

Having rested ourselves, and gazed for awhile on the wide and varied panorama, we descended the hill, and shortly afterwards reached the small village of Ambodinifody. This I suppose to be a military post, for two soldiers, one carrying a musket with a bayonet fixed to it, the other a spear, stood outside the door of the house before which my bearers halted. The soldiers saluted me or the officer by whom I was accompanied. The one who carried the musket gave the word of command, which, as the whole was so sudden and unexpected, I might not perhaps hear distinctly; but what I did comprehend seemed like, "Rear rank; take open order—present—fire!" These words were rather startling, but my companions maintained the utmost gravity.

While waiting here, I walked out to search for plants in some of the spots we had passed, and returning before sunset, found a nice clean mat spread in the house I was to occupy.

During the evening, half a dozen friends arrived — grave, dignified men, whom I had never seen before, but with some of whom I had repeatedly corresponded. The one who came first brought a present of poultry and rice, and a present from the prince, bidding me welcome, and expressing his pleasure at hearing of my approach towards the capital; the others had come three days' journey from the capital to convey to me the greetings of their friends there. Their welcome was indeed most affecting. They had much to relate, and much to ask, and I was glad to assure them of the deep affection and general interest felt in their welfare by friends in England. We united in the expression of our grateful feelings for having been permitted to meet each other, and it was late before we parted—later still before I could sleep.

By seven the next morning we resumed our journey, one of my friends accompanying us in his palanquin. After travelling about an hour, a chief came out of an adjacent house, and earnestly solicited me to go in to see a sick person. I had fre-