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THE LATE MISS KRUPABAI CHOWEY
 BOMBAY, INDIA
 (See page 36)



THE INDIAN LADIES' MAGAZINE

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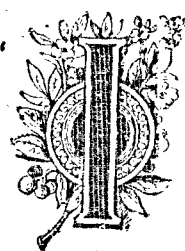
[No. 2

THE NOBLE LIFE

Life's more than breath and the quick round of blood,
 It is a great spirit and a busy heart.
 The coward and the small in soul scarce do live.
 One generous feeling, one great thought, one deed
 Of good, ere night would make life longer seem
 Than if each year might number a thousand days,
 Spent as is this by nations of mankind.
 We live in deeds, not years ; in thoughts, not breaths ;
 In feelings ; not in figures on a dial.
 We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
 Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
 Life's but a narrow unto an end : that end

Gleanings from Lovat Fraser's "India under Curzon and After"

By Lady Bessie Fraser



India under Curzon and After" is perhaps too long a book for the majority of ladies to read, but I do not think those who once begin to read it will care to put the book down until they have finished it. For those who have not the opportunity or ability to do so it occurred to me that gleanings from the very interesting chapters on "Plague and Famine," and the "Two Bengals," would interest the readers of this Magazine.

We in India are perhaps apt to forget how plague has devastated other parts of the world in bygone ages. It is no new disease. It was known thousands of years ago in Bible times, and as far back as then the connection of rats with plague was known. The Philistines were told to "make images of your emerods (buboes), and images of your mice that mar the land." In Mr. Lovat Fraser's words we are told "Plague left deep marks upon the national life in England. The black death destroyed half the population of England. The consequent scarcity of labour gave the final blow to villeinage and serfdom. When farming in common ceased, it became necessary to define the fields, and the hedgerows mark the change in land tenure. Every English hedgerow, therefore, is a reminder of plague. . . . Plague even facilitated the growth of English literature. Up to the time of the black death, French was the principal language of the schools and of the wealthy. So many teachers died that a new race of school-masters arose who insisted on giving instruction in the English tongue, and the way was thereby paved for the poetry of Chaucer. In wandering about Europe after the extraordinary effects of plague had been burned upon my mind in India, I have often been struck by the frequency with which reminiscences of plague are met. In Vienna the green dome of the Karlskirche, and the Trinity column in the Graben alike commemorate the end of an outburst of plague. The glorious Church of Santa Maria della Salute at Venice

known as "Pitch and Pay Lane." It marks the spot where the country people used to place provisions during a plague epidemic, for which the plague patients of Bristol used to leave cash in exchange. In the fourteenth century plague devastated Europe. The appalling mortality then has been calculated at 25,000,000. It remained in Europe off and on until the beginning of the 18th century; after which it was rarely seen except in the neighbourhood of the Balkans (in Turkey). Very early in the 19th century it was almost lost from view. Even in India it became only a shadowy legend.

This was so much the case that even educated men and women in India associated the advent of the plague in India with British rule! Far from this being the case, there were outbreaks of plague in India in 1345, 1399, 1438, 1571, 1595, 1611, 1683, 1704, 1770, 1812, 1821. Of three of these outbreaks considerable details have come down to us. A paymaster in the army of the Emperor Jehangir thus describes the awful virulence of the plague of 1611-1618: "When it was about to break out, a mouse would rush out of its hole, as if mad, and striking itself against the door and walls of the house would expire. If immediately after this signal the occupants left the house and went away to the jungle, their lives were saved, if otherwise, the inhabitants of the whole village would be swept away by the hand of death. If any person touched the dead, or even the clothes of the dead man, he also could not survive the fatal contact. The effect of the epidemic was comparatively more severe on the Hindus than Muhammedans. In Hindustan no place was free from this visitation, which continued to devastate the country for a span of eight years."

In 1618 the Emperor Jehangir wrote:—"The Almighty God has always and in all places extended His protection to His humble creatures, and this is shown from the fact that at this very time it was reported to me that a pestilential disease had broken out in Agra and numbers of men had perished. For this reason I was fully confirmed in my resolution of postponing my march towards Agra, which occurred to my mind by the Divine inspiration."

One cannot help thinking that the inspiration

rarely come into contact with rats. Their exemption from plague would disappear in the presence of pneumonic plague, in which the bacilli are conveyed by the breath from man to man. It is suspected that the black death was more largely pneumonic—it is the most fatal form of plague; there are few recoveries, and death sometimes supervenes in a few hours.

The existence of plague in Bombay was first suspected in July 1896. The first death registered as due to 'bubonic fever' was recorded on 31st August, a theory that it was brought by pilgrims from Kumaon in the Himalayas has found some supporters, but there is practically no doubt that the infection was conveyed by rats on ships from Hong Kong. The first human cases were noted near grain warehouses close to the docks, which were infested by rats. The disease gradually spread into every part of India. The recorded deaths from plague in India up to June 1911 numbered 7,580,000 and are probably considerably more.

No city in the world, not even Hong Kong as it was in the old days, offered such a breeding-ground for the plague bacillus as Bombay did at the end of 1896. Outwardly a 'city of palaces and palms', with a magnificent harbour and life-giving sea-breezes which never fail, it was nevertheless the home of an immense population living under the most unwholesome conditions. At the southern end of the island the native city had been crammed within restricted limits, not by official mandate, but by the greed of property owners.

Huge insanitary tenement houses had been erected, which almost rivalled the 'sky scrapers' of New York in her less aspiring days.

Eighty per cent of the million inhabitants were living in tenements of a single room, and the average number of occupants of each room was four. Many of these rooms had neither light nor ventilation; into them the sunlight could never penetrate; large numbers of the houses were deliberately built back to back; and in these noisome dens, with damp mud floors, rats and humanity swarmed.

Bombay owed its plight to a rapid influx of population, to a great rise in land values, and to defective building regulations. When plague came, there was a panic. I witnessed the scenes of that first mad exodus at the end of 1896, when the railway stations were crammed with people who fought for places in the trains, and when the roads of Salsette were thronged with fugitives fleeing from the pestilence, they knew not whither. By February 1897 it was calculated that 400,000 people had fled from the city, and they carried the plague with them. . . . I fancy that to discover the true effects of plague one must go, not to the larger cities, which fill

up quickly after an epidemic, but to the villages. There is very little evidence either way in the Government Reports. They speak occasionally of the scarcity of labour, and the rise of prices. On the other hand, it is said that in the Bombay Presidency the position of the surviving labourers has materially improved, exactly as occurred in England in the 14th century. The people with small fixed incomes are believed to have suffered. In some ways plague has been a blessing in disguise. It has given a vast impetus to sanitary measures all over India. Above all, it is producing a complete transformation of the city of Bombay. The operations of the great Improvement Scheme initiated by Lord Sandhurst—Lord Curzon specially attended the opening ceremony—continued by Lord Northcote and Lord Lamington, and now being resolutely developed by Sir George Clarke, the present Governor, are changing the face of the city. The foul rookeries are being swept away, wide new thoroughfares are being driven through the native quarters, and the miserable dwellers in squalid dens are regaining their birthright of sunlight and sweet air. In all the years I spent in India I saw nothing to me so terrible as the daily sight of all those vast fetid breeding houses of death, within earshot of murmuring waves, telling of five hundred leagues of wind-swept, sunlit ocean. Many of these structures have now disappeared for

On all sides are fearsome mountains, dense with forests traversed by fierce wild animals; there are rivers which often overflow their banks, and up the sides of the Pass are paths which are unscalable even by goats. Hence travellers find this Pass hard to cross. But this does not mean that there are no human habitations in the mountains nearby. Is any place inaccessible to the human power? Not at all. On many plains among the heights are the villages of the hill-folk, who not only keep cattle, but also cultivate the ground with many kinds of grain; and as the traveller, fresh to these regions, lifts his eyes in the time of harvest to the heights above, the tiers upon tiers of luxuriantly-cultivated hills look to him like green carpets extending along a golden ladder leading to Paradise.

Our traveller, as he walked along this wonderful Pass, was heard muttering to himself something on this wise: "Oh dear! Oh dear! has any one ever seen or heard of such a terrible occurrence! How cruel! How could he find the heart to kill a little child? What does it matter whether they are Muhammedans or Hindus? Are not love and mercy inculcated in both their Scriptures, and deceit, treachery and cruelty abhorred? In the *Kuran* or in the *Puran*, it is the same. But what is the use of bemoaning that which is past? It is the future which must be seen to. Oh! dear, dear, dear! Ah! Allah! How cold it is, even after the sun has risen. It seems to freeze my very life. Look above, or look below, I see nothing but mountain-heights crowned with snow. Whoever called these mountains 'Snow mountains' (Himalayas) was quite correct. Kalidasa was a fool when he said that, though in the Himalayas there was the evil of extreme cold, yet, owing to the fact that these mountains are the birth-places of precious stones, the blemish does not really detract from their worth but is only like the spots on the bright surface of the moon. He could not have had real experience of this cold. If we could only bring him for an instant into this Khyber Pass, he would certainly take back that saying of his in his 'Kumara Sanbhava'. Oh! dear, dear, dear! Never mind, let us see who will conquer, the cold or I. Perhaps it despises me as an old man. Even if I lose my life, will I forego the purpose I have undertaken? What greater duty is there than duty to the King? What a friend to others is that Jyeshthamul? If he had not helped me by giving me this pass, my endeavour would have proved fruitless. I shall never forget his kindness." So muttering, sometimes audibly, sometimes inaudibly, the poor old traveller went on, shivering and hugging himself with the cold, in spite of the fact that to guard against it he wore many coats one over the other. He

seemed about seventy years old. His conical cap with its overhanging tassel peeping out of the many-folded turban he had wound round his head and over his ears, his yard-long white beard, the black beads round his neck, the long white tunic falling from his shoulders to his feet, his Delhi sandals, and his occasional exclamations of 'Allah' and 'Raqud' made him out a bigoted Mohammedan. But then the Sanskrit *Slokas* he sometimes quoted would have raised a doubt that he might be a Hindu, if it were not for the fact that in those days there were some Mohammedans who did learn Sanskrit. Did not Abul Fyze, in the time of Akbar, acquire mastery over Sanskrit and write many books in that language? Perhaps this man was one of that kind.

Towards noon, the cold lessened and our traveller acquired renewed vigour. Walking with the speed of youth, he soon left behind Alimusjid and the villages after it and approached in a short time Lundykotai, with the hope of reaching Kabul soon without any difficulty. From Lundykotai, it being the highest point in the Pass, can be observed distinctly the paths leading to and from it. On our traveller climbing

A Spinning Song from Kathiawad

RADHA

My Sisters plucked green leaves at morn to deck the garden Swing
And donned their golden raiment for the Festival of Spring
But sweeter than the newblown vines or the song of building birds
Are the tendrils of your hair, Beloved, and the Music of your words!

PARBATI

My Sisters sat beside the hearth making the wheaten cakes
And gathered honey from the hives for the Festival of Snakes
Why should I vex the jewelled lords with offerings or vows,
Who wear the glory of your love like a jewel on my brows?

SITA

My Sisters sang at evenfall a hymn of Ancient rites,
And kindled rows of silver lamps for the Festival of Lights
But I leaned upon my lattice-door to watch the Glimmering Skies;
And praised the gracious God, Beloved, for the beauty of your eyes.

—Sarojini Naidu

Hyderabad

Glimpses of the "Changing Chinese"

(By Lady Benson)

FROM "THE CHANGING CHINESE" BY EDWARD
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HERE are some customs in China, common to the women of India and the women of China. In both countries, girls

are subject to early betrothal and marriage, and to the separation of the sexes at social gatherings, and the seclusion of women between the ages of ten and twenty-five to later.

Mercifully for the women of India, the terribly cruel custom of foot-binding has never been the fashion in India.

If you mention the "foot-binding of Chinese women" the remark is instantly made: "Oh, yes! they used to do it, but now that custom has been abolished in China, just as *satti* has been abolished in India." A very comforting and comfortable declaration, but alas! very, very far from the truth. From a book called "The Changing Chinese," written last

or salvation, as men. The only hope of their getting this much desired liberation from Karma and its results, viz., countless millions of births and deaths and untold suffering, was the worship of their husbands. The husband is said to be the woman's god; there is no other god for her. This god may be the worst sinner and a great criminal; still *he is her god*, and she must worship him. She can have no hope of getting admission into *Swarga*, the abode of the gods, without his pleasure, and if she please him in all things she will be re-incarnated as a high-caste man, in order to study the Vedas and the Vedanta and thereby get the knowledge of the true Brahman and be amalgamated in it. After the worship of her husband, she can go to the temple with him and worship the same gods as he does, but only then. Often we see her adoration of minor deities, such as among others, the sacred Tulasi plant, growing in her back garden. The sight is pathetic, for we see the true spirit of worship in her eyes. To her, her religion, little though it gives her, is far more personal than that of the man.

Ravi Varma, the well-known Indian artist, has a beautiful picture called *Malati*, of an Indian woman on the steps of a temple with a simple offering of flowers in her hand; and oh! the rapture of dreamy adoration in her eyes! It is this unsatisfied religious sense in the Hindu women, which makes them so superstitious and fearful of omens, and so blindly adherent to custom; and it is this superstitious faith and conservatism, which makes them a power at home. For the Hindu woman is a personal power at home, in spite of her anomalous position outside. The Hindu, wavering in his faith, often deprecates his inability to become a Christian on account of his family. And we may be sure that it is the woman that counts for most in the family. With all this personal influence, and with the universal scope for refinement and education, which the Indian women possess, it is a pity that their hope in religion is not allowed to be higher.

In Mohammedanism, the position of the woman is lower still. In Buddhism it is much better, but nothing compared to what it is in Christianity. The religion of Christ is a personal one, "an up-lifting of the spirit, a drawing near with faith, a communion with a sympathetic personal father." A religion of the present, where "there is not a particle of doubt left as to whether salvation is a present one or not;" a religion of all castes, a religion for woman as well as man.

The religious work that an Indian Christian woman can do may be of two kinds, direct and indirect, the work being done both in Christian and in Hindu homes. The direct work can be

dependent or independent. Belonging to the former are the workers under missions, the Bible-women, the zenana teachers, who gently introduce themselves into Hindu homes and do their own little work bravely and quietly. Not to be forgotten is the gallant little band of Salvation Army workers, who like ferrets burrow their way into the lowest haunts of misery and vice. Under the independent workers may be classed the honorary workers, women of better position and more money, who are able to do zenana visiting and school-superintending without any remuneration, the wives, sisters and daughters of laymen who voluntarily carry out Christ's command to go and preach His Gospel. What nobler work can there be than that of Pandita Ramabai with her Widows' Home, and her Rescue Home for the unfortunate foolish women who are degraded in the eyes of society and the grand work of many other women, which it is not possible to mention here. All honor to the noble women, who have voluntarily given their lives for the service of Christ's Kingdom!

Apart from the direct carrying of the Christian message, there is the indirect work which every Indian Christian woman can do, both in society and at home just by living a quiet, true, helpful, religious life which others, Hindus and Christians, cannot help admiring and imitating.

How great is the work which the good woman can do at home! As wife, she controls her husband by the hold she has on his affections, by her strength

cruelty, and extortions of their Shabs, a feverish and at times fierce light of patriotism has gleamed in the veiled eyes of Persian womanhood. In their thirst for liberty and its modern expressions, they have broken down many of the most sacred customs which from the beginning of history have bound their sex.

DR. MRS. JAMINENT, So the Calcutta University, who had served with great distinction in Nepal, says Modern Review weaving the respect of all by her character and medical skill after passing an examination of the Glasgow University, has become a fellow of the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of that University. She is the first lady to obtain this distinction.

ARAB FIGHTING GIRLS.—The *Statesman* writes:—Much has been heard recently of the exploits in Tripoli of the Amariyehs or Menders, the young Arab girls, who are fighting in the desert to stem the Italian invasion, but nothing definitely has been learned of this amazon adjunct to the Turkish fighting forces until the return of a correspondent who has been with a large force of Arabs in the desert for some time. The girls are between the ages of sixteen and eighteen and they derive their name from their duties, which are to mend the courage of the falling, to rebuke the wavering, and inspire the brave. They also bring water to the thirsty in the foremost ranks of the warriors, and in performing this service many girls have lost their lives. They are the best substitutes that the Arabs have for Red Cross nurses and they bear the dead as well as the living from the battle fields, another service which has taken toll in many of their lives.

THROUGH the efforts of Miss Subbalakshmi Ammal, B.A., of Egmore, a Widows' Home is likely to be established in Madras before long, where poor girl-widows will not only find a suitable home but will have facilities for studying in the Presidency Training School for Mistresses. The idea seems to be to establish a Home more or less on the lines of the Mysore Widows' Home. It is stated that a few widows have already arrived and that the new Home will soon be in working order. The usefulness of an institution of the kind contemplated cannot be disputed and the proposed Home will certainly supply a longfelt want. We want enthusiastic workers like Prof. Karve and Pundita Ramabhai and the success of the scheme will be ensured. We hope that Subbalakshmi Ammal's laudable efforts will meet with that success which they merit and that the first Madras Widows' Home will prove a veritable boon and a blessing to many a forlorn Hindu widow.

SOME Chinese and Japanese maxims are as follow: "Man proposes, woman disposes." "If you suspect a man, don't employ him; if you employ him, don't suspect him." "If a man has money, he will find plenty of people with scales to weigh it" "with money you can move the gods." "The mouth is the gate of misfortune; the tongue is the root of misfortune." "If the tongue were like the nose, a man would have no trouble till the end of his days."

A POOR WOMAN stood near the Magistrate who was hearing the case—"Drunk, third arrest." The prisoner was her husband. It was quickly decided; but the pathetic face of the woman touched the Judge, and he said to her: "I am sorry, but I must lock your husband up." There was wisdom in her sad and prompt reply: "Your honor, wouldn't it be better to lock up the saloons and let my husband go to work?"

MISS MARIE HA, the well-known lady violinist, will shortly visit India under the direction of Messrs. Baring Bros. of Cheltenham. Miss Hall's performances are marked by rare purity and breadth of tone intonation above criticism, and technical ability that is astonishing.

LADY MACKENZIE, an English woman, who has

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typhoid germs and then transferred to a gelatine plate. In the trail left by that fly, there were 30,000 bacteria, a few of them enough to cause death. A fly can have 3,000,000 progeny in all season. From egg to fly it is within 12 to 15 days.

SUPERSTITIONS.—The following curious beliefs are still current in Britain. To cure whooping-cough, the children should be taken through a tunnel and placed near gas works. Styes to be treated by rubbing gold wedding rings, the fiction curing them. Blue leads to be worn to keep away cold and quinsy!

MOTHER'S DAY.—A new observance day was instituted in Quebec on the 12th of May last, called "Mothers' Day", and services were held in several churches, the worshippers wearing white carnations as symbolical of the qualities of a true mother. Like "All Saints' Day," this new day will take on, and people will soon observe one day in the year as "Mothers' Day."

AN ENGLISH SUPERSTITION.—There is a superstition in the Royal family of England regarding the filling of niches in the Canterbury cathedral. These niches contain the statues of the kings and queens of England, but 4 are left, unoccupied! An old tradition is, if these 4 niches are filled in, the throne of England will come to an end. Queen Victoria knowing of this tradition refused to allow her statue to be placed in one of the niches, and to this day, they remain vacant.

SLEEPLESS WOMEN.—There is a woman in Budapest who has not slept for seven years. She has no inclination to sleep, nor does she suffer any bad effect from want of it.

FLOWERS AND MUSIC.—Professor Hans Teitgen of Munich declares that flowers are sensitive to music. They expand or close under certain melodies.

A much respected resident at Ooty passed away suddenly last week at the age of 75 years in the person of Mrs. Hopwood who accompanied her daughter Miss Hopwood (an honorary missionary of the Church of England Zenana Mission, whose self-denying labour amongst the poor Mahomedan women of Ootacamund is well-known) to Ootacamund in 1893. During the 19 years the deceased and her daughter only once went on furlough. The late Mrs. Hopwood led a quiet consistent Christian life and unostentatiously carried on much Christian work and contributed largely to charity. Much sympathy is felt for her daughter in her great sorrow. The funeral was largely attended.

The two suffragettes, Mary Leigh and Gladys Evans, who were responsible for the outrage in the Dublin theatre on the occasion of Mr. Asquith's visit to the city, have been sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

Two well-known Parsi ladies, Miss Hamabai Framti Petit, famous for her philanthropic generosity, and Mrs. Ruttanbai, F. Vakil, made a plucky flight of 1,800 feet with an aviator at the Juvisy meeting, much to the delight of the crowd. They are the first Parsi ladies to fly, and as such they will be complimented on their pluck and daring.

SERMON ON MAN AND WOMAN.—In a sermon preached in Manchester the minister said "Woman was made out of the rib of man, not of his head to top of him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side, to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved!"

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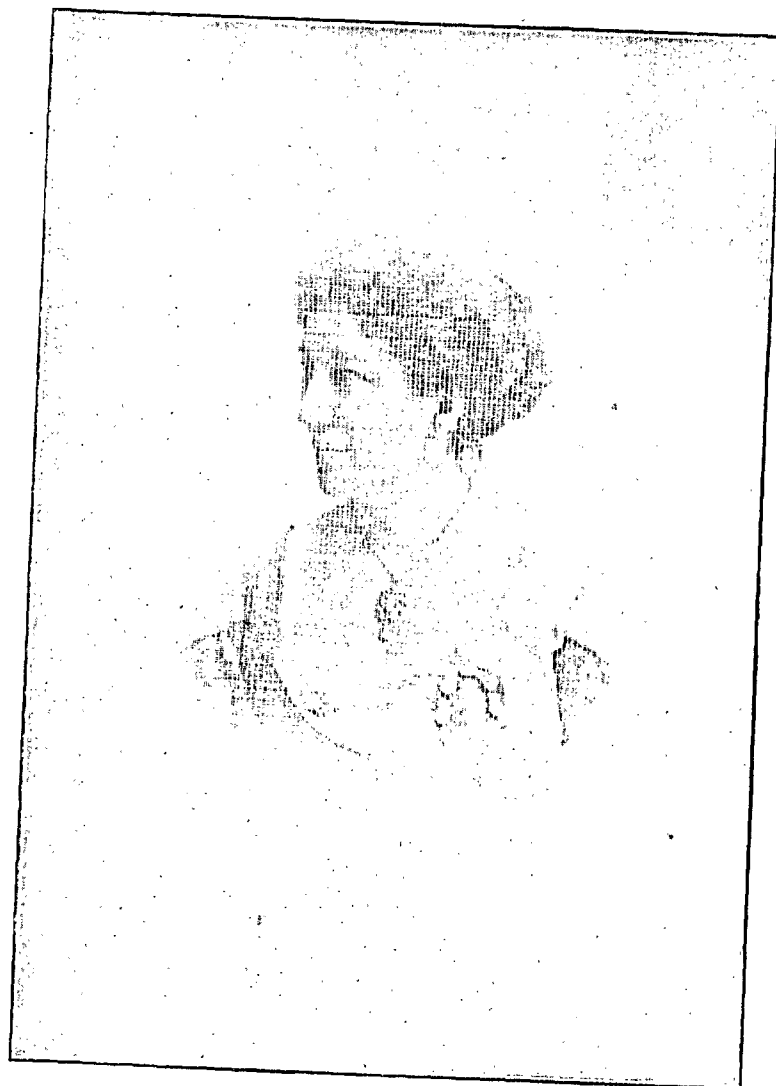
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