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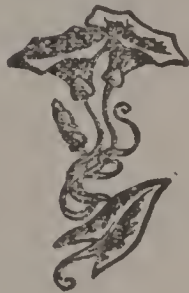
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ADELAIDE GAIL FROST.

BY WAYSIDES IN INDIA

ADELAIDE GAIL FROST



✿ WRITTEN FOR THE CHRISTIAN
WOMAN'S BOARD OF MISSIONS ✿ IN
MEMORY OF HATTIE L. JUDSON
✿ WHO GAVE HER LIFE FOR IN-
DIA'S STARVING VILLAGE PEOPLE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IND.


WOMAN'S BOARD OF MISSIONS

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

OO **T**HE restless millions wait
That Light, whose dawning maketh all things new;
Christ also waits, but men are slow and late,
Have we done what we could? Have I? Have you?
A cloud of witnesses above encompass us,
We love to think of all they see and know;
But what of this great multitude in peril,
Who sadly wait below?
Oh, let this thrilling vision daily move us
To earnest prayers and deeds before unknown,
That souls redeemed from many lands may join us,
When Christ brings Home His own."

By Waysides in India.

Part I.

 REAK, CREAK, CREAK, went the bullock-cart as it rolled slowly over the military road between two large stations in Hindustan. "I do not understand why we are riding in this vehicle over such a beautifully smooth road," said a bright-faced young woman who was rather restlessly changing her position on the straw in the bottom of the cart.

"But you just wait until we get onto the country road," her companion replied. "You see, my dear, that this road has been built *pakka* (solid) so that should there be a necessity of marching soldiers rapidly from one military station to the other, or to some point where there was mutiny or trouble, it could be done. The roads leading off from this to the villages are quite different, as you will see."

The bright morning sunshine filtered through the tamarind trees, whose shadows fell in lace-like pat-

terns on the yellow road. The tamarind with its fern frond leaves was mingled with the shining foliage of the *pipal* tree, sacred to so many millions of people. Ahead of them were other carts and many people walking, for it was bazaar day in the town of Jalalpur, toward which the village folk were tending. The farmers were taking their produce to market, the weavers their cloth, the potter and basket maker their wares, and these were to be bartered and sold in the street or by the roadside. The despised *chamar*, or worker in leather, was passed. He carried some roughly-made sandals and a bundle of ill-smelling hides.

“Get out, low-born eater of flesh!” said a tall young Hindu with the books of a writer under his arm. The *chamar* shrank awkwardly aside. He was an out-caste and might kill and eat, while the high-caste man might not do this, lest he should eat his ancestors. To this high caste Hindu there was always the possibility present that the souls of his great, great grandparents might have taken up their separate abodes in the cow or the ugly buffalo, nibbling the short dry grass by the roadside. The young man looked with disgust on the burden of the *chamar*, who passed on muttering. An old man followed the *chamar*. He wore no more clothes than the worker in leather; he looked no cleaner. About his neck were strings of large wooden beads. In his hand was the brass *lota*, or drinking vessel, for he would not drink from the cup of him of lower caste. His head was bent and he was murmuring over and over again on his beads, “*Ram, Ram, Ram!*”

“*Namaskar,*” saluted the young Hindu writer,

bowing low before him and touching his feet with his hands.

The Brahmin paused, for this scantily draped individual was a holy man of the highest caste. He said: "I am on my way to the bazaar in Jalalpur. I have visited many holy places and bathed in *Gunga Ji* (Ganges) many times, but I have heard that in Jalalpur there is a wonderful light burning in the temple of *Maniyadev* and I am traveling thither to see it."

"Yes, master, it never goes out. That was a true word, for there it burns day and night."

Two women, bearing baskets on their heads filled with grains, went aside lest their shadows should fall upon and offend the Brahmin *guru*. They were draped in coarse dark-red cloths partially drawn over their faces. On their arms were many glass bracelets, and heavy anklets were clasped above their feet. It made one shudder lest they be bruised by these weighty ornaments. Their bright eyes were watching the cart with its load of strange, kindly-looking foreign women, as they walked along behind, easily balancing the baskets upon their heads. A tall man in a yellow and red gingham coat, with shining black hair surmounted by a jaunty cap, walked along with an urban air. Behind him a coolie bore a huge pack of cloth, for this tall man was a cloth merchant from Ramnagar on his way to the bazaar in Jalalpur. As the cart passed he dropped his yard-stick to say with low bow, "*Salaam, Mem Sahib, Salaam!*" A potter resented the merchant's *salaam*, which almost knocked some earthen jars from his hands. Behind the potter trotted his wife, with three dusky jars, one upon the other, bal-

anced upon her head. There was many a woman bearing more than her share of the burden, walking obediently behind her lord and master, never by his side. From one basket borne aloft, a little brown baby raised its head showing sleepy brown eyes, as it clung to the sides of the basket. There were rude bales of cotton on other heads and carts were passed full of grain bags. A child had spilled a basket of vegetables in the road and was being upbraided in vile language by a man standing near. Another boy with large white radishes in his basket was laughing at the scene.

The road turned off to the village whither the missionaries were bound, and became very rough. In the long rainy season great ruts had been cut by the wide wheels of rude, native carts. These were not as yet powdered to dust. The driver of the cart was obliged to strike off in different directions across the fields to avoid the worst places. It was a very slow and tiring, but comparatively safe mode of locomotion. The young missionary wondered if that clump of trees rising so suddenly out of the brown fields embowered the village. There was a gleam of white there, suggesting a comfortable farm house. "Yes, the mud huts of the villages nestle there, but the white is the temple, and no resting place for weary tillers of the soil." 'Twas thus an older missionary answered her questionings.

"See that man just scratching the surface of the earth with his plow," said the irrepressible new missionary as they neared a man with an Indian plow made of sticks with a small iron point.

Ahead of them lay the village of Bhauli, with its

two hundred mud and grass huts surrounding the slightly more precise ones built about the court of the headman. A little herd of brown children flocked under the trees on the edge of the village, and with large, dark eyes watched the approach of the *Mem Sahibs*.

"*Salaam, Salaam!*" chorused the boys, for they remembered the kind faces that had smiled on them in the town. The three missionaries, with some difficulty, extricated themselves from the cart and walked up the narrow roadway into the village and almost straight into the headman's court. Several women were seated about in the sunshine. One was stirring something in a large kettle over a little outdoor fireplace. Two young women were grinding at the mill, and another was husking rice with a long wooden pestle. A little girl was busily grinding the spices for the curry on a large stone with a smaller stone used for pounding. An old woman was cutting up vegetables with a short sickle. A little baby who had been bathed and oiled paraded his shining little brown body in the sunlight, being freely and airily attired in a string of beads and silvered anklets. The old woman rose and said, "*Salaam.*" The younger women drew their draperies shyly over their faces, for modesty in India means concealing the face. The more experienced visitor knew this old woman was the mother of sons and these were the daughters-in-law over whom she might hold sway, since her own years of youthful servitude had ended. Her face was not unkindly, but marks were there that only the expectation of blankness coming on apace can leave in the faces of the old. She gave an order to two of the

young women, who hurried into one of the houses about the court, their anklets jingling merrily. They soon reappeared with a small cot bare of bedding and set it in the court as a seat for the *Mem Sahibs*. These women had no chairs, but sat on the ground or on mats; and yet, with true courtesy, knowing that the habits of the foreign people were different, they brought out the cot as a seat. Though rudely made, with ropes woven across it, the missionaries took their seats upon it with a grateful acknowledgment. The elder lady asked them concerning the welfare of the family. The mother began to shake her head and answer that one of her sons had gone on a long pilgrimage to Jagannath, on the far east coast of India, and they had not heard from him for many weeks. Another pilgrim passing through had seen him by the way at Kashi (Benares). There he had spent all he had taken with him in the prescribed offering to the Brahmins, and was planning to beg his way to Jagannath, hoping to reach there for the great festival when the car was drawn forth.

"I have no rest thinking of him," said the old mother. "Who knows what has happened to him or whether with all his pilgrimages and fastings and performings of *punya* (acts of merit) he yet lives or no? Ah, if he dies may it be by the Ganges or within the sacred enclosure of Jagannath, where the gods dwell!"

A woman whose cloth was drawn over her face began to wail. She was the son's wife, perhaps his widow.

There was an opportunity for the missionaries to speak of God's Son, who made the pilgrimage from



J. E. Dean

IN THE HEADMAN'S COURTYARD.

Heaven to earth to bring gifts to men, and they tried to give a message of hope that would reach even this case.

"It is a true word you are speaking to us," said the old woman, "it seems good to me. Ask your God to bring him back."

"He is our Father, and your Father, too. You can ask Him yourself and say, 'For Jesus' sake.'"

"Who is Jesus?" she asked, and so the conversation went on. They brought food soon, bread and sweetmeats and curds, and offered it to the ladies. Bits of these were accepted, for the women had taken trouble in preparing them. The missionaries were rising to go when an old woman clothed in a single dingy white drapery walked in without ceremony. She was very light in color and her skin was creased with a thousand wrinkles. She carried in her hands a gourd drinking vessel, a long string of wooden beads, a pair of tongs, and a small roll. She was muttering to herself with a strange look in her brilliant, deep-set eyes. The native women at once prostrated themselves, for the newcomer had the appearance of a priestess. She, however, curiously approached the *Mem Sahibs*.

"*Ram, Ram,*" she said, as such people often say the name of that god in greeting, instead of the usual "*Salaam.*"

"*Salaam,*" they answered; "where are you from?"

"*Gunga Ji,*" (the Ganges) she said, "and I have here," patting her roll, "leaves from the temple under the ground at Allahabad, leaves which grew in darkness, but will bring health to the sick. I have here charms of wonderful power which I can impart to

you, even to you who have crossed the black water. I can help you to the desire of your heart."

"And are you satisfied?" asked the elder missionary. The women of the household drew near to hear the reply. Something in the tone made the old pilgrim pause in her recital. "Have you lost your burden?"

"Who are you, that you ask me these questions?" the pilgrim answered in most respectful form. "I am returning from *Gunga Ji*."

"Is your heart at rest?" again questioned the missionary.

A look of sadness crept over the old face as she said: "I lost everything I had. The Queen of Cratrapur gave me money and a new cloth, and now this is all I have. I made the offerings at Kashi, and then I went on to Jagannath. There the priests walked over my body as they did over that of other pilgrims on their way to the temple. I suffered much and I got nothing—nothing at all!"

The women of the native household said, "Alas, alas!"

"And my son!" exclaimed the mother of the household, "did you meet my son, who made a pilgrimage there?"

"There were thousands of people going there. I do not know your son. Plenty were thin so their bones showed, plenty were dying of fever, plenty were in rags. I did not know them."

"*Hai! Hai!*" wailed the young wife, "he is dead!"

"Hush, woman, they were not all dead," answered the pilgrim.

“Where are you going now?” asked one of the missionaries, her eyes full of tears.

“I am going back to the Queen’s palace. I was her teacher. I taught her all I knew from the Vedas, but I now have some new spells to teach her. I grew tired there before, for the maids, oh, the maids, they tossed their heads,” and the old pilgrim imitated them very perfectly. “They were jealous and they brought the laugh upon me whenever possible. They said, ‘Who is this woman that has stepped in?’ They cared for nothing but rings, and bracelets, and jewelry. I wear only this,” and she showed the iron band on her arm, the badge of widowhood.

“I thought there was a king of Chatrapur,” said one of the missionaries.

“Oh, there was, but he is a holy man who spends all his time going from one shrine to another. He will try to find amid the Himalayas the sacred spot where Gunga begins to flow, a drop from Heaven. He has been gone many years giving himself to the worship of the gods. The queen is very anxious lest his brother seize the throne and wrest it from her eldest son, for whom she is trying to hold it. The king has been gone so long that the people are beginning to complain, for there is no one to whom to appeal, and they wish to make his brother king. The queen told me to go to Calcutta and gain audience of the great lady who reigns—the Viceroy’s wife—and ask her to speak to His Excellency about this matter of saving the throne for the king’s son. But I went to Jagannath to pray instead. Who knows if I should have gained the white queen’s ear?”

“And what are you taking back to your mistress?” asked the eldest missionary.

“This,” said she, and she pulled from her bundle a small idol. “This is a *Sita*. She will cause *Ram* to bless the Queen of Chatrapur! *Ram* will overcome the uncle even as he did *Rawan*, the king of *rakshas* (demons) in Ceylon!”

“What will you do if the queen is not pleased that you disobey her command?”

“I will tell her the white queen sent me to *Sita* because the heart of the King of Chatrapur has been stolen by the gods, and not by men, and only gods can fight against the gods. Did not *Ram* overcome even gods? *Sita* will influence *Ram* to fight against the deities that are driving the king mad, while the white queen would only influence the Viceroy, who worships not the gods of Hindustan.”

“There is hope for you, but not in a poor queen who died centuries ago. The heaven-dwelling Father hears the prayers of the distressed. He is displeased with idolatry, but He has shown His love to men in that He sent His Son to earth to tell the people how they can find Him. The poor king is searching after God, but our God dwells not in stone or a house made with hands.”

The old pilgrim stopped her with an eager exclamation. “That is a new story; I like it. I found not my heart’s rest even in the sacred enclosure of Jagannath!”

“*Hai! Hai!*” cried the mother.

“Don’t be sad. There is hope, there is a Mediator, there is one to speak for us to God, but how can sinful eyes see God? It says in the Holy Book, ‘Blessed

are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'” Then the story of Christ and the sacrifice followed.

The eldest missionary, turning to the pilgrim, said: “Take this news back to your queen, that God is One, and there is no hope in gods of stone. Tell her to appeal to the Political Agent of the kingdom of Cratrapur. Tell him of the plot and let him advise her, for he is an Englishman, and knows how to manage such affairs. He may be able to recall the king and get him to set his kingdom in order. That is the proper way to approach the English government.”

The missionaries again rose to go, but the women crowded about them. “We must know more,” said the mother-in-law, “we may forget your story, for it is a new one. Come back next week.”

“There are many to hear the story, and there are few of us to tell it, but we will try to come again.”

“I am so glad I came,” said the youngest woman. “There are so many people who need this Message.”

Though late in the morning the missionaries decided to go to Jalalpur, as this was bazaar day. If they could find people who were able to read, they would scatter portions of the Bible among them. There was a ride of two miles, part of it on the military road, and then they saw the busy scene of bazaar day. All along the street people sat with baskets of fruit, vegetables, and grains, while others had trinkets and bright cotton cords for tying up the hair, or to run in the gathered skirts worn by Mohammedan women. There were beads and glass bracelets of many colors; there were earrings, nose rings, toe rings, necklaces, anklets and all kinds of cheap jewelry.

There were little heaps of bright bits of glass, used by the women to paste upon their foreheads for ornaments; wooden combs, tin buttons, matches, tiny looking-glasses, and coarse thread wound on cards, to tempt the passersby. There were bolts of cotton cloth in bright colors as well as unbleached cloth right from the loom. It had been woven and colored there in the bazaar, where it was purchased and worn that same day—a complete costume going on without the stitch of a needle. Proud fathers were buying caps for their little sons, who, but for the caps, would have been quite unclothed. A boy went by eating a cucumber, as well satisfied as a boy of a colder clime would be with an apple. On the sheet of one vender were all kinds of spices arranged with the ever-present garlic.

Before the missionaries had descended from the cart they were surrounded by a motley crowd of brown faces. There were farmers with dirty white *kurtas* (shirts) and draperies, ungainly turbans on their heads, and equally ungainly shoes on their feet; children, bright of face and scant of clothing; women with their purchases on their heads (not in hats, but in baskets). Many had children two or three years of age astride their hips—bright-eyed little ones eating guavas, turnips, radishes, cucumbers, or whatever pleased their youthful fancies. A fakir with ashes in his long matted hair and streaked on his bare body, stood on the edge of the crowd. A nasal cry was heard and a leper, with his feet gone, crawled near the crowd stretching out a pitiful remnant of a hand for alms. His hair was quite white and his face had an indescribable look of gradual death. One of the



E. DEAN

THE ROAD SCENE NEAR THE BAZAAR.

missionaries called to a shopkeeper to give him some parched grain, paying for it herself in preference to giving the money to the leper to handle in those wretched, decaying hands. A woman stood near with her nose quite gone.

"Is she also a leper?" was asked.

"No; her husband cut her nose off," sneered a man standing near. A woman who saw the gift bestowed on the leper crowded her way to the cart to show her broken fingers.

"Oh, what happened to them?"

"I beat them on the stones when my husband died"—a man pushed her aside to show a terrible cancer.

"Oh, dear; oh, dear!" said the youngest missionary, "I can not endure this!"

"It is much worse on bazaar days than others," said another missionary. "The afflicted come then to show their misery and beg from the people. We will drive on now, but first I will ask if any one wants a book?"

A number wanted them for the small sum of one *pice* (one-half cent) apiece. Especially they wanted a little pamphlet of Christian songs. When these were sold they untangled themselves from the crowd slowly, so slowly, because of the beggars and the curious. Two bright-faced boys ran after them for song books, holding up *pice* that had been given them for sweetmeats. They went back happy with their new books. As the missionaries drove out of the bazaar they noticed a young woman following them rapidly. Outside the bazaar she began to run. Before she reached them they stopped the cart because they caught a glimpse of her eager, distressed face.

“Oh, take me with you! I can not stay here; what will happen to me if you leave me here? You are most kind and merciful. Oh, give me to ascend into the cart quickly, quickly, *Mem Sahib!*”

Quickly they made room for the slender figure and she leaned over whispering to the eldest missionary: “My husband died last night, and we are strangers here.” Then she went on in a low tone. “His father’s house is far toward the north, but he came through here on his way to Benares to find a *guru* (master) who could tell him if he might cross the black water and become a scholar; and now he is dead! No one knows he is dead in the *serai* (travelers’ rest house) not far from here. His body must be burned with proper ceremonies. I have jewelry here about my waist. I saw you pass this morning and I followed you. If you do not help me I must throw myself into a well or die some way. There is no one but the white people who would not be glad to seize my jewels, and I will die of shame among strangers!”

“What emergencies!” thought the younger missionary.

“We can not all go,” said the missionary to whom the woman had spoken. She had turned to her companions, and was speaking in English. “We will get another cart at the next village and you must go on home in this one. I know you want to help, but it is better for fewer to go. It will be necessary to send Mungli and Baldev to inform the *Tahsildar* (a civil officer) of the occurrence.”

When they reached the *serai*, the elder woman descended and with the native woman peered in. A young native man lay dead on a cot. He had evidently

died from cholera. A woman of the sweeper caste had already arrived and a man of the same caste stood outside. That meant that these outcaste people could be called upon for help. The missionary left there never forgot that afternoon. Preparations for the burial were begun before the men who were sent for arrived. When they came a policeman, sent by the *Tahsildar*, was with them. Thankful indeed was the faint and weary missionary that the comfortable missionary *tanga* (cart) was sent to take her home. She took the wailing wife home with her. "Home, home," the missionary repeated to herself, "thank God for a home in this stranger land."

After a few days the young woman told her story. "My father-in-law had two wives. My husband's own mother was dead and the women of that household were not kind to me when I went there as a child-wife. My husband did not know how wicked they were and I was afraid to tell, they told me such dreadful stories. I constantly feared the vengeance of the gods for some of the sins I was told I daily committed. The years went on and no children came to me. Little boys and girls played about the household, but there were none of them mine. After a pilgrimage which my husband took, and after having made many offerings myself to the gods, a tiny baby daughter was born to us, but she never breathed. It was better so, but I loved that little still baby more than anything that has ever come to me. Everybody but my husband told me it was better that she was born dead. My husband was all the time studying, and he learned English in the great school in Calcutta. At last he told me he wanted to go over the 'black water' and

learn more, but his people said it could never be, that it would break his caste and disgrace them all. He told me he did not care for caste rules. I was very much frightened and trembled every time I thought of my husband's breaking caste. After a while, when his father died, he became rich enough to gain the desire of his heart, and then he told me of this wise sage who lives in Benares. We were going to him, but we stopped off at the station nearest here to find the temple of Jalalpur, where the light burns. My husband asked every traveler we met what they knew of the wise men of each place, and so he learned of some *gurus* (masters) about here. Now I know the gods were made angry by his desire to cross the black waters! His two older brothers will take all his property, for they will think me the cause of this—and who knows but that my sins have wrought my widowhood? I dare not go back to those wicked mothers-in-law and the wives of my husband's older brothers. You are kind to me and all my hope is in you. My husband was to get money from his uncle in Benares. We had sixty *rupees* (about twenty dollars) and my jewels with us. I took the money from him when he was ill and he told me to hide it in my clothes. I shall never return to my husband's family, and I will be only a disgrace to my own people. I shall spend my years in pilgrimages, to get rid of this sin which has caused my widowhood."

"You must not talk more of this, little sister, for your face is hot and you tremble so."

But the young widow went on: "I talked with him much about consulting the gods and the great Brahmins. It was to please me that he stopped here

on his way to Benares. The gods are angry with me when I was true to them, and so they have taken my husband's life. My people are all dead but my brother, and he will fear my baneful influence. There is nothing for me, a childless widow, but death. You are so kind and merciful, do you not fear a widow?"

"You are only to be pitied, not feared; you may live here with Gulabi Bai and we will teach you God's love and mercy," was the reply.

"Is Gulabi Bai a Brahmin?"

"Gulabi Bai is a Christian."

"Then we can not eat together!"

"You may cook your own food and eat by yourself, though God has not separated His children, as you suppose."

Later the missionary said to her companion: "How I thank our Father for that allowance for the help of widows, which a dear Christian widow sent our Board. I built the house where Gulabi Bai lives with a part of the money, and it will be such a good refuge for this woman. I am glad it is ready this very day. We will keep her and teach her."

Ah, roadsides in India hold many stories!



Part II.

A

BICYCLE sped along the military road and the young woman mounted upon it wore a pleasant smile on her face. To be sure, the face and smile were almost obscured by the shadow of a huge pith sun-helmet, but she was happy, and enjoying that feeling of freedom one has when riding a wheel. She was also looking forward to her morning in the village. Before her lay an avenue of bamboo waving airily in the slight breeze. The shadows were most inviting on this hot morning. A great lumbering cart drawn by two oxen lay between her and that shady bit. The driver began to turn his animals out of the way and was going through a whole gymnastic performance in doing so, at the same time making strange cries to the oxen, when the light figure flitted by. He stopped in the middle of the road, staring and gasping with astonishment. On she went until she saw a bowed form just ahead of her, apparently the figure of an old woman carrying a burden. Thinking she was probably deaf, the young woman dismounted for fear the sudden passing might frighten her.

"*Aree-h!*" exclaimed the old woman, dropping her burden.



A VILLAGE IN INDIA.

The young American spoke to her cheerily. "This is my foot-wagon; do you wish to see me ride upon it? Perhaps I am going to your village. What village are you from?"

"Pachkhura."

"Yes, that is just the place I am going. Are there many people in your village?"

"Many, many have died," the old woman responded; "the clouds give no rain and though we sow our fields we get no harvest. Last night my sister-in-law died because we could not give her the food she needed. Everybody will die, for the gods are angry with Hindustan."

"Do you know that the people of Hindustan have long worshiped gods of wood and stone? Listen and I will tell you the Truth."

The missionary told the old story so new to the listener, but she saw in that face a word written that only "Give ye them to eat" could reach. "Famine" was certainly engraved there.

"Sister," she said, "here are some *pice*; go and buy you something to eat."

The poor woman fell on the ground with many expressions of abject gratitude. "Go and get your food, and remember there is one God who is Father of us all, and one Savior who can save from sin."

On through that fatal sunshine the missionary sped, when suddenly she saw, lying prone in the dust, a small brown figure.

"What has happened?" she exclaimed in Hindustanee. The figure rolled over and sat up.

"I have no one," said the little boy, with feverish looking eyes, raising a trembling hand as though in

fear of the strange person standing over him. "I came home from the fields and found my parents dead, and I ran away. Now I have no one. I burn with fever, and I have found nothing to eat."

"Can you walk?" asked the missionary.

The child staggered to his feet. "A little," he answered, at the same time falling back into a little heap of brown again. "I am dying of fever."

"I will get a cart to take you to a place where you shall have care." She sprang on her wheel and soon met the cart she had passed.

"Can you take a boy to the Mission House?" she asked the man in the cart. "You have seen the bungalow in the town?"

"Yes, yes," said the driver.

"You will be paid for taking him."

"How much?"

"You will be paid for one-half day's work with your team. It is only about a *kos* distant (two miles)."

The driver tarried, but finally decided to return with the boy. The missionary took a pencil and paper out of the bag hanging to her wheel and wrote a note which she gave to the man, who looked at it most curiously.

"Give this to the *Mem Sahib* and she will pay you and take the boy."

The cart went jogging back over the road and the missionary went on to the village. She looked over the plain and saw clumps of trees, marking the village sites. She saw in imagination the white towers of little churches. She saw by the roadside tiny school-houses, and met merry brown children with books

and slates going happily to school. She saw these in her dreams instead of mud huts, and temples, and thin, naked figures suffering and prone in the dust. Hers was a prophet's soul and she saw possibilities.

Shortly she met two men plodding along in the dust. They made funny village obeisances and she was about to pass on when she recognized them as two farmers whom the missionaries had once helped to procure seed grain. Now they were pausing.

"You had great mercy on us," said the men, "but the gods had no mercy and our fields are dry as dust. Do you think the *Mem Sahib* would lend us *rupees*?"

"We have few *rupees* and can not lend," she said sadly.

"Are not the *Sahib-log* rich and could they not lend us a few *rupees*?"

"We are not rich, but the true God whom we worship does supply our needs. We hope to help the people of India, but they follow gods who teach them to injure their bodies and spirits, and to keep their country in darkness. Their teachers whom they reverence do deeds most hateful to the Father in Heaven. How much have you given your priests to bring rain? Now you are coming to us to give you the money the God you will not serve has given us to save the helpless little ones. Did you read the book the *Mem Sahib* gave you that day in which she told you were written the words of life?"

One man said he could not read; the other answered that his *guru* (master) said it was not good for him to read.

"Ah, so you scorn God's word and yet you ask for His mercy and money to buy grain for your fields?"

The young missionary rode on, but her heart was sore. "Did I do right, did I speak right words? Was I hasty and unjust? More wisdom, more wisdom!" Such thoughts went swiftly through her brain, and prayers for help rose from her heart.

As she neared the village she saw a strange figure standing near the entrance by a grass house. His skin looked like brown parchment, seamed and wrinkled. His small eyes were almost obscured by folds of skin. Their expression verged on the idiotic, but as the missionary drew near he began to talk and she soon discovered that this creature was the village doctor, with his bundle of precious remedies. There were scorpion stings, dubious oils, enchanted herbs, and an iron for burning off eruptions on the skin. He was muttering an incantation and she hastened by, only saying *Salaam*. Once within the village she heard groaning and crying issuing from the headman's quarters. One of the women of the household had thrown herself on a cot and was crying out.

"What has happened?" inquired the visitor.

"Baribai was troubled much with boils and the *hakim* (doctor) has burned them off!"

"Oh, I shall die!" screamed the poor woman.

"He rubbed some spices on the places," the old mother-in-law explained.

"How cruel, how cruel!" said the missionary, feeling her eyes filling with tears. "Bring me some water and some cotton."

Tenderly she bathed the sores amidst the woman's cries, and washed out the hot spices before they could fester in the dreadful wounds. How she wished she had brought her bandages, but finally she found some

clean cloth and managed to leave the woman much more comfortable. She felt too much exhausted to talk to them very long, but tarried to tell them how wrong the treatment had been. Then she said, with a bright smile: "We hope to have a physician from our country next cool season. Some one who can help the sick and not treat them in this cruel manner."

"Tell him to come very quickly. Last night Bahadur's child died. She fell and hurt her arm. It swelled and pained her, and the bone came through the skin, *Mem Sahib*, and she died!"

"The poor child must have broken her arm."

"Yes, yes, and Matra's boy broke his leg. He is very lame and that leg is much shorter than the other."

"*Mem Sahib*, won't you sing us a song?" asked another one.

"I will sing to you about the great Physician, but first I must tell you of Him."

She told the story of Christ on earth and of His miracles in healing the sick. "He has given His people skill in medicine and we can also pray to Him to help us. In His garden in Heaven grow leaves which are for the healing of the nations. He can heal us from sin, which is the worst of diseases." Her message was spoken and the people were invited to come on Sunday to the church in the town to hear more.

Two miles distant was another village where a number of lepers lived. She felt that she must go there, too, and tell those dying ones of Jesus. Two women from the village were coming down the road as she approached. They were dressed in purplish cotton draperies with a wide, irregular border of a

lighter tint. One of them carried a year-old baby astride her hip and the other bore a basket on her head. Why was it that a mental picture thrust itself in between the missionary and this familiar scene? She saw in memory two young women coming down an avenue in a far-away city. One wheeled a baby carriage along, light and dainty in pink silk and lace. Beneath its airy canopy the tiny face of a blue-eyed baby smiled out from soft embroidered pillows. The other young woman carried under her arm a neat package. The two were conversing in soft tones and their passing wafted a delicate violet fragrance. But they were far away, and the women at her side, staring stupidly at her, had never touched lace, or heard in all their lives the expression of noble thoughts. Yet their hearts were not unloving. The one carrying her baby looked at him with pride when the white woman said, "He is a fine, healthy boy."

It was not a pleasant visit ahead of her and yet she went on hoping to take some cheer to the lepers. There were some wretched grass huts on the edge of the village and a creature stepped out of one that almost made the missionary wish to retreat. The poor creature had both feet gone, eaten off by the loathsome disease of leprosy. His hair was perfectly white, and his face was swollen and distorted. "Tell all the lepers to come to the tree by the gate; I want to talk with you." Ten people, pitiful wrecks of the human body, gathered slowly under the tree. "What a figure of sin, what a figure of sin," was the under-current of her thought.

"Listen," she said, "next Sunday a Christian man will bring you all some rice. To-day I have come to

tell you that there is hope for you, that the one God has salvation for you also." They listened and one of them wept and called his body a prison. As she rose to go she saw on the other side of the tree a stone with a patch of red paint upon it. It was a village deity, to them a deliverer from their cherished fear of demons. The worship of the majority of the villagers of India is a worship of demons, of whom they live in constant fear and dread.

Her thought ran on as she turned homeward. This has been my day of seeing physical suffering, it seems. How closely connected is the soul and the body; but these people do not know that the soul has wings, that there can be a rising above the prison life of the earth. He came to seek and to save the lost, He saw life's saddest side with deeply seeing eyes and He is with me. But it is hard to wait until these villages shall be swept and garnished, until a doctor comes with relief for some of the suffering, until we have schools where the younger generation shall receive a daily incentive to a higher life. She passed a grove of trees by a well, and thought how glad she would be to see underneath those trees eager brown faces looking into a preacher's face as he read to them in their own language the words of life. She thought how she would like to hear them singing in that grove meeting, "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" and "How Firm a Foundation." "It might be, it might be!" ran through her mind as the wheels of her bicycle rotated over the brown roads. Her head ached when she reached the Mission Home, but she found a cool resting place in her own room. She went in feeling weak and almost forgetting that she had need of food. The door opened

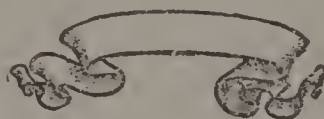
softly and the young widow whom they found by the way in the first village town slipped quietly in with a tray of food.

“I saved your ‘big breakfast’ for you, *Pyari* (beloved), and you must eat.”

“How kind of you, my sister; are you happy here?”

“So happy since I have found a friend in Jesus. I read some by myself this morning about His works and I want to go and help you in the villages. I have thought, too, that I would ask you to send a letter to my brother and tell him of my becoming a Christian. I believe I should tell him. They will perform my funeral ceremonies, I know, but I dare not let him go without a message from me and my Savior.”

There are *joys* waiting to be found by India’s roadsides, too!





A WAYSIDE TEMPLE.

Part III.

THE village of Akoni contained thirty-one houses and two hundred and fifty-one inhabitants. Of this number of people, there were one hundred and six males and ninety-five females. Many a little girl in that small village had been exposed or "let alone" to die. There were two Mohammedans. The rest were Hindus, and not one person in the village could read. The missionaries, in looking over the Census Report for their district, found that in one *Thana* (a sub-division of a district) there were seventy-nine villages. Of the eighteen thousand male inhabitants of these villages, only six hundred and fifty could read. This was deplorable enough, but of the seventeen thousand females not one could read.

"I want to change that Census Report," said one, earnestly.

"If we had a teacher and three dollars and fifty cents a month, with—let us say—one dollar for supplies, we could make a great change in Akoni," said the older missionary sadly.

"We might teach a young man of that village to read and set him to teaching his own people, for we certainly have no teacher to spare now."

"But if he is not a Christian, the motive power of love, and the desire to be honest and helpful to

others, would not be there. He would also observe caste distinctions in the school. We need a Christian man whom we can oversee. I think we might get a Christian man and his wife from some old school of another mission, but that money——”

“We must do something to evangelize our villages anyway, and I am going to-morrow,” said another.

Early the next morning she went to one of the villages they had not visited for three months. “How glad we are that you have come again,” said one woman, “but *Amma* (mother) is dead. She died mourning for her son, who never returned from Jagannath, and his widow started on the same pilgrimage last week. She will try to find him, but we believe she is a widow. *Amma* wanted to see you very much before she died. She said you spoke sweet words.”

How the heart of the missionary sank. So many were depending on her, on one solitary woman of limited strength, for every word of Eternal Life and Hope! Ah, they laid thick about her, a thousand unreached villages, and there were only a half dozen laborers with an occasional opportunity of going out into the vast and dying harvest field! If she had been able to leave her room last week she might have saved the young wife from the dangers of that pilgrimage, but oh, the limits! Bodies that grow weary and faint, spirits sickening at the continued sights and sounds of idolatry and its curses. Money that fails in the hand reached out to help the suffering and the dying. Limits! Limits! The old pilgrim had come back to find the white woman and hear more, but she had not waited. The queen had sent her on another quest for

help to Badrinath, high up amid the Himalayan snows, ten thousand four hundred feet above the level of the sea. "The old woman will never survive going from the heat of the plains to the cold of that high altitude," thought the missionary. "They do not wait for one to come. They go on in their search for a Hope and do not wait. In my home town to-day, with its population of five thousand, there are six churches, with buildings and pastors. My share of our parish here is two hundred and fifty villages, a town of twelve thousand, and two towns of five thousand. Is there any use, is there any use in trying?"

"*Mem Sahib*, my brother bought one of your books and he wants you to come to our house. He is sick."

The young missionary turned to greet a large-eyed child wrapped in his *dhoti* (drapery) and started with him toward a mud house. On a cot outside lay a young man who raised himself on his elbow.

"I have read your book, *Mem Sahib*. I read it before the fever came and all the time while I burned with fever I heard a voice saying: 'Let him that is a-thirst come! Let him that is a-thirst come!' It is in the back of your book. Tell me of the One who said these gracious words. I am tired of thirst and hunger. I have never been satisfied. My heart is very weary."

"I will tell you some more gracious words, brother. 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' There is but One who can satisfy us and that One is Jesus, God's Only Son, His Only Incarnation. He never meant that we should depend on bits of wood and stone and clay for comfort. The Father in Heaven wants to comfort us and

rest us Himself. He wants us to have faith in Him who is above all principalities and powers, and He has given Him a name that is above every name. Our God is above us and all we can make. Do you not believe in Jesus as your Savior?"

"Yes, yes; this Book has taught me that idolatry is a sin. I shall never worship that stone yonder again. I have told no one, but I wish you to call my people. I have something to say to them."

The missionary beckoned to the mother and brother. The mother was a widow, but there was still another son and his wife. The wife of the sick man sat near with her cloth over her face.

"I want to tell you that stone yonder is only a stone. I worship it never more. I worship Him who rules heaven and earth. I take His Son, Jesus, for my Savior."

"Alas, Alas! the gods will punish you and us, for those first words," said the mother. "Worship whom you will, but forsake not these!"

With a prayer on her lips the missionary turned to the mother. "When you come to the door of death, will you not want something better than the hope of living over and over in some dying earthly form? There is a better hope for you and for him. A hope to live in the mansions of God's own House, to live with the good and pure eternally. I am giving you God's Word, something higher than man ever spake." Then she recited clearly in their own language, "In my Father's house are many mansions."

"A good word, a good word," murmured the sick man. "I never learned this by the Ganges. I have been troubled, for I refused to take the *mantar* from

my *guru*." [The *mantra* is a sacred formula whispered by the *guru*, or religious guide, into the ear of the devotee, to be kept as a motto. It is given specially to those who are intending to lead a religious life.] "I have been told it is very unlikely that I shall be born a human being when I leave this body, because I refused to take the *mantra*. I feared to die, but now you tell me salvation is through Jesus Christ. Tell me more."

She sat there an hour and talked. His people crowded about. There was a shade on the faces of some, but the young man's face was full of light. As usual, she carried some medicine for fever with her, which she gave to him. Then she prayed with him. As she went away the mother followed her.

"Don't let him speak against our gods," she begged, "they will curse us and him!"

She tried to make it all more clear to the mother, but she only shook her head, trying not to listen.

"And I," she thought, "was oppressed with all remaining to be done, even discouraged, and God led me to a prepared soul this very morning. How different are their sick beds from ours! No clean, inviting sheets, no pillows, no crystal glasses of refreshing water. Nothing clean, nothing dainty. No one skillful, no one who knows how to be really kind! There that sick man lay on sagging ropes woven across the cot with a thin, dirty *resai* (a sort of cotton mattress) under him. The glaring sun was upon him until I told them to change his position. They will probably move him back again, now I am gone. We must get at the root of the matter. There will be no real change until idolatry is supplanted by Christianity.

We may try to lop off the effects, but the root of the trouble remains. They need what Jesus teaches and they must believe on Him." So the missionary mused until she came to a bathing tank, at the edge of which she saw there was a great excitement.

"What has happened?" she questioned.

"Some women were down here bathing," said an old man. "Mungli's wife fell in and a *mehter* pulled her out just before she was drowned. The woman's husband is a caste man and he is going to beat the *mehter* for touching his wife!"

The missionary stood there aghast, but the old man told his story as a mere commonplace. A *meh-ter* is an out-caste, a scavenger, but he had saved a woman's life and was going to be beaten for it!

"You ungrateful man. He has saved your wife's life. She would be lying here dead but for him. You should reward him with a gift!"

"He touched her," said the man, stolidly, but he made no further attempt to strike his wife's rescuer.

The *mehter* went off quietly, not stopping to wring out his wet garments, seeming glad to escape the beating. The missionary passed on thinking of the daily papers in her home town. Such an act in their vicinity would call forth public praise for the citizen of such bravery and presence of mind, and this young man had gone forth with curses instead of blessings. He accepted his fate, as he considered it. This belonged to a set of not unusual happenings, but the American woman was full of indignation.

It was growing very hot. She felt that she should not be out in the sun now, but she saw some women by a well and felt constrained to speak to them.

"May I tell you about the Water of Life?" she asked.

The women paused. One was just leaving with two jars of water, one on top the other on her head. Another was drawing up her jar from the well. Others stood waiting. Some looked wonderingly at the *Mem Sahib*, some stupidly, but she preached to them the sermon of Jesus by the well.

"Yes, yes; we need much water," assented one woman.

"What is there, after this life?" asked the missionary, changing her plan.

"*Ko jane?*" exclaimed an old woman, "Who knows?"

"You will be born a mosquito, perhaps," said a younger woman, carefully brushing that insect from her hand.

They lingered while she spoke to them. One woman said she wished her religion was like that. One said her neighbor had eaten some of the offerings to *Mahadeo* (the great god) and he would be a dog in his next birth. That all dogs contained the souls of those who had eaten offerings belonging to *Mahadeo*. She had never eaten any offerings, so she did not know what there was for her after death. Being a woman was bad enough and she showed the missionary two dreadful scars on one limb below the knee.

"How came those?"

"My man cut me there with a rope."

"Where do you live?"

"In your town. We often see you buying in the bazaar and saying kind words. They sound sweet

and I heard you sing a song one day about some one who had saved your life."

"Yes, I know the one you mean; shall I sing it?"

Two women now went off. Their Hindu sister's story had reminded them that a beating might await them, too, if they did not hasten.

"Jesus has saved by life,"

the song began, and it told of the World's Savior. The women nodded their heads and the one who had spoken wept.

"I will try to come to your house. Tell me where it is," said the missionary, rising from the well curb to go. The woman explained the location and the figures bearing the water jars went in different directions towards their abodes.

The young widow, Anandibai, was waiting for the missionary when she returned. "I want to go with you to-morrow, sister. I have read my chapter and have my message. It is the second chapter of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians. We can not be saved by our own works."

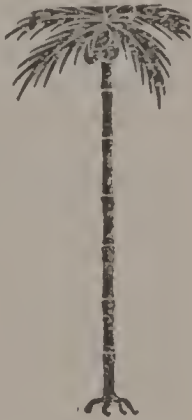
This same day a letter came from Anandibai's brother. It only said they were worshiping the gods that they might not curse them on her account; that her father-in-law and his household told the people that she had killed her husband, and they would kill her if she returned. The youngest of the missionaries took Anandibai with her into her room that first night after this cruel letter came. In the night when she heard her sobbing, the missionary went to her.



A VILLAGE HOME.

The girl only said: "Don't mind me, for it will be all right. I have a comfort. Jesus will not forsake me."

What a hope!



Part IV.

HOW many life messages we receive along the way," thought the missionary, as she rode away the next day with Anandibai. "If one goes on to fuller living they should not ask to linger in any way, however sweet. Life is so full, so full. One needs a deepened heart."

"*Hai, hai!*" (alas, alas!) some one was crying near by, and the missionary left off her meditation and touched life again, such wretched life. A girl of perhaps eight years sat by the dusty roadside.

"Where are you going, and what is the matter?"

"I have nowhere to go. I was told to get out of my village, for there is famine there."

"Where is your village?"

"There," she replied, pointing to a clump of trees on the road not far away.

"Get in the front of the cart and I will take you back."

"They will beat me."

"Get in; I will take care of you."

The child climbed in the cart and crouched down in a frightened manner. When they reached the village the missionary took her in with her.

"Whose child is this?" she asked the headman.

"She is a weaver's child, and there is no food for such as she in this village. She steals and better people than she will die of hunger. She has no one but an old aunt who is in her son's house. They do not want the girl. Her marriage is arranged."

"Where is her aunt?"

"Over there," the headman said, designating the house.

An old woman was bent over a small loom in front of the hut.

"Is this your neice?" asked the missionary.

"She is none of mine! What has she been doing now?" grunted the old creature, looking curiously at the foreign woman in the strange clothes.

"I shall take her to my house. Has her marriage been made?"

"Yes, and it cost much, your honor, and I shall need that money. She ran away from her father-in-law's house and they will not take her back——"

"They beat me every day," interrupted the child.

"People are always complaining of her and I eat an oath that you will have only trouble with her."

"But I will take her and see if she will not try to be a good girl. I hope she will attend to what she is taught. Come with me, daughter."

The girl darted to the side of her new friend and kept close to her until they were in the cart again.

At the next village they found a wedding procession about to start. The drumming and clanging of the so-called musical instruments was heard before they reached the town. When they came to the entrance, the missionary and Anandibai were invited within. There sat the bridegroom, a boy of twelve or

thirteen, upon his temporary throne. About him were Brahmins and astronomers, chanting, making prayers and reading in their books, hoping to find a lucky fate for the bridegroom. No one mentioned the bride!

This young bridegroom belonged to the writer caste. The men of this caste are generally clerks or copyists. His forehead was marked with the *tika*. Some turmeric had been ground to yellow powder and was streaked upon his forehead and then some whole grains of rice were stuck on. These are symbols of abundance of food. He was dressed in the wedding garments, which were mostly yellow. On his head was a huge yellow turban. His eyes stared from a rim of lampblack and great earrings dangled from his ears. He was supposed to be in royal state, but the child was being paraded around as helpless as a chained monkey. He was about to start for the bride's house, or the house of her father, in a decorated *palanquin*. He would meet the bride's procession somewhere outside her village. The boy bridegroom looked very much embarrassed. The crowds about him were making extremely personal remarks, flattering and joking him. The missionary stood looking at it all as a picture. She saw the procession start with the unmusical instruments. She saw the dancing girls and heard the rude songs. No one had time to listen, for most of the people were in the procession. The child wife, she was told, was only five years old. No one thought pityingly of the tiny bride or the gayly decorated groom, who were children without choice in this important matter. She would probably re-

ceive no consideration, and he no real companionship or sympathy. It seemed so much a playing at life.

The missionary found an old woman muttering under a tree by the entrance.

"They are gone," said the American.

"Yes," the old woman replied in the rude village dialect. "Let us go. Women are so fickle and frail that you are never sure what their lives will turn out to be."

She said this in the sing song of a proverb. Anandibai stood there, silent up to this time. The missionary looked at her and found her eyes were full of tears.

"Sister, I can remember when a tiny girl of riding out, borne aloft, to meet my husband. He did not see me, however, till we were married. Few, few Hindu women go to such a heart as I went to. Boys are taught proverbs that make them so ignorant of woman, and these same proverbs make women disbelieve themselves. My husband was taught this: 'A drum, a rustic, a servant, a woman—all these go on right when struck,' but he never struck me. Mine was an unusual state. Our Vedas declare that woman is an incarnation of sin. That bridegroom just going away in his yellow wedding draperies has been carefully taught that women are vain and deceitful. It makes me weep for my country since I have known you and the good news for women that is in the Gospel. The family that begins in this play will have no one to help them to be good. Maybe they will start out on a vain pilgrimage after salvation and knowledge. Oh, if my husband could have found before he

died the salvation and other worldly wisdom I have found."

Anandibai sank down by the roadside and cried bitterly.

The old woman crept near her. "*Hai! Hai!* What has happened?"

"I am a widow!" Anandibai sobbed.

"See, woman," said the old pilgrim; "my arms and hands are bare. Long ago I had my jewels torn from me. Long ago they spoke bitter words to me, and cursed me. I lost my bright draperies and received this," and she showed a breadth of her scant, dirty cloth once the widow's white. "I went and poured out my grief to the fields. Everybody hates me. There I have been burned. There a housewife scalded me lest my shadow curse her. There is where a boy beat me for sport. Here is where I cut myself and tried to bleed to death. I have nothing but trouble, and now I shall sit in this village and die. My house is destroyed, but when a little girl my wedding procession went out this gate. I had a bright cloth about me, and jewels, and there was feasting, and singing, and dancing. Then I was a wife and my husband was sometimes kind and sometimes hard and cruel. I have been beaten many times, though I gave him three sons. The sons died and he blamed me for their death. I am a long time widowed and since I saw the smoke rising from his funeral pyre I have not had one kind word spoken to me."

"Sister," said Anandibai, softly, "there is love for such as you and me. I, too, have tasted of the same sorrow, but I have found a Friend. My friend is Jesus, who is God's only Son. He has conquered death,

and He teaches that the sadder people are the more kindly they should be treated. In His Gospel there is a place for the widow and the out-caste. Come with us. I believe I was allowed to come to-day to guide you to a better destiny. Since I became a believer in Jesus I have had no opportunity to go about telling of His love and to-day I have come to take you as my first gift to Him."

"I do not understand," said the old woman in a dazed manner.

"Come to our house," the missionary said to her. "We do not believe that widows are curses. Anandibai will teach you and we will give you love."

The old woman arose, saying, "I will get my dish and come;" but Anandibai said they would say she stole the dish and asked her to leave it behind, for she would receive another from her new friends. They took her into the cart and drove back to the town. This was the second widow in a God-planned Woman's Home. How different were the two women. One so young and gentle and good to look upon. The other so old and marred and unhappy looking. The missionary thanked the Father that the younger widow had been found before blighting hands had been laid heavily upon her. The girl whom nobody wanted sat in one corner of the cart with her arms clasped over her knees, drawn up into a little bunch. She was going to what was to her an unknown fate, yet she sat there with no sign of fear. Perhaps she was a philosopher and reasoned that if this life to which she was going was miserable, it would be a different kind of misery, and the change would refresh her.

It was growing near noon and the missionary was thinking how much could be crowded into even a half day of life. She was thinking of her childhood and of how fond she was of "stories." Now almost every day one or more new earth life-stories were told to her in part, always "to be continued" unless death had said, "The end." As they drove on they passed many a wayside shrine. Sometimes it was only a stone set up under a sacred tree, a shapeless stone perhaps, and yet they called it "Great God." There was one near them now, and a man was eagerly leaving his offering of cocoanuts there; a full-grown man with a face not at all unintelligent, and one whose sacred cord told that he was a Brahmin, of the highest caste of the Hindus. Even he was at this worship—and God's great, beautiful world bathed in sunshine was all about. The lace-like verdure of the tamarind and bamboo, mingled with the plumes of the palm. The skies were blue, washed clear by the rains. For a moment they had been so happy, just living amidst all the beauty, and then they saw this man crouched before them worshiping a shapeless stone.

"Look up! look up!" the missionary cried, almost involuntarily. "God is not pleased that you worship, instead of Him, a stone. Brother, take this book; it tells you of Him."



A MAN WORSHIPING A STONE.

Part V.

THE dry, hot days were over and the wet, hot days had come. Then it was hard to go to the villages, but the playing at life went on there. The "rains" meant that there would not be famine the next year and all discomfort was accepted as a fore-runner of better days. One day two of the missionaries went to a near village. The headman's son was sick with cholera. The missionaries were too late to help him, though they had remedies with them. The young man was in utter collapse. They tried heat and stimulants, but it was too late.

"Six people died here yesterday of that sickness," said a man of the village. In the wailing and crying over the headman's son the hopelessness of Hinduism was once more revealed. No one had a single word of hope to speak. He was dead, and perhaps even now was a dumb animal or a crawling insect. At best he belonged to others, never to them again.

Again they told the story of the Resurrection and the Life. "Oh, this dying country!" one exclaimed as they left. "No, they do not wait for us. They do not wait for all to be set in order in the homeland. Long have we delayed. Foreigners are sweeping into our home country. The non-Christians are going in hordes to take advantage of the prosperity of our

Christian nation. The home-people can not live apart from the alien, the atheist and the heathen. How much better did they send those to teach them in their natural habitat! I am so weary of finding superstition and absurd reasoning everywhere and people believing a lie." The elder missionary spoke these words with deep feeling and tears were in her voice.

"It is harder to bear when one has a headache as well as a heartache," said the other. "You are not physically well to-day and we are going home. Think that Anandibai waits us there; that the poor old widow has a word of love and kindness spoken to her to-day; that little children are learning a "new song" to sing to their people when our voices are silent here. Think, dear one, that though millions lie off there in that cloudy east without a helper, we are training helpers to go to them. No day passes without an opportunity to tell of God's love to men, and you help us all. Think of the sisters in the homeland who are praying for us now, and who are working to send forth more laborers into this great harvest field."

"Yes, it all comforts me. I am troubled with headache these days. I think these bodies have such a great deal to do with the soul life after all. I do pray to rise above the physical, but it conquers sometimes."

Outside the village the people were gathering to appease the silent power which was working in their midst bringing death so soon—*Haija*, the swiftly coming, destructive cholera. No one would take the name of the disease upon his lips. It is a sickness to them most mysterious and most feared. The mission-

aries stopped to tell the men about some sanitary precautions and went on to another village.

“What a difference between that boy’s death and Hira Lal’s! Do you remember that dear Christian boy’s last request, that on his grave should be written, ‘Not lost, but gone to his Lover?’” Thus they conversed together until they came to the next group of houses. They stopped by a tiny grass house, where a potter’s family lived, who made their water jars. The family was all out of doors and regarding them wonderingly.

“Will you bring us some more water jars?” asked one of the missionaries.

“Yes, your honor; I will bring them on bazaar day.”

Just then a cry rang out. “What is that?”

“Oh, nothing, *Mem Sahib*. It is only the *Kacherin*’s new daughter-in-law. She is a very bad child.”

“Where do they live?”

“Back of my house,” said the man.

They went there quickly and found a woman of middle age meting out punishment to a girl of ten. A young man was holding the girl and his mother was deliberately pinching her cheeks all over, while the child was helplessly screaming.

“Stop that!” exclaimed the elder missionary emphatically. Both the tormentors loosed their hold and sprang up in fear and surprise, and both started to run. “Wait,” said the same missionary, “why were you doing this?”

“She is lazy and ran away,” said the old woman.

“And she does not cook my food properly,” added the young man.

The child was sobbing and her face was already swelling from the bruises.

"Is there a policeman here? You need to be put in the *jail-khana* (prison), both of you."

They both looked frightened and then they begged her not to let the *Sirkar* (government) punish them. They had never seen the missionaries and so thought that they were connected with the governing spirit.

"Such cruelty should be reported to the government. I shall take your names," was the answer.

They then started towards the headman's house.

"Has your sister-in-law come back from her search for her husband?" was the first question asked.

"No, no," they said sadly. "They are both dead, we believe. No message comes from them. Our father-in-law has taken him another wife since *Arma* died. She is a young woman and is very hard, and has a bitter tongue. She is within putting on her jewelry to show you. She came from a distant village."

A young woman soon emerged brightly dressed, with nose rings, toe rings, earrings and finger rings. She evidently felt her position. She had no mother-in-law and was herself filling that place. She said she was from a village belonging to a native king; that her father was rich, and her wedding was very grand. She enumerated the amount of rice and sugar and sweetmeats that had been used on that occasion. She was to have been this headman's wife even had the old woman not died. So she rattled on until one of the missionaries asked: "Has your husband still other wives?"

“Oh, no; he has no other; he will never have another while I live. The old woman was very tiresome and her tongue was bitter.”

The daughters-in-law sat there looking morose and were quite silent. The younger missionary opened her Hindi hymn book and began singing a song of which the refrain is, “All days do not pass the same, sometimes there is sunshine and sometimes shadow.”

One stanza may be thus translated:

“As the clouds go from color to color,
So the world goes on in its change,
The king and the subject, the rich and the beggar,
One by one pass out of this range!”

This led them to talk of things eternal, for surely all seemed so passing there. The months, yes, even the days, were full of change. The two missionaries now turned homeward, as ever feeling glad for the refuge. It had been a long day of hard work. To sympathize, to suffer with the suffering, means to give out one's energy.

The next day the younger missionary felt she must go back to the villages and see how the cholera-stricken people were. She promised the others not to go within, only to leave medicine at the gate. This promise she fulfilled. Ten others had died in the night. She called a young man she knew and carefully instructed him as to the medicine, which was very powerful. She was not gone long, but when she returned as far as the gate of the mission grounds she felt that something unusual was occurring. Anandibai ran out of the house with her garments disarranged and her face agonized. “Sister *jee*, the big sister *jee* is sick and we believe it is—*haija!*”

“Cholera and her!” was the thought that flashed through the young missionary’s mind. She had not been well yesterday and they had gone unknowingly into the cholera-stricken village. She was tired out at the end of the hot season—was she to find her rest now? She tried to quiet her trembling lips and hands. “Father, give me strength and calmness, for Jesus’ sake!” The oft-repeated prayer came naturally and its influences, no, His influence, nestled in her heart. Then she saw one of the dear missionary sisters carrying a hot water bag into the room, and she knew that the sick one was cold. Oh, that dreadful chill! She softly opened the bedroom door and crept in.

“Little sister, I seem to know now how the people feel. Think of feeling your strength slipping away and no one to help, no one to give you courage. No Father in Heaven to pray to, no Jesus on this side, at the edge of the valley, to go all the way through it with you! Oh, I seem to know how dark the other side, the one they know, must be, from knowing how light is this side! I know as never before how India’s poor, ignorant people must suffer, not only from what they have, but from what they have not!” With what emphasis the sick woman spoke.

“Dear one, you are not to feel these things now. You are to get warm and well. See, Anandibai is bringing a good *kunda* of coals. You shall have it right here. Does it not feel good?”

The eager voice was silent and the eyes closed. Now she is speaking again. “I feel no pain now. I am glad that is over. Sister, those people in the village can not think that there is brightness and green-

ness after while, that trees are waving whose leaves are for healing, that there is a Son of Righteousness who can bring warmth and comfort, when the chill is so dreadful. Tell Anandibai, whom we found by the wayside, that she is to be a messenger to those without hope when the river is chill. You know the one we sing about in *girja* (church)—

“*Gahriri wah nadiya, nawa purani—*”

“Yes, dear, ‘the river is deep and the boat is old, but Jesus will take me across.’ You have taught a great many people to sing that. You are to teach many more, we trust. Aren’t you getting warmer?”

“It is very cold, little sister. I wish the sun was shining. It seems so dark——”

Oh, was she to go after all! The other missionaries came in and spoke to her.

“I can not see you, but when I can see, I shall ‘see Him as He is.’ Tell the people—oh, tell the people so they will have comfort when the river is deep and cold. Bodies are poor things. I am so weak.” She said no more but to murmur the Hindi word for Jesus—*Yisu, Yisu*.

The tropical sun was shining without, bright and warm over a steaming earth, for it was not late in the rainy season. So much warmth without and her busy hand so cold and still. “Bodies are poor things!” But that soul’s influence was to live. It was to live not only in a land over many seas, but in dark, obscure corners, that no one much cared about. In poor little villages by India’s waysides. Miserable lepers, dying slowly, would remember that a strange *Mem Sahib* had come and told them that the soul could es-

cape and go to God. Widows would cherish through many a weary day the memory of a kind-voiced woman who told them there was love for such as themselves, that God loved suffering ones the more tenderly. Many women living narrow, narrow lives had caught a glimpse of freedom that might be theirs in God's kingdom through her words. Men had been told the truth that was able to make them free. Little children, yes, many a little child, had been taught sweet songs by her lips. She was not forty years old, but she had lived long, and well, and she was weary. She did not live to see her work fall from a nerveless hand, to feel that everything was growing and she but a withered bough; that all were passing by while she sat idle in the race.

Those who had to hurry her body to the grave where so few English names ever had been or ever would be inscribed could not but think of the morrow and this new empty place they must try to fill.

The young widow from out India's despised class was the one to say to them: "She is absent from the body. I feel that she is not absent from the work, because Jesus is here and she is present with Him. I thought and thought about it last night. Don't you believe she can get closer to us than when her soul was in the body? Perhaps she will help get our mansions ready, for she knows what we all like. Don't you remember the time she, with her own hands, freshened up all your rooms when you were gone? I remember she put your favorite flowers in your rooms."

It was a comfort to hear Anandibai talk of such things so naturally, and we went back to work feeling

that in some sweet, unseen way her hand was helping.

The old widow seemed to mourn over the going most of all. The next Christmas day they found a few common flowers tied together with grass, on the table where the "absent" sister's plate had been, and there were some bright glass bangles under the plate.

"Whose gift is this?" one asked brightly.

One of the natives of the household answered in an awed tone: "It is for the big sister. The old widow left it for her Christmas gift!"

They called the old woman and told her that the dear one who had gone, now had the glory and brightness of heaven, and that she would want them to give what they had to give, to the poor and neglected here. They told her that Jesus said when we have done it unto the least of these we have done it unto Him.

"Then I know," she said, "I will give them to the sweeper woman; none of the people like her very well. I think she is the 'least.'"

A "Thank you" went up to the Father that even this poor, ignorant old woman understood.

The youngest missionary once said that some of the sweet surprises that blossomed by the way seemed to her to be flowers from seed the sister who was "absent" had planted. In the village where she had gone most often a school was started, and to those in the mission it was always a memorial of the absent one.

The old pilgrim never came back. Very probably she died in her attempt to reach the Himalayan shrine. Neither did the young wife who went to find her husband ever return. They are among India's unfound ones. Every year strangers die by the

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Ganges, and in the crowded places of pilgrimage, but the great, longing multitudes surge on—India's millions! And what will change India? Not our inventions, for side by side with the newspaper stands in the railway stations is another, where idols and the paraphernalia of worship are for sale. The locomotive engines bear thousands and tens of thousands of pilgrims to Baidynath, Jagannath, Allahabad and Benares, where the travelers bow down to idols of wood and stone and brass. The telegraph bears messages by its current that are strange to Christian civilization. A man with *poojah* (worship marks) in his forehead, even "the mark of the beast," may take from his pocket a Waterbury watch to see if it is *do pahar* (the second watch, or noon). India's kings will yet be using, if they do not already, the automobile to expedite their pilgrimages to inland and remote shrines. Something within must work the change without. Better to give them belief in the Bible than the training of the civil engineer. When once they are true Christians, other learning must come naturally. They will want to be, and do, and know. The impulse, the power will be there and it will go on when the hands that wrought through it are folded and cold.

Our day is short. Our time here, "a little while." We can not reach out the helping hand very much longer, and the millions by the wayside do not wait. See them passing by. The coolie with the dulled face. The leper with "the image" almost lost. The widow with scarred body. The frightened little orphan child. The naked "holy man." The priest with his *poojah* marks. The burden bearers with loads upon their

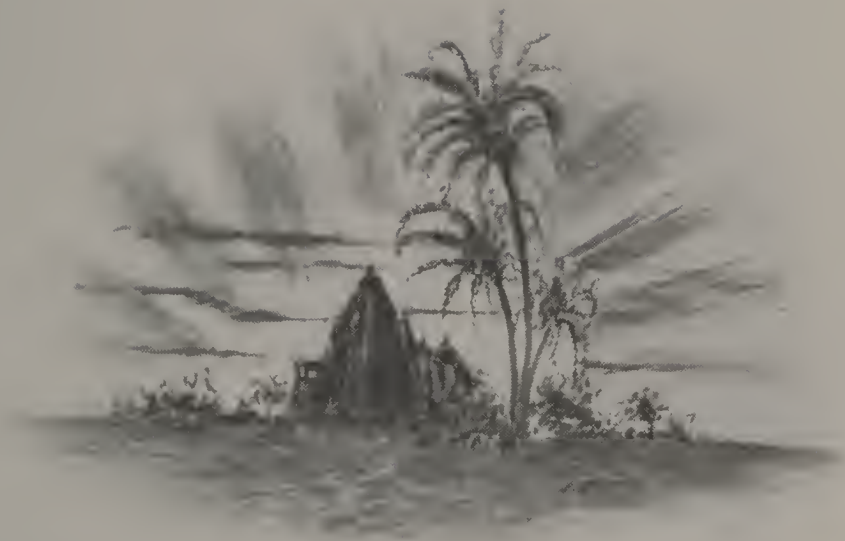
heads. The haughty Brahmin with his scroll. The out-caste hastening from the beaten footpath lest his shadow offend. The beggar who cries in every public place. The dancing woman with unholy glance. The aged man or woman with hopeless eyes. The sepoy in his regimentals. The Mohammedan official in English garments, with the exception of his great turban. The fakir of the same class in his yellow robe. The representatives of many divisions and sub-divisions of caste. See them pass by, and think how short is their time. Think of villages once swarming with life, now but a sepulcher from plague and famine. Shall we wait?

The Transforming Message is ours, the education is ours, the riches are ours, and the patient working together in systematic giving will bring victory. To lie down at night knowing that we have sent a portion of ourselves and of our effort to take the Gospel of Light, Life and Love to dark, neglected corners, must make our rest sweeter, our awakening more joyous, and our hope more real.

Sisters, "bodies are poor things." They fail beneath the tropical sun. They fail in the dear land of homes. We need to hasten before the soul escapes, before our "little while" is merged into His eternity, and before their "little while" flickers out in awful fear and doubt.

Ah, while we wait
Sad millicns pass into the night.
We can not hear the children cry
When ours are laughing in the light!
And so we wait
While all the wretched, weary years
The out-caste trembles by unyielding gates

The victim of a thousand fears.
And still we wait—
And still the hopeless, close sad eyes;
The mothers are not comforted
For days and nights are rent with cries!
And shall we wait
Until the last soul hurries out
To darkness and long-dreaded death,
Tormented by ancestral doubt?
Ah, can we wait
And find sweet resting when our day is done
And know those sighing millions go
Without one hope at set of sun?



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