



Nachlass Robert Koch

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Transkription: Michael Tietz

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c/o. Mess. H. S. King Co.
65, Cornhill E.C.
London. Oct 28th [18]99

Dear Professor Koch,

up to the present time I have not felt up to writing, but now I'm glad to say, that all my old energy has come back and I hope to return to India in December if the Medical Board will pass me. Four months ago I proceeded to the North of England and Scotland, in order to obtain fresh and mountain air, and immediately found great benefit from the change. For 20 weeks previously I had undergone treatment in London - consisting of Massage and Electricity. In July my agents forwarded me a note to them from you asking for my address - and I hope you received their reply. No doubt you heard of my severe illness, but I will give you an idea of its origin and progress. In September 1898 Government sent for me to Simla and after remaining there for a period of ten days, returned but on my way remained at Saharanpur to make several (4) autopsies on Australian horses which were suffering from a form of "Paralysis" which has been of frequent recurrence, breaking out every year with more or less severity. The autopsies took six hours daily for 3 or 4 days, as the brain and spinal cords had to be removed in tact. On returning to Muktesar I felt in perfect health, but on the 28th September a little or slight fever was present and the usual symptoms, head-ache re. On the 30th Sept. I was feeling much better and received Dr. Thomson the Sanitary Commissioner of the North-Western Provinces. On the following day the fever returned, with great pain in the Great Sciatic Nerve - and later I became more or less unconscious, with only my native servants who gave me little or no food. On Oct 8th an Assistant Surgeon was sent with a Dhoolie to transport me to the Hospital in Naini-Tal. Not knowing that I was a "teetotlar" he gave me two ounces of Brandy in Water and I became comatosed so that there was no rousing me at all. At Naini-Tal it was found that I had lost power over my right foot, had a large slough over the inner ankle and phlebitis, of the veins of the leg. A month later, vomiting came on and continued until I was removed from the mountains. By that time my body weight had decreased by 35 Kilos and I had become more like a skeleton. At present however my body weight is 98 Kilos, and I am feeling very well. On Jan. 28th I left Bombay for England and curiously two of the first class passenger had suffered similarly with loss of power of the right foot. The former in Uganda, C. Africa after an attack of Malarial Fever - contraction whilst passing through 'swamps' 'in route' - the latter in Madras presidency after visiting the swamps below the Niligi Hills. In both cases the limbs have recovered power and the men are able to walk ten miles at a stretch.

A friend of mine Dr. Braddon has treated five cases of 'Paralysis of the foot' following Malarial Fever in Penang and Singapore - whilst Dr. Rogers who is now at Muktesar came across three similar cases in Assam + Chachaz. So that one is inclined to diagnose the disease as one of Malarial origin in my case, although at first it seemed likely that the symptom arose from blood poisoning from inoculation at the 'post-

mortems' on the horses.

I am very sorry to have to inform you of bad news - but you may have already heard through Kriebel. That the Laboratory was entirely burnt down on the evening of the 27th of September. There was scarcity of water and the fire could not be got under - consequently with the exception of the Office papers and Laboratory [unleserlich].

The whole of my private quarters including Library, household goods, microscopes, telescope re. have all been destroyed. Together with all microscopical slides. The work of 25 years. The money value of my loss all is about 25,000 rupees = £ 2.200. Up to the present I have had no communication from Government, so I do not know whether they intend to rebuild the Laboratory. I am thankful to say that the greivous news, has not had any effect on me, of a [unleserlich] nature, as I have passed through so many severe trials, that my Exterior has become like that of a 'pachyderm'. My only wish is to be allowed to return to India and do what I can towards getting the place ready for further investigations.

The mosquitos forwarded by Mess. King Co. - were all obtained in the city of Bombay - a malarious weality - so hope you found them of use. Unfortunately the large bottles of beetles which I collected for you at Muktesar, and left in the Store Room, when taken ill, most probably will have perished in the flames, but hope to be able to obtain other specimens for your friend. I hope you had an enjoyable visit to Italy and that you were able to work out the malarial problem, in continuation of your East African Experience. Have you published any papers up to the present on the question. I ask for have not seen any journals for the past Twelve months. With very kind remembrances to Madame Koch and still trusting that you will let me have copies of your signed photographs.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

Alfred Lingard.

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East African experience - Have
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