorts among ^{people} men; and nobody can be so sure that his way is right that he can afford to persecute, or even scorn, those who differ from him. But if men were sensible, and had any regard for their children, they would manage to segregate themselves into communities each of which is fairly uniform in itself. In Valanga we have, I believe, achieved uniformity in essential matters without the tyrannous oppression of the individual by the collectivity. At least, I regard myself as a fairly independent thinker, and my views on many philosophical questions differ from those commonly held in the country; yet I never feel that my

freedom of thought and expression has been curtailed. And the experience of Glindon, who for years cut himself off from his neighbors because they would not build for him the bizarre house ^{that} ~~which~~ he desired, proves that a Valangan can go his own way as long as he finds it convenient to do so, provided only that he does not injure his neighbors, deprive his children of education, or ruin the orchard of which he is custodian."

I said

"In my native land [^] few people could salve their wounded vanity by a display of independence so long-continued as Glindon's, for the simple reason that they would soon be forced by economic pressure to capitulate. The freedom of these countries where scarcely anyone has a fixed place in society, and creeds and customs are mixed together in a fantastic hodgepodge, is far more apparent than real. It provides magnificent material for political orators, but for all except perhaps the wealthiest, it proves rather thin when one actually experiences it. In such ~~a~~ countries one is controlled by economic currents rather than by ideals; and his much vaunted liberty consists, in the ultimate analysis, in little more than freedom to drift with the stream and earn his living however he can. If, weary of drifting, he strives to develop a way of living more satisfying to him, an enterprise in which he will scarcely succeed without enlisting others who share his aspirations, he finds himself thwarted at every turn by the huge mass of indifferent or hostile humanity which surrounds and almost smothers him. It would seem that nothing would be of greater value to men, so long

as all cannot reach an accord upon the fundamentals of a good life, to segregate themselves, as you suggest, into smaller communities inspired by common ideals and purposes - if only some means could be devised to keep these commonwealths from flying at each other's throats."

"Ideally," said Charondis, "the relation of the individual to society is like that of a plant to the soil. The subterranean parts of a plant are necessarily fixed, and the more securely fixed they are, the more the vegetable flourishes; but for the aërial parts, which require air and sunshine, freedom is a necessity. Moreover, you will observe that the underground portions of plants are relatively uniform, whereas the aërial parts exhibit great diversity. Similarly with ^{people} ~~men~~: we are all fairly similar in our basic animal needs, which are best satisfied by social arrangements; so that the more firmly this part of ourselves, which corresponds to the roots of plants, is embedded in society, the more we flourish. But in addition to this foundational part of ourselves, each of us has an intellectual and spiritual part which alone expresses his individuality. This higher, more personal part of ourselves craves freedom from rigid social forms; just as the stems and leaves of plants seek to emerge from the soil. It would be as impossible for a man wholly imbedded in society to fulfill himself, as for a green plant buried in the soil to flower and set fruit.

"The Valangan system recognizes this dual need of man. It provides for everyone's basic requirements with so small

an expenditure of labor that he enjoys a large surplus of time and energy to develop his peculiar gifts in the manner most congenial to him. Even our religion does not enslave the intelligence, as religions so often do, but leaves a very large region open to independent speculation and free spiritual growth. Doubtless a flowering plant enjoys more liberty when it is uprooted from the ground and free to roll along in every wind; but this is an empty freedom, for it soon wilts and dies. Similarly, we might increase our freedom to do as we please by severing all ties with society; but of what advantage will this perfect liberty be to us if we starve? No organism can escape from the fixed conditions of its existence, and for man these fixed conditions are most readily ^{ful-}filled in society."

"I have observed," I said, "that some societies are as careless of the individual as a gardener who might drop his plants on the surface without setting their roots in the soil; whereas others, professing great concern for the individual's welfare, bury him body and soul in the ground. Valanga strikes a happy medium between these extremes. It plants the individual in society just as he should be, roots in the ground, stem, leaves, and flowers in the air, enjoying the sunlight of freedom. A society should not ignore the individual, neither should it swallow him whole."

Charondis continued: "We were speaking not long ago of the happiness of Valangans. I believe that no small part of our felicity may be attributed to the fact that in our country there is not a single drifting, unattached person, but every-

one has an inalienable right to the fruits of his ancestral homestead, and everyone has others who care for him, and for whom he is in return responsible, first parents, then co-guardians, next husbands and wives and children. We admit to our country no one for whom such a firm position cannot be found, for such admission would be useless to him. In former times, before our situation became so precarious, we encouraged to emigrate any person who could not fit himself into such a position. Fortunately, in recent times almost everyone has succeeded in fitting. As a race, we appear to be becoming well adjusted to the conditions of our life."

"While other nations, " I added, "appear to be becoming less adjusted, to judge by the great increase in mental disorders ~~cases~~ in the last generation."

"Of all the institutions of Deodan," Charondis went on, "I regard as the most admirable, as revealing a true appreciation of the relation of the individual to society, of the spirit to the body, those concerned with marriage. The spiritual qualities of the one with whom we must live for the remainder of our lives are of the greatest importance, and nobody can be happy dwelling on intimate terms with a companion who is uncongenial to him. In this aspect of matrimony, great consideration must be given to personality. But in all that touches the procreation of offspring, personality hardly enters. The very organs concerned with it are not under voluntary control. We cannot govern the transmission of our

heritable traits to our children, making sure that they will receive those which we consider most desirable and escape of those which are harmful; for the mechanism of this transmission is not controllable by us. On all the physical side of parenthood, we are passive instruments of vital forces rather than independent agents. And only for a short while do the results of our procreative activities concern us personally. After two decades or so, we are no longer responsible for our children. At most we may live to see their children and their children's children. But our descendants become a component of society for countless generations. Hence we must recognize that parenthood is of far more concern to society than to the individual and should be controlled by it. But the personality of one's lifetime companion is of more consequence to the individual than to the community, and should be left to his choice. Deodan gave first consideration to the individual. The robe-making is to ensure that he finds a congenial partner. Then, after he is happily married, Deodan asks him to regulate the number of his offspring in their own interest and that of the commonwealth, to which it is of the greatest moment. What could be fairer or more skillfully arranged,"

"Everyone who has made robes must be grateful to Deodan,"

said Yanoa; and I heartily agreed with her. I believe that every country would do well to adopt some similar prenuptial test. It need not take the form of making garments if this does not fit into the economic arrangements of the community. Any large constructive task, requiring a modicum of intelligence no less than of manual skill, performed by the youth and maiden in closest cooperation, would serve equally well.

CHAPTER XXII
AN ACCIDENT AND A LINGERING ILLNESS

After our marriage, Yanoa and I enjoyed such happiness as I should hardly have believed possible in a world which is so often called "a vale of tears." She had no difficulty in adapting herself to the quiet homestead of Avrano, which so much resembled that in which she grew up. Delighted with their new daughter, Calocar and Alcira did everything in their power to make her comfortable; and the latter was glad to have someone to share her household tasks. I must confess that it was not without certain misgivings that I brought my bride to dwell beneath the same roof as my mother, for I recalled all the unpleasant things that I had heard about mothers-in-law in my native land. But my fears were groundless. Yanoa dwelt as happily with Alcira as with Ilinissa, and I have never known a more devoted mother and daughter. In Valanga, the several generations which occupy the same house nearly always abide in concord, for Valangans are seldom jealous or domineering; our whole system of education discourages such attitudes. Moreover, in a stable culture there is none of the clash between "old-fashioned" and "modern" ways which in a rapidly changing society embitters the relations between the generations. And in the wholesome moral atmosphere of Valanga, parents have no occasion to antagonize their children by excessive solicitude to guard them from evil. Young wives approaching their first confinement, and mothers of babies, are glad of the presence of an older woman whose experience is invaluable

to them.

After grandchildren arrive, the grandparents gradually turn over the management of the household to the parents and devote more time to their other interests. But important decisions are made by the common consent of all ^{the} occupants of the home. Even growing children take part in these family conferences, thereby developing at an early age a feeling of responsibility for the homestead and helping to mature their judgment.

I now began serious work on the lectures on history and the present state of the world which I was to deliver first at the Museum, and perhaps later in some of the outlying cantons. Although the absence of all pertinent books and documents was a great handicap and obliged me in many instances to make vague general statements when I should have preferred to be more precise, it still seemed possible to convey to my fellow citizens much of interest and importance to them. But neither the attendance of the house and orchard nor my writing prevented us from making frequent excursions in search of ferns and new flowers for Yancoa to paint. After Orovan brought Rilinia from Alomia and we were all together again, we formed a merry party as we wandered over the valley and climbed up the cliffs. Then one day Yancoa whispered to me that she felt new life stirring within her, and I had another reason to be glad.

But even in Valanga life is not wholly exempt from the tragedies which befall poor mortals. The Tirintin River, which flows through the center of Valanga, is spanned by six bridges, four of which are made of whole trunks, while

the two longest are marvellous structures composed of giant timber bamboos bound together by stout lianas from the forest. These bamboo bridges must be repaired or replaced rather frequently, as the bush-ropes which hold them together decay in wet weather. It became necessary to replace the bridge which links Botamia with the opposite canton of Thevena, and many men from both sides of the river turned out to help with the work. While Iretanyo and a number of others were raising into place one of the long, stout bamboos, it suddenly slipped, kicked back, and struck him in the abdomen. He doubled up with a gasp, and would have fallen into the river had not Orovan and several others who were close by caught and pulled him to safety. He lay writhing in agony for several minutes, then lay quiet and very pale.

We made a stretcher with two poles and a blanket borrowed from a neighboring house, and laid Iretanyo upon it. Then four men lifted him to their shoulders to carry him home, while I went ahead to prepare the family for his arrival. Finding Ilinissa and Alestia in the house, I told them as casually as I could that Iretanyo had been hurt and was coming on a stretcher, but his injury was probably not serious. Alestia gasped and turned pale but said nothing. Ilinissa exclaimed, "O-oh" and put an arm around her daughter-in-law. Then she asked if he was bleeding, and I assured her that we had seen no blood. In a minute the women regained control of themselves and went to prepare Iretanyo's bed.

Someone had the presence of mind to send for the doctor while the stretcher was being made, and he arrived soon after

Iretanyo was put to bed. In each of the thirty cantons of Valanga there are physicians, who in most cases learned their art from their fathers. The office of physician may pass from father to son for many generations; but if there is no son, or he lacks the special qualities which the practice of medicine requires, the doctor chooses another youth to become the recipient of his knowledge and skill. As part of his apprenticeship, the young man usually spends some time with the physicians of a number of other cantons, to learn any special methods of healing they may have developed.

Like everyone else, each of these practitioners has his homestead which provides for his needs, and he serves his neighbors without remuneration. The Valangan physicians know the medicinal properties of many plants, including some which cure fevers and others which alleviate pain. They are skilled at suturing wounds, which they disinfect and bind up with sterilized bandages. They know how to reduce dislocations and are expert in setting broken bones. But they never undertake internal operations, for which indeed there is rarely need in Valanga, where appendicitis and cancer seem scarcely ever to occur. I have sometimes speculated how men first steeled themselves to probe into the vital organs of their living fellows; and it seems to me that without seeing them eviscerated in battle, or perhaps torn open by fierce animals in the chase, they would never have gained the hardihood to undertake this. Since Valangans neither fight nor hunt wild animals, the conditions which gave birth to operative surgery are lacking.

After examining Iretanyo, the doctor reported that he could find no lesion, and led us to hope that after a few days of rest with a soft diet the patient would recover from the shock his system had received. Yet days lengthened into weeks and he grew no better. On the contrary, he continued to lose weight, and an unhealthy pallor came over him. Despite his growing weakness, he felt little pain. Although someone was almost constantly in attendance and we tried to cheer him with music, conversation, or reading, most of the time he preferred to lie quietly and drowse or sleep. Gone now were our cheerful gatherings and light-hearted excursions together. A heavy gloom settled over us as we began to despair of the life of a son, a grandson, a brother, a husband, and a friend.

No one was more severely afflicted by Iretanyo's continuing weakness than Calpani. Day after day he would sit beside his brother's bed with a constancy unexpected in an active lad of thirteen. One day he said: "Tanyo, if I thought that those Agaruni medicine men that Wilyo told us about had a remedy to make you strong again, I would go and get it for you. Orosmo would go with me."

"How would you manage that?" asked Iretanyo. "The Agarunis are fierce and have little love for us Valangans."

"I would take something to trade for it - an axe or a knife that Orosmo's father made, or maybe a beautiful pitcher from Mandinis."

"But what if they wished to keep you and eat you, as they do with their captured enemies and wished to do with Wilyo?"

"Then I should trade myself for the remedy, and Orogmo could bring it back. I would not greatly care if they ate me, so long as you get well again."

"Since the injury is in my abdomen, the remedy would probably be something cut from the belly of a monkey or some other animal, or possibly even from one of their human victims, if I know anything about the Agarunis' notions of medicine. And because we must not eat such things, all your effort would be wasted."

"But wouldn't you take it even to save your life, Tanyo? Think how sorrowful we should all be if you left us. And poor Alestia would be left a widow so soon after she married."

"No, Calpani, I could not take such a remedy even to preserve my life. We have certain principles of conduct here in Valanga, and if we disregard them we shall first become contemptible to ourselves and finally hateful to those around us. When we cease to respect each other, Valanga will no longer be what it has been. Would you wish to save your life at such a price?"

"I suppose not," Calpani replied after a little reflection.

Iretanyo stretched out his wasted arm from beneath the cover and took his brother's hand in his own. "You are brave and generous, Calpani, and I am grateful to you," he said. "But the greatest bravery is to accept without complaining those afflictions which are sent to us by God or destiny or whatever you wish to call it, and which we are unable to change."

"I shall try to remember that, Tanyo," said Calpani.

Although I had no notion of the specific character of

Iretanyo's injury, it seemed possible that a physician with some skill in internal surgery might save him. But as far as I knew, the nearest surgeon was hundreds of miles away. In his present weakened condition, Iretanyo could not be transported up the cliffs and over many leagues of rough mountain trails to the nearest navigable stream; but if he could be kept alive long enough, a doctor might be brought to him. [¶] I now recalled what I had long forgotten, that the greater part of the money which my aunt had bequeathed to me had been invested, and with accumulated interest it should ~~be~~ be a substantial sum, enough to provide a handsome remuneration for any surgeon who could be persuaded to undertake the long and arduous journey. But even without this, I did not doubt that a young doctor could be found, who from altruism, or for the sake of a unique experience, would return with me. Yet it would certainly require weeks if not months to bring to Valanga an outside physician with all necessary appurtenances, and perhaps he would arrive only to find the patient dead, or to pronounce his case hopeless. And it would be hard to leave Yanoa, with her approaching motherhood, for an absence of uncertain length, on a hazardous mission from which I might not return. Still, when I recalled all that I owed to Iretanyo, and the sorrow his premature death would bring to others dear to me, and my own great love for him, I felt that however tenuous the probability of saving him by this course, I ^wshould never forgive myself if I neglected to take it.

When I confided my hope and my misgivings to Orovan, he thought for a while, then said: "I know nothing about these

matters; but if you believe there is even the slightest chance that a foreign surgeon might come and save Tajo, I think that we should go for him; and with your consent, I shall go with you."

"And Rilinia?" I asked.

"It will be hard to leave her; and she may weep when I tell her; but she will not put obstacles in my way, for she knows what one owes to a dorin. And why should it be more difficult for me to leave Rilinia than for you to leave Yanoa?"

"Well, Orovan, to have you with me would lighten any journey; and you would see many marvellous things, by no means all of them pleasant. As I told you, the trip is not without dangers, and perhaps we shall not return. But it is comforting to know that whatever happens to us, our wives will never be destitute, nor the children we are expecting lack loving care and a proper education."

"Before we make any plans, I think we should speak to our President and get his permission to leave and to bring a stranger into Valanga. The Council is very cautious about these matters, now that our situation has become so precarious."

We lost no time in seeking the President of our canton, whom we found pruning his fruit trees. After listening attentively to our project, he said: "This matter will require the most careful consideration. We are all deeply concerned about Iretanyo, and there is nobody in Valanga who is not eager to do everything in his power to speed his recovery. But we must also recall that every contact with the outside world is one more chance of being discovered by people who in one way or

another seem to destroy every indigenous culture with which they come in contact. In a question like this, which concerns the welfare of the whole nation, I cannot myself give you permission to go, but I shall ^{promptly} ~~lose no time in~~ calling a meeting of the Council."

That evening Orovan and I sat by the bed in Iretanyo's white-walled room, with the fragrance of flowers and the voices of birds and insects floating in through the open window. No one else was present, and he turned to me and said with a faint smile on his pale face: "How strange, how unpredictable, are the pranks which fortune plays with us. Not long ago, before the Council gave you permission to stay, you feared that you might be forced to quit Valanga, and said it would be the most forlorn destiny that you could imagine. At that time, I had no thought of leaving. Now it turns out that I shall go first, while you remain. But it is satisfying to me to know that I have brought another to take my place and dwell happily in Valanga. That thought makes it easier for me to depart."

"Please do not talk so, Tanyo," I protested. "Alestia would be alarmed if she heard you. You are still far from a corpse, and we have not abandoned hope for your recovery."

"But I am losing hope. I lie here uselessly week after week and get no better. I do not wish to die; I have much to live for; but I am resigned to it. I think more and more of what happens to us after we exhale our last breath. Is the spirit extinguished like the flame of a lamp in a closed room, or does it speed onward like a ray of light in outer space?"

Orovan said: "It is agonizing to contemplate the loss of a friend, but the loss to us would be far easier to bear if we could be sure that the departed one is not lost to himself. If we were convinced that his spirit somehow endures happily and ~~he~~ is still aware of his identity, it would be selfish of us to lament our bereavement."

Iretanyo continued: "Naturally, lying here so many days with death staring me in the face, and especially when I awake in the night, I have thought much about it, and what it means. It is distressing to think that one will never again behold the sunshine, nor the stars, nor this beautiful earth, nor the birds, nor the faces of those dear to him. But how shall one see these things without eyes, which are lent to us only for a while, and which we know as soon as we begin to think must some day be returned to nature, whence we received them. But the bitterest thought is that perhaps we shall no longer be able to love that which we have loved - that even love will be extinguished by death. It is easier to contemplate leaving one's wife and parents and friends and this delightful valley, than ceasing to love them - even if we can never see them again."

"Not long ago Yanco and I were talking about this very matter with Charondis," I said. "He is certainly one of the most profound of philosophers, and he holds that the spirit is immortal because it loves. The body, he argues, does not last long because the creative power found it easier to develop a method of producing new bodies in unlimited numbers than to make them such that they would function for ever. But love is

so precious that there can never be enough of it; hence it is irrational to suppose that in a spirit which loves this love can be extinguished; therefore we must conclude that such a spirit will endure always. If, as most of us hold, Anga is beneficent and in some way that we cannot understand ~~he~~ loves us, it is inconsistent to believe that he would ever permit the annihilation of a mind ^{that} ~~which~~ loves him. I have read much on this subject in the writings of both ancient and modern thinkers, but this is the most convincing argument for immortality that I have ever heard."

"If Charondis is right in this perplexing matter, as in my opinion he usually is, then Tanyo's spirit must certainly endure, for it has great capacity for love," declared Orovan.

"Charondis further teaches," I continued, "that so long as a rational man recognizes the bare possibility that the best and most essential part of himself will survive his body's dissolution, he will live as though convinced of the spirit's immortality, doing everything in his power to improve the quality of this one component of his complex being which has any chance of enduring for more than a few score of years. To give some other aim precedence over this ~~is to take great pains to win what we are sure~~ we cannot retain, while neglecting that which we may possibly keep for ever."

"I believe that all three of us have lived as Charondis recommends, as indeed appears to be true of nearly everyone in Valanga," said Orovan.

"More so than in any other country that I know," I added.

"Then," concluded Orovan, "perhaps a carelessly handled

piece of bamboo cannot extinguish a loving spirit. At least, we must believe so until we have far better proof than we now possess, that such an absurd thing can happen."

"However that may be," said Iretanyo, "I want you two to promise me that if I join our ancestors, you will help Alestia to find another husband worthy of her. She is too young and beautiful to remain a widow."

"Such generosity is only to be expected of you, Tanyo," said Grovan. "But if, as we ^{believe} recognize to be possible, our spirits survive death, might not a second marriage involve us in complications. Most of us, I believe, hope some day to rejoin those whom we most dearly love."

"Certainly we do," admitted Iretanyo, "but anyone worthy to be Alestia's husband would also be worthy to be our friend. Why should not our spirits, supposing that they survive and retain something of their personality, dwell in such delightful fellowship as prevailed, for example, between the three of us and Alestia and Yanoa, before we paired off in marriage? After all, the exclusiveness of the marital relation is chiefly in the interest of begetting and rearing children in the best possible conditions; and we have no reason to believe that spirits in heaven reproduce themselves in any corresponding way."

"If the occasion arises, we shall do as you desire, Tanyo," I promised. "But remember that we have been engaging in a philosophical speculation, not discussing what will happen to you in the near future."

"Even to speculate on death in the manner of a philosopher raises one's spirits and makes him feel more alive," said Iretanyo.

"Who's talking about death?" demanded Alestia, just then entering with a drink for her husband. "I will have no talk of death in this room. The patient is still very much alive, and the doctor has not given up hope of saving him."

"None of us has abandoned hope," I said. "In fact, it appears to me that we have not yet exhausted all the possibilities of restoring Tanyo's health."

This is all that Orovan and I would divulge of the project we had discussed earlier in the day; for we did not wish to raise hopes of bringing a new physician only to dash them, and we were far from certain that the Council would sanction our project.

As we walked homeward through the dusk, Orovan said: "As long as I believe, what I cannot doubt, that Anga is beneficent, I must also believe that a human being as good as Tanyo will not wholly perish. I have known him as long as I can remember, and he has never done, scarcely ever said, anything unkind. He is good to the core."

"If you were as certain that a blessed immortal life is in store for Tanyo as you are sure that he deserves it, would you still be so anxious to keep him with us. Would it not be selfish of us to defer his entry into bliss?" I asked.

"But I am sure that he would not wish to make Alestia a widow so soon after she became a bride, nor to cause his family and us the sorrow of his loss. Besides, it seems to me that if

our whole existence, however prolonged, follows a rational scheme, it must be somehow important to us to round out and complete our experience here before we pass on to the next stage. And if it is true that blessed spirits endure for ever, to defer for a few decades our attainment of that happy state cannot make an appreciable difference in the length of time that we shall enjoy it."

"Strange as it may seem, Crovan, to postpone for a hundred or even a million years the beginning of a state which has no end, makes not the slightest measurable difference in the time we shall enjoy it. For such a state is eternity, which we mortals find it difficult to conceive except as infinite time; and infinity remains infinity, no matter how great the finite number you subtract from it."

"I am often bewildered by the subtleties that you and Charondis delight in. The important question is whether by taking an unusual course to cure Tanyo we shall be doing the right thing, and not selfishly keeping him with us when he would be happier elsewhere."

"I believe that we shall be doing what is best for Tanyo. The Council must decide whether such a course would be right for Valanga," I said.

See Lucetius, De Rerum Natura, III last lines (p. 132)

CHAPTER XXIII

VALANGA AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

The Council of Presidents convened four days later. My proposal to bring an outside physician was made the occasion for a discussion of the whole foreign policy of Valanga, which such a move might greatly affect. Faloris, who perhaps more than anyone else in the country had all the facts at his finger-tips, had been asked to present a brief review of Valanga's attitude toward the outside world since its foundation. ~~while~~ I was requested to give my opinions on several matters: what dangers Valanga might incur from closer association with the larger world; what advantages might thereby accrue to the country; and whether Valanga might contribute anything of importance to mankind as a whole. We both wished that we might have had more time to collect our thoughts and prepare our addresses, but we appreciated the Council's willingness to ^{accelerate} speed up its deliberations on so important a matter because the critical condition of a single citizen demanded ^{speed} expedition.

For years no question discussed by the Council had aroused such general interest. The Council Hall could not hold the people who flocked from all over the country to witness the proceedings, so the meeting was held outdoors in the sparato of Bellucia. The Chairman of the Council opened the discussion with these words: "Fellow Presidents and citizens of Valanga, This special meeting was called to consider urgent and important questions. As has now become general knowledge, a young man loved by all who know him, Iretanyo of Nardan, recently suffered an accident while engaged in constructing a bridge

over the Tirintin River. After several weeks of the best treatment that can be provided for him, he shows no sign of improvement, but on the contrary continues to decline. His co-guardian Wilyo of Avrano believes that the physicians of foreign countries, who have developed much skill in opening the human body, repairing its internal organs, and closing it up again, might be able to cure the abdominal injury from which he suffers; although of course he ~~can~~^{they} give no assurance that this is possible. With great abnegation, Wilyo and his other dorin, Orovan of Tilinga, have offered to go abroad and try to bring back a competent surgeon. Their devotion to their dorin is the more affecting because both have been married less than a year, and they would be leaving their young wives to go on a long and perilous journey on the bare possibility of saving their friend, who also is newly married. Obviously, we all wish to do everything we can to support them and hasten the recovery of a fellow citizen.

"The situation is, however, complicated by the precarious situation in which our country now finds itself. For some centuries, we have had reports of the subjugation and corruption of one after another of the nations of this continent by aggressive men, armed with peculiarly destructive weapons, who reached its shores from across the ocean. When it became evident that our traditional defenses, which no hostile force has ever succeeded in passing, would be inadequate in the face of the missiles of long range which these foreigners possess, we began to believe that our one hope of safety lay in remaining

undiscovered in our mountain fastness, and as far as possible we severed all communications with surrounding peoples. The admission of a foreign physician would be a direct contravention of this policy. He would probably wish to return home after the termination of his mission, and we have no means of ensuring that he ^{would} ~~will~~ not tell his own countrymen more about Valanga than we wish them to know.

"Accordingly, we must consider this matter with great care. Fortunately, we have in Wilyo of Avrano himself one who can tell us far more about the situation in the outside world than we have known for many years. The time is ripe for a reconsideration of our position in the light of present world conditions. It is unfortunate that the distressing situation of one of our fellow citizens forces us to come to a decision more rapidly than we would otherwise do. Still, we cannot afford to be hasty, as the welfare of our commonwealth is at stake. To orient our deliberations, we have asked our learned historian, Faloris of Cherimola, to give us a sketch of the changes in our attitude toward the outside world since the foundation of our nation."

Faloris then arose and spoke: "Esteemed Presidents and fellow citizens of Valanga, two thousand three hundred years ago, Stenoril founded this nation upon a new concept of the relation of man to the earth. He brought to a beautiful valley, still scarcely touched by human hands, some four hundred selected settlers, and he taught these people to consider themselves, not as absolute owners who could treat their land as they

pleased, but as custodians appointed by the Supreme Power to guard the beauty and fruitfulness of this small portion of the earth which still retained its original loveliness. He further taught these colonists that only men of the highest moral character could fulfill this obligation, hence it was incumbent upon them to cultivate such a character in themselves and their children. He unified his people in a common endeavor, and gave them a purpose far higher and more worthy of rational beings than the pursuit of pleasure, the accumulation of wealth, or the aggrandizement of territory, which are the ruling aims of other nations. By inspiring the people with a purpose which could be realized only through the friendly cooperation of all the inhabitants of the country, Stenoril effectively excluded those rivalries for wealth and rank which stir the basest passions and embitter the lives of other peoples, and he made Valanga an exceptionally happy land.

"Protected by its enclosing cliffs from aggressive neighbors, the new nation prospered, and under a succession of able leaders came ever closer to the goal which its wise and far-seeing founder set for it. After about three hundred years, its population had increased almost to the capacity of the land to support it, and its institutions had taken essentially the form we now know. Meanwhile, the surrounding peoples made little progress, because they continued to engage in fruitless wars to win military glory, extend their territories, or capture men for slaves or sacrificial victims. They were exhausting their soil by improper cultivation, and paying in misery

and death the price of their ignorance and folly. Valangans who travelled through the neighboring countries were distressed by what they saw. It had become evident to those who thought deeply that Anga was the creator and owner not only of this small valley but of the whole earth; and many believed that it was displeasing to him to behold ignorant men despoiling it, with little advantage to themselves and much hardship to the other creatures which share it with them. Gradually there grew up the notion that it was the divinely appointed destiny of the Valangan people to reclaim the whole earth for Anga, restore it as far as possible to its pristine beauty, and at the same time bring felicity to its now miserable inhabitants.

"Those who pondered this matter deeply saw that it was not merely a question of spreading the knowledge of Anga and the religious rites of our people. Certain religions have set about with great zeal to convert the whole world to their own peculiar doctrines and modes of worship. These religions, developed in more advanced cultures which have attained higher ethical concepts, have at times brought a certain moral elevation to the more primitive peoples among which they were propagated. Yet on the whole, their effect upon these peoples has been profoundly unfortunate.

"If you examine our religious beliefs and practices, or those of any of the tribes which surround us, you will find that they grew gradually out of the experience of the race and form an integral part of its culture. All its customs and institutions, its agricultural practices, are intimately bound

up with its religion and supported by it. Deprive the people of these ancestral rites and beliefs and the whole fabric of their culture is weakened, often to the point of collapse. It does not help to substitute for them other religious practices which grew up in a distant land, under different conditions and in response to different needs. The new beliefs may be intrinsically truer, higher, or nobler, but they are not congruent with the indigenous culture and fail to support it; and those who bring the new faith lack a comprehensive plan of life to impart to the people whose ancestral institutions they have subverted or destroyed. The converts to the new religion may, for all we can tell, win the heaven which is promised to them as a reward for belief; but their earthly condition is rarely improved and often it deteriorates lamentably. These truths, which I suspected from reading the accounts of some of our travellers, have become clearer to me from my long conversations with my friend Wilyo of Avrano.

"The earnest preachers of these proselyting faiths are blinded to the mischief they are doing by their habit of dividing human life into two contrasting departments. On the one hand, they have what they call the religious life, which includes such matters as belief in the deity and his revelations, worship and prayer, charity, and morality in a limited sphere; and on the other hand, there is the so-called secular life, within whose province fall agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, how we eat, dress and build our houses, and all similar matters. To us, this fragmentation of life appears arbitrary and absurd. Our whole life is an expression of our religion, just as our

whole country is our sanctuary. We believe that we are serving Anga when we plant and prune our trees, build our houses, bring forth and rear our children, or study his creation, no less than in our formal ceremonies. Everything we do has reference to him, and our religious ceremonies are merely supports to a mode of life which we strive to make sacred and holy in all its details. ^{It} Similarly, we believe it impossible to separate our morality, which our religion upholds, from our economic arrangements. Both are concerned with the practical rather than the contemplative side of life. If you change a man's economic arrangements, you must make corresponding changes in his ethical principles; and conversely, if you change his moral concepts, you must make corresponding changes in his social institutions and his agriculture. Otherwise, his principles and practices will no longer be in accord, and he will be thrown into profound confusion.

"I suppose that some of you are thinking that I have wandered far from the question which I have undertaken to discuss, but now the relevance of what I have been saying will become clear to you. As becomes apparent from the perusal of the writings of some of the leading thinkers of the Age of Deodan, they saw that to improve the condition of some of the neighboring countries, it would not suffice merely to instruct the people in certain beliefs and the performance of certain rites, but that it was necessary to rebuild their entire culture, from the ground up, on the model of our own. Since we do not imagine that our mode of life is possible for a warlike people,

the first problem was to bring peace to the nations which we undertook to teach. But it did not seem right to deprive of its bellicose temper a people exposed to the attack of militant neighbors. And if we pacified all the nations nearest Valanga, there would remain other warlike races beyond, and beyond these yet others, until one reached a great empire which for some centuries had been pursuing a policy of territorial expansion, whose ruling dynasty, founded upon military power, would certainly resist any attempt to spread the doctrine of peace among its heterogeneous peoples.

"This consideration delayed efforts to improve the condition of the neighboring nations, until it occurred to someone that Florunda, a land twodays' journey to the west of us, might be fortified in such a manner that men untrained in the art of killing could defend it from aggressive neighbors, as Valanga has always been defended. The Florundans spoke a language closely allied to our own, indicating that we had a common origin. The valley which they inhabited has somewhat the same geological formation; but the surrounding cliffs, less lofty, are interrupted in several places, especially at the lower end where the river flows out. But it appeared that by building high stone walls across these gaps, the country could be made nearly impregnable.

"This project was discussed with a number of leading Florundans who knew our country and found it happier and more beautiful than their own. They were readily convinced that the advantages enjoyed by Valangans were due, not to our intrinsic

superiority over the Florundans, but to the fact that for centuries we had been able to develop our institutions without the disturbing influence of war; and these men managed to win over the majority of their fellow countrymen to this point of view. It was agreed that with our help they should build the necessary fortifications, and then gradually remodel their institutions on the pattern of our own.

"Over a period of several decades, many Valangans went to Florunda as teachers, and many Florundan children were brought to grow up in Valangan households and become thoroughly familiar with our customs. The Florundans were apt pupils, and two or three generations after the completion of the walls their culture was very similar to ours. They lost their military habits, but kept their defenses manned by citizens who were prepared to throw down stones and boiling water upon attackers who, disregarding warnings to keep away, managed to pass through the ingenious outer defenses and reach the foot of the high walls. The country was gradually converted into an orchard of flourishing fruit trees; comfortable, durable dwellings replaced the crude, unhealthy cabins in which the majority of the people had formerly dwelt; and the character of the Florundans was immeasurably improved. The most amicable relations existed between Valanga and Florunda; and many nuptial alliances were formed, preceded in all cases by the robe-making which the Florundans had adopted from us.

"For about two and a half centuries, Florunda flourished with its new institutions, then calamity came. The Wolturans,

aggressive barbarians who for several generations had been slowly pushing eastward, finally reached its boundaries and demanded its surrender. For twelve years, the Florundans held them at bay by keeping unremitting watch over their defences. We could be of little help, because the approaches to Florunda were controlled by the enemy. Finally, a small party of the barbarians gained access to the valley by making a difficult descent of the cliffs at a point which had been inadequately guarded. Attacking the defenders on the walls from the rear and massacring them, they opened the defences to their main body. Then the shouting barbarians poured into Florunda, killing, looting, destroying in a frenzy of hatred. [¶] Nearly a thousand ~~of the~~ Florundans managed to escape and make their way over the mountains to Valanga, which did not shut its doors against its friends in distress. Homes were found for these unfortunates, and everything was done to make them forget the horrors they had passed through. Such a large influx of newcomers into a small country already fully populated, so upset our social arrangements that it took many years to straighten them out. Through frequent intermarriages, the descendants of these immigrants have become indistinguishable from the rest of our population. Indeed, it is probable that by now all of us have Florundan blood in our veins. The remainder of the people of Florunda, to the number of about thirty thousand, were either massacred, reduced to slavery, or dispersed over a wide area.

"It is probable that without the walls which we had urged

them to raise, the Florundans, even if they had retained all of their old warlike habits, would have succumbed far sooner to the superior numbers and military skill of the invading barbarians. Still, Valanga was implicated in this terrible tragedy, which damped our zeal for disseminating our ideals among other peoples; and for more than a thousand years nothing of this sort has been attempted. We have been content to dwell within our sheltering walls, which even the fierce barbarians who sacked Florunda could not pass, and perfect our own civilization, and hope that somehow, by means we cannot clearly envisage, possibly through the advent of some teacher far greater than either we or any other people has so far produced, the situation in the outside world would improve and permit us to relax our present policy of extreme isolation, which has been forced upon us against our will. I believe the consensus of our people is that if the whole world could be persuaded to adopt Valangan ways, it would become peaceful; but we are far too few to attempt to instruct all mankind simultaneously; and so long as the threat of war hangs at no great distance, it is useless to try to impart our institutions to defenseless people. Whether today the world situation is more propitious for our constructive efforts than it has been for many centuries past, there is one here who can tell you with far more authority than I."

The Chairman of the Council then arose to thank Faloris for his brilliant speech and to introduce me. My new robe gave me poise and confidence, and I spoke somewhat as follows:

"Esteemed Presidents and fellow citizens of Valanga, as the first traveller in many years who is able to give you a comprehensive report on the condition of the outside world, I ^would be highly gratified if I could tell you that it has improved greatly in recent times and has at long last become peaceful. Unhappily, nothing could be farther from the truth. In less than fifty years, the world has been convulsed by two wars which in magnitude and destructiveness far surpassed all previous conflicts, and by more lesser wars than I can recall. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that humanity is now divided into two armed camps, separated by opposing social and political ideals; and the more powerful nations are devoting an astoundingly large share of their productive capacity to the accumulation of vast stores of military equipment of a destructiveness hitherto unconceived.

"If, instead of taking the form of military competition, the rivalry between these two groups of nations would become a friendly emulation to work out the best solutions of the many ills which afflict the industrial civilization which both cultivate, everyone would gain. The side which won in this sort of conflict and developed a superior form of civilization, might eventually conquer the world without firing a shot. But either the leaders are concealing behind a mask of social idealism the old primitive lust for power, or they are too stupid to see how a true victory is to be won. The ironical aspect of this race for military supremacy is that the opposing sides, which originally differed greatly in their civil in-

stitutions and mental attitudes, become daily more alike, as inevitably happens when men pursue the same ends by the same means. If this situation continues much longer, it will make little difference to the world as a whole which side wins. But I must reserve further comment on these matters for the lectures which I am soon to give.

"I make these remarks in order to help you to see into what kind of world Valanga will be drawn if it loses its isolation. I must add that, in my opinion, it cannot become widely known without forfeiting its independence. I am not sure that you are aware that, several hundred years ago, a certain European monarch had the arrogance to claim for himself all this region in which Valanga lies, although, far from having conquered or even explored it, none of his men had been within hundreds of leagues of it or knew anything about it. With the breakup of this colonial empire, the territory that includes Valanga was claimed by one of the independent countries which then arose. The outlying parts of this vast country are still most imperfectly known in its capital. Its rulers believe that these wild mountains are inhabited, if at all, only by savages too few and miserable to be worth their attention. If they became aware that a civilized community is to be found here, they would certainly insist that it recognize their sovereignty.

"Then one of two things would happen. They might treat Valanga as a ward or protectorate, sending a commissioner or protector in whom the ultimate political authority would reside; so that this people, which for twenty-three centuries has gov-

erved itself in the most admirable manner, would be subject
 to the arbitrary decrees of a foreigner whose country is much
 of the time in a state of political turmoil. Or, alternatively,
 they might decide to make us ordinary citizens of their country,
 with ^{and} the obligation to vote in their national elections ~~and~~
representation in their legislative assembly. In this case,
 they would doubtless insist that we first learn their language,
 which is less beautiful than ours, a less sensitive medium for
 the expression of all the shades of thought, and poorer in
 literature. They would probably also decree that we, who have
 no money, should pay taxes; and our youths, who will not willingly
 crush a worm, would be conscripted into their army and trained
 in the most efficient methods of slaughtering their fellow men.
 Whichever course they followed, you can be sure that Valanga
 would be promptly invaded by missionaries using all their per-
 suasion to convert us to their religion, although ours is older,
 more rational, and has proved itself more effective in making
 men good.

"It would be useless to resist the demand that we recognize
 the sovereignty of the country which claims this territory.
 Its army would not even go to the trouble of transporting
 artillery and setting up batteries, which from the top of
 the cliffs could devastate the whole valley with their fire.
 They would drop troops into our midst from the air. With no
 weapons more effective than stones and sticks, how could we
 resist even a dozen men armed with guns that fire deadly
 missiles more rapidly than a man can count? After being forced
 into submission, we might try to regain our independence by

an appeal to the international assembly which for some years has been striving, not too successfully, to keep peace in the world and protect the rights of weaker peoples. I doubt whether our plea would be heeded. The country which claims us would contend, what is true as a political fiction but as an actual fact^{is} a preposterous lie, that Valanga has for many years been an uncontested part of its national territory. It would be difficult for us to make our voice heard in this assembly of nations, because we are not powerful enough to make our friendship of consequence to any other country; and self-interest is still a dominant consideration in this august gathering.

"What advantages might closer association with the rest of the world bring to us? In the first place, we ^wshould have access to all the treasures of thought of the world's great thinkers. Far from making us dissatisfied with our lot, the writings of these men, especially the older of them whose worth has been tested by time, should make us more contented with it; for Valanga has achieved much of that toward which they were groping. On the practical side, what to most people would be the greatest attraction of closer contact with the outside world, all of the marvellous inventions of recent centuries would be available to us - if we could somehow pay for them. By placing an appropriate apparatus at the foot of the great waterfall in Alomia, we could generate electricity, which, conducted over wires to every house, would light it brightly by night. With it we could also run machinery, make ice in our homes, and operate devices which pick up messages that with the speed of light travel through the air from all parts of the earth. With

these wonderful instruments we could, without leaving our homes, keep our nerves constantly tense by listening to hourly reports of all the troubles which afflict mankind, even in the most distant nations. By simply turning a button, we could likewise hear music of the most varied kinds, some of it of high quality; but we ^wshould doubtless soon forget how to play our instruments and ~~to~~ sing our beloved songs.

"It would be tedious to tell of all the useful devices, great and small, which we might acquire from the outside world. We ^wshould have to pay unusually high prices for these things, because until a highway is built (which would require vast expenditure and years of work) they would have to be brought to Valanga by air, a costly form of transportation. Doubtless we could pay for them by exporting our hand-made goods, which among people who appreciate such things bring good prices; for handicrafts such as ours are becoming increasingly rare in the world. But we ^wshould certainly have to work much harder than has been customary with us. And we ^wshould be making things, not to exchange with our neighbors who are also craftsmen and appreciate the loving care that we expend on them, so that these products of our industry become a bond between us, but for strangers whom we have never seen. I doubt very much whether we ^wshould be any happier or better for having the merchandise which the outside world could give us. I need only to remark that, having it in my power to possess many of these things if I return to my native land, I can think of no worse tragedy that might befall me than being obliged to abandon Valanga.

"Although undoubtedly the outside world could supply us

with many artifacts and skills that we would find useful, let us not suppose that we could simply add these things to our present culture, leaving it otherwise unchanged. To believe so would be the most dangerous fallacy; and if I can teach my fellow citizens nothing else but this one lesson, I believe that I ^Wshould make recompense for all the kindness I have received from you. If we accept the machines and the processes which industrial civilization has to offer, we must also be prepared to adopt the kind of life that goes with these things; for they will subtly alter our habits in unexpected ways. The question that we must consider is, not whether we wish our way of life enhanced by a few foreign importations that will make it easier or more pleasant, but whether we wish to abandon our mode of living in favor of theirs. Unless we are perfectly clear on this point, Valanga may some day, when it is no longer able to preserve its isolation, find itself profoundly transformed into something it never intended to be. Extensive intercourse with the outside world would, for example, cause us to shift our emphasis from spiritual to material values; and we ^Wshould soon be devoting more time to teaching our children how to handle things, less to training them to be good men ^{and women.}

"After these too brief remarks upon subjects which I hope soon to discuss more fully with you, I turn to the question which many here will regard the most important of all, for it concerns a national aspiration of long standing: What can Valanga do to improve the rest of the world, making it happier and more beautiful? I believe that if it does no more than

provide a living example of a good society, it can be of very great service to mankind. Let me explain. Nearly two thousand years ago the Roman philosopher Seneca, surveying the many diverse states known to him, declared that there was not a single one which could tolerate the wise man or which the wise man could tolerate. Seneca was well acquainted only with the cities of the Mediterranean region, but could he return today and examine all the countries of the whole world, I believe that he would draw the same conclusion: The wise man would not freely choose to live in any one of them - except Valanga. The wise man, I believe, would wish to become a citizen of a state in which virtue is esteemed above wealth and power, where justice is more than a name for the established order, where it is possible to love one's neighbors sincerely because they are truly lovable, where men dwell in harmony with each other and with the rest of the natural world. Where today shall we find such a land, beyond these encircling cliffs? Because it is impossible to point to a contemporary, ^{or historical} society which even approximately satisfies our highest aspirations, men have persistently dreamed of a happy Golden Age in the misty past or the remote future. The mere knowledge that there exists today, somewhere on earth, a community, however small and remote, in which a wise man would choose to dwell, would bring hope and encouragement to perplexed humanity.

"But not only is it difficult to point to an actual state in which the wise man would elect to live; what is even stranger, it is scarcely possible to point ~~even~~ to an ideal

state, in the creation of which the thinker's imagination was allowed freest play, where a good and wise man could dwell happily, without feeling oppressed or frustrated. During the many centuries in which Valangans have been molding their actual commonwealth into conformity with their aspirations, thinkers of other lands, despairing of effecting much improvement in contemporary society, have indulged in a harmless form of amusement which consists in describing in more or less detail an ideal commonwealth - a utopia, as it has come to be called from one of the most celebrated of them. With the notable exception of Cicero, whose devotion to the dying Roman republic, which he vainly strove to uphold, caused him to invest it with an ideal perfection that it was far from possessing, the thinkers who planned these imaginary commonwealths permitted themselves to diverge far from any actual model.

"Yet when one studies them carefully, these plans for an ideal state, produced by some of the world's greatest thinkers, show glaring defects. In many of them, the citizens would be subject to a strict regimentation which extended to almost every detail of their lives and every hour of their day. Thus, the revered Plato, legislating in his old age for the second of the commonwealths he planned - the one which he said was the best that could be actually established, not like his first the best that he could conceive - forbade even innovations in songs and children's games, which he feared might infect the population with a pernicious thirst for novelty. Although it is but natural that a legislator who believes that he has pro-

vided the best possible laws should not wish them to be altered in any important respect, he might leave the people to make minor changes, especially if they are in the spirit of his original foundation; and he should recall that one measure of the success of his institutions is their capacity to improve the people who live in accordance with them, so that eventually they become ready for customs better than he had devised ~~for~~ ~~him~~ - perhaps even better than he could conceive.

"At the other extreme from these strictly regimented ideal states, there are utopias, mostly of rather recent date, which although superficially charming rest upon the flimsiest of foundations; for their authors have imagined that it is possible to produce honorable and responsible citizens without a stable family, without formal education, without religion or any substitute for it. As though ^{human} ~~men~~ were insects or birds, innately endowed with a coherent system of behavior adequate to guide them through life! The great merit of Valanga is that it follows a happy mean between oppressive regimentation and unguided liberty, providing for its citizens a free life of the spirit firmly established upon stable institutions.

"Then, too, these fashioners of model societies have rarely given sufficient thought to their economic foundations, especially the chief of all, their relation to the land that supports them. They seem to have imagined, if they gave any thought to the matter, that the means of procuring food upon which men blundered through the ages, often under pressure of extreme necessity in a harsh environment, were good enough for their ideal state; when this matter more than any other needs to be

rationally examined and set upon sound principles. It is surprising that, although thinkers have not infrequently undertaken to examine the first principles of knowledge, in order to set all their intellectual edifice upon a rational and defensible basis, no one seems to have taken the trouble to subject to the same searching scrutiny the first principles of economics, so that our very lives might be set upon a secure and rationally defensible foundation. No one, that is, except our revered Stenoril, who saw clearly that by sustaining their lives with the fruits which trees so freely yield, men might be relieved on the one hand of the grinding drudgery of producing grains and preparing them for food, and on the other hand of the spiritual degradation which comes from exploiting and slaughtering animals.

"Just as men have had great difficulty in conceiving a satisfying pattern of life and placing it upon an appropriate economic foundation, so they have been perplexed about the goals of life. I almost wept when I read, in the Laws which Plato set down for his second-best state, that the citizens of this so carefully planned commonwealth would employ their ample leisure, provided by their sweating slaves, in "sacrificing, singing, and dancing." His pupil Aristotle did better when he declared that the end of the good life is the contemplation of God. By setting as the end of all their institutions the loving care of their country regarded as a natural community of living things and an expression of the highest Creative Power, the founders of our nation provided us with a purpose worthy of us and of all men. mankind

"For all these reasons, I believe that it would be valuable

to the rest of the world to know about Valanga and its customs, even if we deem it prudent to conceal from them the geographic location of our country. Perhaps, without coming and seeing for themselves, they will not believe it possible for men to live as happily and well as we do. No matter; even if they should look upon Valanga as just another imaginary commonwealth, it should be highly instructive to them, and provide them with much helpful guidance. Doubtless they will say that much of our success in creating a good society is to be attributed to the extraordinarily favorable natural conditions we enjoy here in our elevated tropical valley. Certainly ^{people} men who live in high latitudes, with great extremes of cold and heat, must devote more labor to the construction of their dwellings, to heating them in winter and possibly even cooling them in summer. They must likewise expend more labor on clothing themselves; and it is probable that they will not be able to depend for food on trees to the extent that we do, but must rely in greater measure upon annual plants. ^{It} It is proper that men who dwell ~~in the~~ areas where nature is kindest to them should set the example of a good and satisfying life. If the people to whom nature is most generous cannot live well, what hope is there for the rest of mankind? Those in less favored regions should copy them as closely as they can, modifying their practices in conformity with local conditions. Every community, like every individual, must first of all select the ideal toward which it strives, then come as close to it as circumstances permit. Otherwise there is no true progress, but only opportunism and aimless drifting.

"Among the natural advantages which Valanga has enjoyed, not the least is the encircling cliffs, which have protected it so well from foreign aggression. Without equally effective natural defences, or their equivalent in international arrangements which ensure permanent peace, I doubt whether any nation can develop citizens of such uniformly high character or institutions so conducive to happiness, no matter how benign and bountiful the region in which it is established.

"I ^w should be raising ^{futile} false hopes if I led you to expect that, learning about Valanga, all mankind, or any considerable part of it, will rush to copy its ways, with the result that in a few generations the world will be so orderly and safe that we no longer need preserve our isolation. ^{People} Men have great difficulty in recognizing what is good even when it is plainly displayed before their eyes; or recognizing it, they despair of attaining it. No one planned the evolution of the monstrous industrial communities which now include so large a proportion of mankind; no one in his senses would have planned them. Likewise, I believe it impossible for anyone to plan in adequate detail the transition of these communities to some better form of society; they are far too complex for that. Moreover, the people who comprise these industrial societies, although in many ways dissatisfied and even fearful of them, are still too entranced, like children with new toys, with all the inventions their mechanical civilization provides, to be ready to relinquish them. They must grow tired of their glittering toys, and suffer more, before they are ready to change. Perhaps there is no hope for these prodigious social growths, but they must be carried along by

their own impetus until they collapse under their own weight.

"It is not improbable that the future of mankind rests with those communities which have remained relatively unaffected by modern technology, if they can preserve themselves until the so-called advanced societies have destroyed themselves by their own excessive involvement in material complexities. Perhaps when the industrial fever has burnt itself out, these economically simpler communities will find room to develop along more wholesome lines. Therefore it seems best that we preserve our isolation and abide our time in hopeful expectancy."

an excellent, in many features resembles Valanga."

As I sank into my seat, exhausted by a long effort of a sort to which I was not accustomed, the audience burst into applause and had to be called to order by the Chairman of the Council; ~~for~~ although the people as a whole are admitted as spectators of the deliberations of the Presidents, they are expected to preserve perfect silence. Several of the Presidents ~~then~~ made short speeches which I need not record here; then the meeting ~~was~~ adjourned to permit the councillors to ponder what they had heard, and talk over the matter quietly in small groups, before resuming the formal discussion on the morrow.

continued

The next morning, a debate ~~was carried on~~ for about two hours, then one of the Presidents called for a vote on the resolution that Valanga preserve its strict isolation and no foreign physician be brought in; but that an account of its history and institutions be prepared and sent to the outside world, if it seemed possible to do this without revealing the country's geographical location. This resolution was carried by twenty-nine affirmative votes and one abstention. Because of his friendship for Iretanyo, the President of our canton would not vote against bringing a surgeon to attend him, although he, too, favored the continuance of isolation. Had the Council approved a change in the foreign policy of the country, it would have been necessary to refer the question to the people as a whole before action could be taken, as is done with all matters of outstanding importance.

I was then consulted as to the feasibility of preparing an account of Valanga and transmitting it abroad, without betraying the country's situation. When I replied that I thought this could be done, the Presidents asked whether I would undertake to write this account; and I agreed to do this if Faloris and other well-informed people would read my manuscript, or rather let me translate it to them, in order to eliminate all errors of fact and of interpretation. I also suggested that if I were to cast my account in narrative form, telling how I reached Valanga and tracing the steps by which I became acquainted with its customs, it should be more entertaining, hence more widely read, than a formal treatise on the nation's institutions; and to this they assented. Then, after attending to a few routine matters, the Councillors went home.

I shall not deny that I was secretly relieved by the decision of the Presidents, not because I shrank from any effort, however great, which might lead to my friend's recovery, but because I was apprehensive of the consequences of bringing to Valanga a foreigner with whose character and practices I was not thoroughly familiar. When we told Iretanyo what we had tried to do for him, he was grateful for our efforts but approved the Council's decision. It was far better, he said, that one citizen should die than that the nation be placed in jeopardy. Later, when I reflected upon this whole episode at my leisure, it was borne upon me how little a man's most careful judgment is to be trusted when the life of one dear to him is at stake, and how in his anxiety to preserve the loved one he is often led to prefer a course which in his calmest hour he

must disapprove. I was thankful for our Council's fatherly
restraining hand.

CHAPTER XXIV
PREPARATIONS FOR A JOURNEY

Laying aside my work on the lectures that I was to give, I now threw myself wholeheartedly into the task assigned to me by the Council; for it seemed to me that the need of the outside world to know about Valanga was far more urgent than that of Valanga to know about the outside world. I welcomed this occupation the more because it helped to divert my attention from the gloom which Iretanyo's continuing prostration cast over our family. ⁹ But the physician never abandoned hope of saving his patient. He continued his daily visits and the systematic massages which were intended to restore the abdominal organs to their proper functioning. Little by little Iretanyo improved, until finally he was able to leave his bed and totter about, greatly emaciated, but full of hope for his complete recovery. As he grew stronger and our apprehensions were dispelled, the sun gradually returned to our heaven. Then it burst forth in full splendor when Yanoa presented me with a daughter, a little being so shapely and cheerful that I was at last forced to admit that newborn infants can be attractive. A few weeks later, Orovan and Rilinia became parents of a son.

For well over a year after my arrival in Valanga, I would sometimes dream that I was again among the Agarunis, witnessing that terrible cannibal orgy which drove me forth to the stillness of the night and freedom. Then I would awake in a cold sweat and lie trembling, until I finally assured myself that I was no longer in the power of the savage Agarunis but safe in peaceful Valanga. At such times, I would ask myself whether

people so utterly dissimilar in all their thoughts and customs as the Valangans and the Agarunis could actually be animals of the same kind, to be classified in the same biologic species. If Iretanyo or Orovan had been transferred as infants to an Agaruni family, could either of them have developed into the savage warrior who calmly cracked the skull of his captive enemy? Would Yancoa or Alestia, now so gentle and loving, have been capable of mixing her murdered husband's blood with the milk she offered to their child, as I had seen the Agaruni mother do, if she had been reared in that savage tribe rather than in Valanga?

Questions such as these have recurred to me again and again while writing this history. It is perhaps impossible to answer them with certainty; but it is an undoubted fact that exceedingly few people, and those the most exceptional, rise ~~much~~ in conduct or even in moral aspirations much above the better examples provided by the society in which they were reared, while the majority are content with far lower standards. And I am certain that many generations ago the ancestors of the Valangans, like my own forebears, were no more cultured and gentle than the Agarunis, and doubtless they had practices no less horrible. The differences which separate the Valangans from the Agarunis do not appear to be of the sort that arise by genic mutations and are transmitted by physical inheritance, like the color of the hair and eyes or the proportions of the body. At most, they are only partly supported by changes in the innate constitution of the

Valangans which long centuries of peaceful co-operation have
~~supported,~~ promoted.

What, then, could have caused a people originally ^{perhaps} no better
 than the Agarunis to develop into Valangans? Must not this
 transformation have been effected by some agent or power al-
 ready present in the savage Agarunis, lying scarcely perceived
 in the depths of their being, slowly and silently urging them
 upward, but hampered in its free expression by the difficult
 circumstances of their lives, surrounded as they are by foes, and
 handicapped by the imperfect development of their intelligence?
 So long as this inmost power fails to attain perfect expression
 in all the details of his ^{or her} life, ^{individual} a man must feel thwarted, op-
 pressed, incomplete, never truly himself. While I dwelt among
 the Agarunis, it sometimes appeared to me that their festi-
 vities were so unrestrained, their ceremonies so extravagant,
 because they made violent efforts to cast off some horrible in-
 cubus that they scarcely even perceived. Only in the measure
 that men succeed in divesting themselves of this oppressive
 burden, by making all their outward acts conform to this inmost
 principle, do they achieve that steady happiness which pervades
 Valanga.

My residence in this country has renewed my faith in the in-
 nate goodness of man, which in my student days I derived from
 the ancient sages. In the years before I arrived here, my ex-
 periences among diverse peoples were inclining me more and
 more toward the grim theologic doctrine of the natural deprav-
 ity of mankind. But now it is clear to me that people in other

countries, for all their faults and wickedness, are about as good as we can expect them to be - perhaps even better than we should expect them to be - when we consider the viciousness of their social arrangements, which place a premium upon aggressiveness and foment the lust for power, and the inadequacy of their education, with its bewildering division into secular and religious instruction. And now in the technically ^{logi} more advanced countries, education, which was never what it should be, is increasingly skimmed to leave time for technical training, which is hardly education at all, if we pay attention to the original sense of the word.

There is a period in the lives of many, perhaps nearly all, young people when they yearn for noble leaders to follow, lofty ideals to which they can dedicate themselves. If this need of the adolescent spirit is not satisfied at the crucial time, or if it is met with ideals that are hollow and leaders who are sham, they all too quickly learn to fill the vacant heart with sensual indulgences and material possessions; and only exceptional individuals remain responsive to great ideals after youth has passed. Hence the tremendous importance of an adequate moral education.

Although my belief that man is intrinsically good has revived in Valanga's genial atmosphere, I shall not again fall into ^{my youthful} the error of supposing that this inherent goodness must be revealed by the capacity to discover the good life for oneself, or to know by a sort of divine intuition what practices and social arrangements most conduce to it. For the

overwhelming majority of mankind, original goodness manifests itself merely by the ready recognition of moral truths when they have been pointed out, by preference for the better way of life when some other person has demonstrated its greater beauty. To develop a fresh moral outlook or a fundamentally new social arrangement calls for genius of the highest order, which has always been rare, and which in modern times is far less common than the capacity to discover a hitherto overlooked rule of nature or to invent some startlingly new machine or process. Because of the rareness of fresh moral insights, that society will improve most rapidly which awaits them most expectantly, seizes them most eagerly when in the fullness of time, as by a divine gift to mankind, they at last spring up, cherishes them most lovingly, and imparts them most carefully to its children.

Like other peoples, Valangans only rarely have novel moral insights, although in the course of their history they have produced a surprising number of moral geniuses, considering the smallness of the population, and they have been extraordinarily responsive to them. Their innate goodness is revealed by this glad acceptance of moral guidance, and by the fact that, without any machinery of compulsion, they adhere faithfully to the practices which their national experience has proved to be conducive to a good and holy life, simply because such a life satisfies their inmost selves.

And now, after three months of steady application, I bring my task to a close. After it has been criticised by Faloris, the President of this canton, and other friends, I shall make

a clear copy on papyrus scrolls and take it to the nearest postoffice, where I shall forward it to my old professor of ethnology. Except for the stamps and cancellation, I doubt whether even he could tell from what part of the world the manuscript comes; for the text itself, I am confident, contains nothing to reveal in what continent it was written. I am sure that I can trust the professor not to divulge the names of the town and country whence the package was posted to him. I shall request him to publish this manuscript, and likewise to forward letters to my parents and a few old friends which I shall enclose with it, telling them that in a part of the world which I must keep secret I am still alive and well. I shall also inform my parents that they have a granddaughter, whom they are most unlikely ever to see.

By difficult mountain trails and then by canoe, the journey to the postoffice will require weeks, and we shall probably be absent from Valanga for at least two months. Orovan still insists that he will go with me, although I have been trying to persuade him that for the sake of his wife and child he should stay at home. We shall be accompanied by two youths, co-guardians and still unmarried, who will share our dangers and lighten our journey. The Council has appropriated enough gold for the postage and other necessary expenses. Dressed in clothes which Yanoa is now making on the model of those in which I reached Valanga, I shall travel as a prospector who has panned this gold in a distant mountain stream, whose location he for obvious reasons wishes to keep secret; while my companions will play the role of my native "boys", ignor-

ant of the language of the town which is our destination. We shall not set forth until Orevan and I have dedicated our infants at the next ceremony, which is still about two months off. I am not sorry for this delay, for I confess that I contemplate this journey with a certain irrational trepidation, fearing that on my first contact with the outer world the happiness that I have known since arriving here will be somehow shattered, as by a rude awakening from a delightful dream.

glamor - I understand.

He will pass, you know, in the city where organization we have now completed, and which is confined to the region of speculation, and which is not believed to be found anywhere on earth.

Some other world perhaps in heaven there is laid up a pattern of it for him who wishes to build it and bind himself accordingly. And the question of the present or future existence on earth is quite unimportant. For in any case he will adopt the practices of such a city to the exclusion of all or of many other.

Plato Republic Book II, and

I understand, he replied. He will do so, you mean, in the city whose organization we have now completed, and which is confined to the region of speculation; for I do not believe it is to be found anywhere on earth.

Well, said I, perhaps in heaven there is laid up a pattern of it for him who wishes to behold it, and, beholding, to organize himself accordingly. And the question of its present or future existence on earth is quite unimportant. For in any case he will adopt the practices of such a city, to the exclusion of those of every other.

Probably he will, he replied.

Plato, The Republic, Book IX.