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Song of Solace.

(By H. S.)

There is joy that is born of the Sunlight,
Radiant as flowers in Spring;
And brief alas! as bird flight
On swiftly soaring wing;
Joy that to youth is mated,
Ere time has taught us tears,
Ere the glimpse of clouds ill-fated,
Has summoned alien fears.

There is joy that is born of the rainbow
When youth has sped its way;
When the glittering golden sun - glow
Has had its little day;
Joy of the dawning morrow,
When the night has been dark and long,
When we've slept on the heart of sorrow
And awakened to Hope's sweet song.

94077 ISOBEL'S CHILD.

Mrs. F. B. Browning has a poem called "Isobel's Child," which tells us in pathetic language about the sublime renunciation made by a mother for the sake of her child. There are some of us, who are capable of sacrifice when it is pointed out to us in plain terms of this world of ours. But, there are few who can think of self-denial, when it has to do with comparatively unknown sacrifices. Few of us wish to think of the vague, shadowy future in terms of the real, sure present; and alas! few of us desire to surrender the public fame of the world for the comparative oblivion of the home. When we make a great sacrifice, we like to be called heroes and heroines; and that can only be when the sacrifice is palpable. Thus few renunciations are made when they have to do with a quiet surrender like that, which Isobel makes in the poem we are now considering.

The story goes that a little child of three months is recovering after a severe illness of eight days. The mother's heart, hitherto wrung by unavailing pity over the suffering of her child, is now fairly at rest. She had prayed earnestly for the recovery of her child:

"Oh, take not, Lord, my babe away,
Oh, take not to thy songful heaven
The pretty babe thou has given.
Think, God among the cherubim,
How I shall shiver every day
In thy June sunshine, knowing where
The grave-grass keeps it from its fair
Still cheeks: and feel, at every tread,
His little body, which is dead
And hidden in thy turfy fold,
Doth make thy whole warm earth a -
cold!"

She had dared to reason with God,
the author of her life and the life
of her little babe.

And must the first, who teaches me
The forms of shrouds and funerals, be
Mine own first-born beloved? he
Who taught me first this mother-love?
Thou who art
So happy in thy heaven alway
Take not mine only bliss away."

And the answer from on high
had been favourable to her. So,
now she sat and smiled with a
relieved heart, which was begin-
ning slowly to expand in the glow
of recovered hope.

"So motionless she sate,
The babe asleep upon her knees,
You might have deemed their souls had
gone
Away to things inanimate.
In sooth the smile that then was keeping
Watch upon the baby sleeping,
Floated with its tender light
Downward, from the drooping eyes,
Upward, from the lips apart,
Over cheeks which had grown white

With an eight-day weeping:
All smiles come in such a wise
Where tears shall fall or have of old -
Like northern lights that fill the heart
Of heaven in sign of cold."

In the language of the heart, she
talks with her child,

"I prayed for thee, my little child,
And God has heard my prayer!
And when thy babyhood is gone,
We two together undefiled
By men's repinings, will kneel down
Upon His earth, which will be fair
(Not covering thee, sweet!) to us twain,
And give Him Thankful praise."

Outside the room, a storm is
raging.

The wind in intermission stops
Down in the beechen forest,
Then cries aloud
As one at the sorest,
Self-stung, self-driven,
And rises up to its very tops,
Stiffening erect the branches bowed,
Dilating with a tempest-soul
The trees that with their dark hands
break
Through their own outline, and heavy roll
Shadows as massive as clouds in
heaven,
Across the castle lake.

But, inside the room, all is quiet
and peaceful:

O sight for wondering look!
While the external nature broke
Into such abandonment,
While the very mist, heart-rent
By the lightning, seemed to eddy
Against nature, with a din,
A sense of silence and of steady

Natural calm appeared to come
From things without, and enter in
The human creature's room.

So, Isobel the mother, happily
looks forward into the future. What
career will her child choose in
years to come? Will it be the
simple country life?

"My little child what wilt thou choose?
Now let me look at thee and ponder.
What gladness, from the gladnesses

Futurity is spreading under
Thy gladsome light? Beneath the trees
Wilt thou lean all day, and lose
Thy spirit, with the river seen
Intermittently between

The winding beechen alleys,
Half in labour, half repose,
Like a shepherd keeping sheep,
Thou with only thoughts to keep
Which never a bound will overpass.
And which are innocent as those
That feed among Arcadian valleys
Upon the dewy grass?"

Or will the child choose to be a
Philosopher or a Poet?

Wilt be a philosopher,
By whose voice the earth and skies
Shall speak to the unborn?
Or a poet, broadly spreading
The golden immortalities
Of thy soul on natures lorn
And poor of such, them all to guard
From their decay, - beneath thy treading,
Earth's flowers recovering hues of Eden,
And stars drawn downward by thy looks,
To shine ascendant in thy books?"

Or perhaps, the child will be
satisfied with the simpler joys of

Home and Love, joys such as those
that thrill the mother's heart;

"But, O my babe, thy lids are laid
Close, fast upon thy cheek,
And not a dream of power and sheen
Can make a passage up between;
Thy heart is of thy mother's made,
Thy looks are very meek,
And it will be their chosen place
To rest on some beloved face.

As these on thine, and let the noise
Of the whole world go on nor drown
The tender silence of thy joys'
Or when that silence shall have grown
Yearning for sound, to look above

Too tender for itself, the same.
Yearning for sound - to look above
And utter its one meaning, LOVE,
That He may hear His name."

So dreams the mother. But out-
side the storm is still raging. The
large white blind owl, that had sat
for years safely in an old tree hollow,
is carried away by the wind. The
tame hawk, with "wet, jagged
plumes," screams at the lightning.
Nor are there wanting dread omens:
the hound howls at the bed-room
door; the resting nurse dreams an
evil dream; and suddenly a silence
falls everywhere.

No wind, no rain, no thunder!
Their noises dropped asunder
From the earth and the firmament,
From the towers and the lattices,
Abrupt and echoless
As ripe fruits on the ground unshaken
wholly

As life in death.
And sudden and solemn the silence fell,
Startling the heart of Isobel

As the tempest could not;

The moonlight shines clear and
cold on the infant's face, and
Isobel's eyes also wander there in
a pause of her happy dreams. And
then, she starts with fear; for she
sees a wondrous change in the
beloved face. The babe is awake,
and, strange to say is gazing at its
mother; the mouth, which had scarce
been able to make inarticulate
sounds before, is now breaking into
human speech:

The babe has awakened from sleep
And unto the gaze of its mother,
Bent over it lifted another;
Not the baby looks that go
Unaimingly to and fro,
But an earnest gazing deep
Such as soul gives soul at length
When by work and wail of years
It winneth a solemn strength
And mourneth as it wears.
And the small soft mouth unweaned,
By mother's kiss o'erleamed,
Quickened to mind's expression,
Shaped to articulation,
Yea, uttering words, yea, naming woe,
In tones that with it strangely went
Because so baby-innocent.

And the child is speaking strange
words of wisdom. How can the
dreams, the philosophies and the
visions of earth hold it down, when
it has had a gleam of heavenly
beauties?

"Oh, the dream within the dream!
I saw celestial places even.

Oh, the vistas high palms
Making finites of delight
Through the heavenly infinite,
Lifting up their green still tops
To the heaven of heaven!
Oh, the sweet life-tree that drops
Shade like light across the river
Glorified in its for-ever
Flowing from the Throne!
Oh, the shining holinesses
Of the thousand, thousand faces
God - sunned by the throned One.
And made intense with such a love
That, though I saw them turned above,
Each loving seemed for also me!
And, oh, the unspeakable, the He
The manifest in secrecies,
Yet of mine own heart partaker
With the overcoming look
Of one who hath been once forsook
And blesseth the forsaker!

A better world waits for him:

A little harp me waits thereby,
A harp, whose strings are golden all
And tuned to music spherical,
Hanging on the green-life tree
Where no willows ever be.
Shall I miss that harp of mine?
Mother, no! - the Eye divine
Turned upon it, makes it shine;
And, when I touch it, poems sweet
Like separate souls shall fly from it,
Each to the immortal fytte,
We shall all be poets there,
Gazing on the chiefest Fair.

The child begs his mother to let
him go; for her prayers have been
holding him to earth.

Mother, mother,
I tremble in thy close embrace,

I feel thy tears adown my face,
Thy prayers do keep me out of bliss.
O dreary earthly love!
Loose thy prayer and let me go
To the place where loving is,
Yet not sad; and when is given
Escape to THEE from this below,
Thou shalt behold that I wait
For thee beside the happy Gate,
And silence shall be up in heaven
To hear our greeting kiss,"

Then the mother begins to
wonder whether her worldly wisdom
has been right? Has she not been
wishing evil to her child? Why
should that innocent child stay to
learn "the air-corrupting sighs" of
the narrow earth?

O little lids, now folded fast,
Must ye yearn to drop at last
Our large and burning tears?
O warm quick body, must thou lie,
When the time comes round to die,
Still from all the whirl of years,
Bare of all the joy and pain?
O small frail being, wilt thou stand
At God's right hand,
Lifting up those sleeping eyes
Dilated by great destinies,
To an endless waking? thrones and
seraphim,
Through the long ranks of their
solemnities,
Sunning thee with calm looks of Heaven's
surprise,
But thine alone on Him?
Or else, self-willed, to tread the
Godless place,
(God keep thy will!) feel thine own
energies

Cold, strong, objectless, like a dead
man's clasp,
The sleepless deathless life within thee
grasp.
While myriad faces, like one changeless
face,
With woe NOT LOVE'S, shall glass
thee everywhere
And overcome thee with thine own
despair?

No, she has been wrong. It is
unspeakably sad for her to feel that
her own child is longing for a love,
which is not hers,

But that love is a divine one, a
sublime satisfaction.

Love! earth's love! and can we love
Fixedly where all things move?
Can the sinning love each other?

And so, she withdraws her pray-
ers, and lets the babe go. When
the nurse wakes up in the morning,
the child is dead; and, strange to
say, the mother is not sad.

The nurse awakes in the morning sun,
And starts to see beside her bed
The lady with a grandeur spread
Like pathos o'er her face, as one
God-satisfied and earth-undone;

The babe upon her arm was dead:
And the nurse could utter forth no cry,
She was awed by the calm in the
mother's eye.

She tells the nurse what she has
done:

I changed the cruel prayer I made,
And bowed my meekened face, and
prayed
That God would do His will; and thus
He did it, nurse! He parted us:
And His sun shows victorious
The dead calm face, - and I am calm,
And Heaven is hearkening a new psalm

She is calm, yes even though her
heart is broken, for she hopes to
meet her child soon.

This earthly noise is too anear,
Too loud, and will not let me hear
The little harp. My death will soon
Make silence.

Therefore, the Poetess tells us,
we should not be afraid to let our
beloved ones leave us and die; for
they pass into a safer keeping than
ours.

Oh you, Earth's tender and impassioned
few,
Take courage to entrust your love
To Him so named, who guards above
Its ends and shall fulfil!
Breaking the narrow prayers that may
Befit your narrow hearts, away
In His broad, loving will.

KAMALA.



Class in Instrumental Music at Shanti-Niketan, BOLPUR.

OFFICE OF THE AGO.
7 - FEB 1933
KAMALA



The Art Exhibition at Shanti-Niketan, BOLPUR.





Miss FAZILAT - UN - NESSA, M. A.,

The eldest daughter of Mr. WAHED ALIKHAN of East Bengal, who passed the B A. with distinction and won a first-class first in mixed Mathematics in the M. A. Examination from the Dacca University, is the first Indian lady to win distinction in Mathematics. Miss Fazilat - un - nessa, will shortly sail for England to study the Science of Education. The Dacca University has decided to sanction a grant of Rs. 5000 to aid her in her projected study. She has now taken up the study of Sanskrit in M. A., in the Dacca university. Miss Fazilat-un-nessa is a firm believer in Hindu-Muslim unity.

(Photo by:- R. VENKOB RAO, Srirangam)

RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S SCHOOL AT BOLPUR, BENGAL.

Rabindranath Tagore is known, par excellence, as a poet, a writer of mystical verse, of "Song-offerings" to the Infinite Lover, of gems of devotion couched in the most exquisite language. Of Tagore as man of action, the Founder-President of a university, and educationist of the first rank, the practical, utilitarian folks know little. This is a curious instance of the incalculable nature of fame and popularity. Europe has rejoiced in Tagore's mystical words and airy visions; but it has cared little for his deeds, and for the indomitable spirit that, in opposition to the omnipotent Government departments of the day and in the face of Indian suspicion of educational experiments (especially when wrought by a poet), has persevered until the school he planned has come to be known all over India, and is even beginning to attract visitors from America and the West.

What was the motive that led Tagore, Poet, Mystic, Musician, to turn School-master? The driving force came, not from any new theory of education, but from the memory of his own school-days. His school

life was not a particularly unhappy one, but it tortured him, because it had not the completeness of the world. "School was a Special arrangement for giving lessons". It snatched him away, to paraphrase his own words, from a world full of mystery of God's own handiwork, from sunrise and sunset and the silent glory of the stars; it fenced him round with unintelligible conventions; it failed to take account of the individual child, and was little more than a factory for turning out uniform results; it set him in opposition to the world, instead of reconciling him to it.

So, some twenty-five years ago, there came into being, at a lonely spot in Bengal at Bolpur, some four hours train-run from Calcutta, a school for boys. All round is the vast open country; here, in the forest-sanctuary of the "Ashram", are the white houses of Tagore and the foreign staff (English & Irish, Austrians & Dutch), the bungalow where the girls live (for the school is now a co-educational one), the long, low dormitories of the boys, the simple Indian cottages that form the music class rooms, the Art-room and Library, the mud-baked cottage built as their 'project' by the smaller boys, and the prayer hall; and everywhere are the shady trees under which lessons are held. Here

too are the weaving and the carpentry sheds and the settlement school for poor children, while two miles away an Agricultural school, and a Rural Research Department are growing up.

What are the ideas and ideals underlying all this? First, school life is integrated through and through with nature, not as seen in Botany class-room or Zoological Laboratory, but as she is lived with, played with, loved. We do children a bitter wrong, Tagore holds, in snatching them away from the open arms of earth and water and sky. "If they had any idea that they were to open their eyes to the sunlight, only to find themselves in the hands of the education department, till they should lose their freshness of mind and keenness of sense, they would think twice before venturing upon their career of humanity". "Children are in love with life, and it is their first love. All its colour and movement attract their eager attention. And are we quite sure of our wisdom in stifling this love? Children are not born ascetics, fit to enter at once into the monastic discipline of acquiring knowledge. At first they must gather knowledge through their love of life, and then they will renounce their lives to gain knowledge, and then again they

will come back to their fuller lives with ripened wisdom". So, at Tagore's school, if they will, the boys can climb a tree, and carry on their studies, sitting on a fork of the branches. Why not? The boys' scientific knowledge of the botanical structure of the tree will be all the richer, because of their personal experience of the trunk, branches, and fruits. Again, the boys, sons of wealthy parents for the most part, have bare feet, and why? "Of all the limbs we have, the feet are the best adopted for intimately knowing the earth by their touch; for the earth has her subtle modulations of contour, which she only offers for the kiss of her true lovers-the feet". In the west, Tagore thinks, that, partly because of climate, they look upon nature as an enemy to be overcome, or at least, as an intractable servant to be disciplined and trained. The traditional thought of the East, on the other hand, is that nature is a beneficent friend, prolific in her gifts. The Western conception, however, has tended to oust the Eastern idea, with the result that the educated Indian is too often utterly divorced from the world of nature with which he deems it an indignity to have any contact. Against this baneful fallacy, Tagore does battle, and every boy, who lives in the forest - 'Ashram' is conscious

of his kinship with mother-earth.

Allied with his familiarity with nature, goes simplicity and poverty of life, a remarkable feature in the education of high-born children. The boys wear the simplest of cotton garments, and sleep in the barest of dormitories, and their food is plain. The comforts of civilization are at their minimum. The idea behind this simplicity is not of the value-~~pute~~ of asceticism and poverty, but of its educational significance. "Poverty brings us into complete touch with life and the world, for living richly is mostly living by proxy, and thus living in a world of lesser reality. This may be good for one's pleasure and pride, but not for one's education. Wealth is a golden cage, in which the children of the rich are bred into artificial deadening of their powers. Therefore, in my school, much to the disgust of the people of expensive habits, I had to provide for this great teacher-this bareness of furniture and materials, not because it is poverty, but because it leads to personal experience of the world".

In a variety of ways, one sees at work in Shanti-Niketan (the abode of Peace), ideas that are commonplace in Psychological text books and educational manuals, e.g. the use

of suggestion, the value of the subconscious, the influence of nature, but which do not always succeed in crossing over into practice. At Shanti-Niketan, the subconscious minds of the children are captured, and later, the conscious intellect comes into its own. Thus, in the early years, too much emphasis is not placed on books, which with all their uses, have their limitations, and which may so cover the windows of children's minds that they fail to see the reality outside the curtained panes. Instead, in the first years of school, the boys and girls glean their knowledge of life directly, through persons and things. In line with this, the 'Project Method' has been recently adopted, and a normal-sized cottage was built (with the exception of the roof) entirely by the smaller children, who likewise planned and made the garden, constructed the gate and the bridge across the creek that flowed in front of the house, adorned the walls with their own pictures, and furnished the rooms with their efforts at carpentry. So too, much is done through the medium of songs and plays. "All my latter-day plays," says the poet, "have been written here, and the boys have taken part in their performance. Lyrical dramas have been written for their festivals. With all the anxiety and

hypocritical sensitiveness of an author about the performance of his own play, I have never been disappointed in my boys, and I have rarely allowed teachers to interfere with the boys' own representation of the characters. Very often, they themselves write plays or improvise them, and we are invited to their performance. They hold meetings of their literary clubs and they have at least three illustrated magazines conducted by three sections of the school, the most interesting of them being that of the infant section." In the art department of the school, much more stress is laid on originality and imagination and memory, than is common in the teaching of art in the West. Where British students would be told to copy a model, the Indian artists at Bolpur either paint from memory or do an imaginative composition. That they paint,—always in water colours, the favourite medium of Indian art—, extraordinarily well, any one can testify who has seen the art work at Shanti-Niketan.

When the school was started, the boys had little interest in music, a grief to Tagore to whom music is the health of life. Yet he saw clearly that there was no use forcing an art on unwilling minds, for art, to be true, must be spontaneous. No pressure, accordingly, was brought

to bear on the boys, to sing, or to learn to play the classical instruments of Bengal, the Esraj, Sitar or the Vina. The fullest opportunities, however, were given to the musical children to develop their talents, and as the music-lovers played and sang, there grew up amongst the others, the desire to have formal musical training themselves. And today the school boasts some of the leading musicians of Bengal on its staff, and we doubt if there are many schools in East or West, where the standard of musical education and appreciation is as high.

Despite the freedom of Shanti-Niketan, however, compulsion is not altogether absent. In two curiously-contrasted spheres, it is present, viz in regard to manual work and to religious meditation. India is a land of villages, voicing the simple inescapable demands of Agricultural life. Yet, education has come to be construed in India in terms of the head and not of the hand, so that the mark of an educated person has been too often told to be inability to use his hands. The much-respected graduate is usually profoundly ignorant, and often highly contemptuous of the problems of practical life, as they press upon the teeming multitude of India's poverty-stricken Agri-

culturalists. Against this parody of education Tagore has set his face. Every inmate of the school must learn some craft, be it weaving or carpentry, masonry, gardening or farming. When a boy comes to Shanti-Niketan, he is given entire freedom of choice as to which craft he wants to learn. If his first choice does not prove a success, he is allowed to change to another, or yet another, the masters guiding him into that line in which they think he will best express himself. But every child must become a master of one craft.

Compulsion, again, is exercised in regard to the daily meditation. Morning and evening, fifteen minutes are set apart for this, and Tagore insists on every child being present. He does not want the children to be hypocrites, and to pretend that they are meditating, when they are not. They are at perfect liberty to spend the time gazing at a squirrel or a bird, if they so desire, but at least the avenue is left open for influences from a spiritual world to play upon the genial, sensitive hearts of the worshipping community, and, even if the way be blocked by the tumultuous restless thoughts of youth, the period of self-controlled quiet is good.

Like its founder, by turns, poet, dramatist, politician, educationist, and religious seer, Shanti-Niketan is too many-sided to come under any one category; in its simplicity, its attitude to nature, and its happy relationships that subsist between teacher and taught, it reminds one of the Boy Scout movement (there are scouts and guides at Bolpur); in its emphasis on freedom and self-government, it has many affinities with schools of the new education type; while the large place it gives to music and art reminds one rather of Germany and Switzerland than of Britain; in its modified use of the Project Method, it borrows from America, while in its whole-hearted adoption of, and enthusiasm for, co-education, (and this in purdah India), it out-distances most schools where boys and girls are educated together. Being an Indian School, it is more frankly and unashamedly religious than are the majority of schools in the West, yet there is no religious instruction given; and emancipation of soul from the finite to the infinite comes, not through dogmatic teaching, but by the help of the unseen atmosphere of worship and aspirations that envelops "The Abode of Peace". In that atmosphere, Christian Missionaries and Indian Christians, members of the Brahma Samaj and other.

sects of Hinduism, all feel at home. Yet, with all its unconventionality and freedom, the school is no training ground for dilettante minds. It prepares for the Matriculation, and the College Department of Shanti-Niketan is affiliated to the Calcutta University.

The head-master of the junior school, an Indian, holds the Cambridge Teacher's Diploma, and is a Bachelor of Education of Edinburgh University; and the school is a real school of the intellect and will, as of the emotions.

In Tagore's school, there are many traces of the living educational thought and practice of Europe and America. Yet this is no copy of a Western Model, but is an original creative work, expressing India's contribution to the universal problem of providing a fitting environment for the nature of youth. In the past, India has come to Europe and America, to study the Western system of education; in the future, the West may journey to the East, to see what it can glean from the school of Rabindranath Tagore at Bolpur.

"The West. As I Saw It"

By MRS. RATNAM CORNELIUS

Chapter 11.

IMPRESSIONS ON LANDING IN THE WEST.

The first feel of the Western shores was something indescribable. Everything and everybody seemed so strange and foreign, and I cannot say I fell in love with the noise and rattle of the streets of Marseilles! The huge horses dragging heavy waggon-loads of luggage and stores all along the roughly paved stone-roads grated in my ears and gave me a bad first impression of the streets of a Western city.

I happened to remark about it to my English companion, and she turned round quickly and said, "Wait, till you get to London and it will be worse!" I was fairly thunderstruck at the prospect of such a calamity on the other side of the Channel; but, actually when I was in London, I still felt that the noise and rattle of the streets of Marseilles were really worse! It may have been only a bad first impression, I cannot say.

It was difficult to get about much, or do much to our satisfaction in

that great Western port, as neither my companion nor I knew enough French (though my companion could get on better than I did, as she had learnt French in her school days and remembered a few useful words); but we did our best in the way of sight-seeing and shopping during the two days we were there.

Compared with Indian conditions, the shops seemed wonderful and the wealth of beautiful fresh flowers that greeted one at shop-windows and street-corners added some zest to the sight-seeing, besides having a soothing effect on the over-wrought nerves caused by a long voyage. I must say I expected a much cooler weather there than we experienced at that time, and I told my friend that after all the climate of the south of France was not much better than the East in Summer. It seemed so hot!

Now, to come to my train journey from Marseilles to London.

I do not think I would ever want to undertake it again unless it were done in a special kind of train and under different circumstances! To

me, the French trains seemed awfully dirty and crowded. This may not be the fate of every foreign traveller, who travels in France in a night-train; and we may have thus suffered, because we could not book sleeping berths, as we were too late for them and had to travel in an ordinary second-class compartment. Well, after a bad night, the day dawned, as it always does, no matter whether you slept overnight or need more sleep; and about 10 A. M. we reached Paris. Of Paris, the Metropolis of France and the Fashion-city of the world, I shall write later at length, as it needs a chapter by itself, and also as I spent a much longer time there during my second visit than during the first.

But one thing I must not omit to mention now, and that is, the vast area of old battle-fields and trenches that we passed through on our way from Paris to Calais, and the site of the ruins of Amiens Cathedral and other pitiable sights we saw there of the late world-war, which devastated that whole area!

But I was really thankful when

the long and tedious train-journey from Marseilles to Calais was over, and we had to take the small boat to cross the Channel. There was the usual routine of going through the Customs - Office, pass-ports etc, and then began the long-looked-for crossing of the English Channel. I had been so many times told by many and sundry about the rough crossing that there is apt to be across the Channel, that I had thought I must put on extra courage and should not get sea-sick at all, though silently feeling all the time that I may get sick any moment! But nothing of the sort happened, and in a very short hour, we were safely on the other side to my great surprise! In fact, people had frightened me so much, that I had thought of flying from Paris to London, rather than risk the crossing in the small boat, and I would have done so if only my companion had consented! Well, I crossed the Channel several times later and nothing un-toward ever happened! This is for the consolation of any one, who is contemplating a crossing of the English Channel in the near future and is afraid of the venture!

When we neared the English shores, I was on the look-out for the white chalk-cliffs of Dover, of which I had read and heard so

much, and I must say I was not disappointed. It was a very picturesque scene that greeted us on the other side of the Channel in the fading twilight.

We were in Dover now! The never-ending Custom house routines and passports again! But this time we were let off easily and without much ado in the prompt, business-like way of the English people.

Then we were once more in the train, and this time in the Express speeding from Dover to London. That was a curious experience also, as it was my first feel of the English soil, and it was mighty interesting to pass through numerous English villages and hamlets in the counties of Kent and Surrey, watching the mass of hops, which were quite green in the fields then, and the smoke of the cottage-chimneys curling in waves above the creeping ivy and flowers of the cottage-walls. So this is England and these are English fields and cottages, I thought to myself, but had to reserve all my feelings to get my first impression of the Great Metropolis, which we were to reach soon.

When we were in the train bound for London, we ordered the inevitable four o'clock tea, as it was time for it and we needed it badly; and as my companion and I sipped

and talked, many were the looks levelled at us by the English travellers, who were in the same compartment with us.

"London", "London" was the next shout that greeted our ears, and we were at the Victoria Station in the great Metropolis at 7. P. M.! Every one of us began to look out for people, who would be waiting to welcome us on the platform, and great was the excitement that prevailed!

My first ride through the city of London was not wrought with much enthusiasm or any thrills, as it was nearly dusk then, and as I was weary with the fatigue of a long journey! After plying me with the usual inquiries as to how I had fared during the journey, and if I had been to England before, what I thought of the country from the little I had seen, and so on, my hostess pointed out a few places of interest, which we passed through on our way, such as the Marble Arch, the Hyde - park Corner, the war Memorial etc.

Soon we left our Taxi for the Suburban Railway, bound for the terminus in which my hostess had her home. It was my first experience of travelling in a tube-train, and so my curiosity was aroused to see what kind of journey it was going

to be. The tube train itself is a little different from ordinary trains, being small and low and with a rounded top gliding through the tunnel (tube); yet it was quite comfortable, clean and attractive inside; but what really interested me more was the crowd of English travelling people, all seated so calm and reserved, comfortably in corners as far as possible, men intent on smoking perhaps, and men and women as well in reading the various evening papers of the day. It was a curious sight and something very peculiar to London; a man cannot easily exchange a word with his neighbour, because I suppose, they have not been formally introduced to each other and because of the natural English reserve.

Our train rolled on to its destination, after giving me ample opportunity to observe all this, and finally we were put down at our Terminus. It was but a short distance from there to my hostess' home, and another surprise awaited me when I arrived at her door.

The usual ringing of the door-bell and the maid appearing to answer the bell and to let us in was gone through; and no sooner were we inside the entrance of that typical English home, than the aunt of my hostess, tall and strong,

with a very genial face and outstretched hands of welcome, greeted me very cordially and made me feel at home; she even offered at once to take the suitcase from my hand, and energetically climbed the staircase, as if she were in the prime of age, bidding me follow. Here was a surprise indeed, for who can dream in India of a seventy-two year old person climbing energetically two flights of stairs with a suit-case in hand, to help a newly-arrived guest! One has heard of old ladies in England living to a good old age! but to hear is one thing and to experience is another, because the latter is always so much more effective.

As soon as I was shown my room and was made acquainted with all the conveniences of an English guest-room. I was ready for a wash and change and then went down below to the dining-room for supper. Supper was a simple meal with those English people. It generally consisted of a thin soup, a little meat or fish (fish more often), some boiled vegetables, a milk pudding and fruit to finish with.

Here perhaps it won't be out of place to describe an English home-

stead. The home where I stayed consisted of a ground-floor with a dining-room, a study on one side and men's guest-room on the other side, divided by a passage or corridor in the middle, in which was the staircase leading upstairs to the general sitting room and two bed-rooms, with the inevitable bath-room connecting them! the third floor consisted of an additional bed-room and rooms for maids (facing the roofs of other houses); and the garret was on the fourth floor.

The kitchen formed part of the ground-floor behind the staircase and was concealed from the public view, but opened on to the corridor, with a door near by leading to the back-lawn and kitchen garden. The coal-storage room etc. were in the basement below the ground-floor, led to by a dark narrow stair-case near the kitchen, to which the maids had easy access.

This is more or less the usual type of an upper-middle-class English home, it seemed to me but the type may vary a little in different houses to suit their needs.

My hostess and her aunt insisted on my resting in my room for a day, after my wearisome travelling, and while I was confined to my room, I had ample opportunity to observe not only the general outline

and features of a London suburb, but also of the neighbouring houses and its people, their lawns, their gardens etc. Everything looked so quite and peaceful compared with the heart of London; the lawns and gardens so green, orderly and neat. The back lawn of an English home makes itself useful in various ways; here the maids hang out the washed clothes, handkerchiefs and stockings to dry, the old and young people of the house have their tea out in summer and entertain their visitors; and, when no visitors are present, they entertain themselves here with their own hobby of gardening, or amuse themselves with reading, sewing, knitting and so forth.

As they have to stay indoors most of the winter and as the English summer is so delightful (the weather being fine and the gardens and lawns attractive), it is no wonder that they are tempted to spend so much time out-of-doors in the privacy of their lawns and under the delightful shade of old garden trees.

I have had the pleasure of spending many a long hour on those lovely lawns, and I shall always recall those days with a great deal of pleasure.

Having rested from travelling, the next thing to do was to see "London proper".

FIRDAUSI AND THE SHAHNAME.

Almost every great work in literature and art is accompanied by a story, which gives it a romantic interest and arouses our sympathy for the producer. One of the most pathetic stories in the history of Persian literature is that of Firdausi and the Shahnama.

Firdausi lived in the eleventh century and was a citizen of Tus. His fame as a poet spread all over the eastern world. When Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni heard of Firdausi, he sent for him to his court. Travelling was slow and full of peril. By land, thieves and murderers haunted the roads, and by sea the journey was equally dangerous. Firdausi was not a strong man and he knew that if he undertook the journey he might never see his native land again; but he gave in to the entreaties of the Sultan's messengers and went to Ghazni.

When he reached Ghazni, Firdausi was taken to the court and he started writing his famous Shahnama. Mahmud of Ghazni promised him a gold piece for each couplet. It took Firdausi a very long time to complete the poem. He was inspired by its theme and wrote with such powerful eloquence, that the Shahnama has always been recognised as the greatest epic in Persian literature. When Firdausi finished the poem, he presented it to the Sultan. He had exerted his utmost strength in the production of the

epic. He looked like an old man, haggard and enfeebled by overwork; but the knowledge that he would be commended and rewarded by the Sultan filled him with great hopes. He no longer dreaded the future. He would never die of starvation. He would live in comfort for the rest of his life, and leave his beloved daughter a large fortune when he died. All these thoughts came to Firdausi when he entered the Sultan's presence. But disappointment was awaiting him. He received no reward from the Sultan, whose praises he had sung in the Shahnama. Sixty thousand gold pieces! Mahmud of Ghazni was not going to part with sixty thousand gold pieces. What did he care for his promise, for the poverty-stricken poet, or for the great epic? It was written and would live to tell the people in distant ages about the famous Mahmud-e-Ghazni, Firdausi was offered sixty thousand silver coins for his epic. He rejected the money and returned to Tus, broken-down in health and full of hatred and bitterness towards the Sultan. He longed to have his revenge. Setting to work immediately, Firdausi wrote a bitter satire on Mahmud of Ghazni, giving a full and vivid account of the Sultan's ingratitude and meanness. The satire was published with the Shahnama.

While Firdausi's fame spread as the greatest Persian poet of the age, the news of Sultan Mahmud as the meanest man of his time was also passed from mouth to mouth. When Mahmud heard of the satire, he was alarmed. He despatched two courtiers with sixty thousand pieces of gold to Firdausi's home in Tus. He was willing to give the money and save his own reputation, but it was too

late. As the courtiers reached Firdausi's home, they saw a bier being carried out. On enquiry, they learnt that Firdausi had died from ill-health, poverty, and sorrow. They tried to make his daughter accept the money, but she scorned to touch it.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ALL-INDIA WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AT DELHI.

BY

Srimathi Abayambal

The beautiful and historic City of Delhi, which has been the seat of so many kingdoms and civilisations was the fitting venue of a unique gathering of the women of India. This conference of women was unique in more than one respect. In the first place, such all-India gatherings of women are things never heard of before. Perhaps no one would have thought some years back that women possessed enough imagination, vision, ability and organising power to plan and conduct such a Conference. To this Conference were invited representatives and visitors from all Provinces of India, from as far South as Travancore and Cochin, to as far North as the

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Punjab and the United Provinces. Women delegates from 33 constituencies met, and they were 200 in number. Again, it was unique in that it met, not for any frivolous purposes of amusement or enjoyment, but to conduct deliberations on no less an important matter than education and the several knotty problems connected with it, which are engaging, perhaps baffling, even the best masculine brains. It was unique again in the courage and ability with which these problems were grasped and sought to be solved, and in the spirit of love and service which animated the women who gathered there, irrespective of differences in status, caste or community. Lastly, it was unique also in the splendour and beauty of the arrangements made and in the reception accorded to women. Vicereines, queens and princesses mixed on a common platform in a charming spirit of equality, with the women of India drawn from all classes and types; teachers, doctors, painters, musicians, wives, mothers and missionaries; Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, and Europeans, all animated with the one supreme desire of service to Mother India, so that they may all help in building a strong noble and a perfect Indian womanhood.

The opening ceremony was a

brilliant function, and was attended by members of the Council of State and the Assembly, by members of the Indian Statutory Commission and those of the Viceroy's Executive Council and several others filling important positions. It was opened by Lady Irwin, who made a very sympathetic and thoughtful speech and conducted that day's business in a charming and graceful manner. The Municipal welcome that followed this was equally impressive and grand and was also historic, for I do not think that women were at any time before given such public welcome by a Municipality. This was also attended by Lady Irwin. And the Sessions were concluded by a no less brilliant reception to the Delegates at the Viceregal Lodge, where Her Excellency moved freely with all.

I must say a few words about the splendid arrangements made for the accommodation and the comfort of the delegates. A spacious building was taken to accommodate the delegates, and the organisation and management of this Hostel was in the hands of two able, genial ladies of respectable position; who attended to

1928 MAY

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1928 May

Woman's Place In National Life.

The aim of education should be training in citizenship, beginning with the development of the individual and widening through home life to the community, and then to national and international consciousness.

We are living in an age of reconstruction. Many vital problems of life embodying nothing less than the destiny of the future are awaiting solution.

What interests us particularly at present, is the question of the advancement and elevation of Indian womanhood. The problem viz., what should be the position of the woman in the future civilization of India and what are the best methods of restoring her to her rightful place in life, is the widest and the most complicated one, requiring the most sober and disinterested consideration. The question is taken up now earnestly by our men, and, while not detracting from the work which they are carrying on for our amelioration, we must recognise that it will be difficult to do anything practical until and unless the women them-

selves wake up, give their serious thought to their needs, and, discuss and desire the various methods of work for their own uplift.

The primary aim and object of all education is the development of the faculties bestowed on man or woman by God. The fundamental principles, which compel a reconsideration and reform in the cultural position of women, are the same as those that apply to the other half of humanity. Woman is as much human as man, and in the order of creation she stands at the same stage of evolution as he. The same mystery of origin and the end of being attaches to her existence as in his case. The fundamental laws of human life, its emotions and faculties operate in her to the same degree as in man. The great problems of life and death are common to both of them, and the woman too has, above all, to equip herself for the progress of her soul. But, if her vision is narrowed down, her thought-faculties suppressed, and if her experience and knowledge of the world is limited, how can she understand the fundamental truths of life? From this view point, her claim for the highest education in all branches of knowledge and for all avenues of culture to be thrown open to her, becomes self-evident.

The wider her understanding of

life and the world, the deeper and broader will be her sympathy; the nobler her love, the more sober and tolerant will be her views.

Her place and importance in national life urges the necessity of her understanding her serious responsibility in the process of nation-building. In this, her contribution may be different from that of man, but no less necessary and imperative. Her share in the making of civilization is as great as that of man. "Woman cannot be pushed back for good in the mere region of the decorative..... for she is not less necessary in civilization than man, but possibly more so" (TAGORE).

The family is the unit of every nation, and it is the nursery of the future citizens of the country. The woman is the mother of the race and the citizens of the world are trained by her. The vigour, the moral and intellectual strength of the sons of the soil, depend upon the early environment which is provided for them in the home, and this in its turn depends upon the intellectual, physical and mental equipment of the woman. The family, the society and the nation are parts of one whole, and the efficient performance of our duties compels the understanding of

their inter-dependance. It is this understanding that goes by the name of true citizenship. It is, therefore, important for the welfare of the nation that woman should be so trained as to understand her influence over its destinies, and her responsibilities to the home, the society and the nation.

I just want to emphasise the meaning of the word citizenship, as used in connection with the education of the woman. I do not want to be understood by the term citizenship, that I want every woman to leave her immediate duties in the home and enter the dust and din of political life. Citizenship only means the duties and responsibilities of a woman or a man towards the society and the nation. A woman, who knows and understands her duties to the society and the nation, will make a better householder than one who is ignorant of it. And I do not say also that the present system of education is efficient to make her a good citizen. The education that now obtains for woman needs to be changed in several ways.

I may be considered to have spoken too generally and it is a legitimate question to ask now I would organise the education of girls to prepare them for citizenship.

as I have defined it. I may say briefly that, in addition to the usual subjects now taught in schools or as an alternative to some of them, provision must be made for subjects like Mothercraft, Civics, Fine Arts, the common ground of the great religions, History and Geography. As far as possible, instruction should be provided in the Vernacular. Otherwise, our women would grow up to be but faint and ineffectual copies of men.

It is true that home is the proper sphere of woman, but the word 'Home' is not generally properly understood. The idea of home should not be dissociated from all its relation to, and bearing upon, the society and the nation. The woman requires to be, not only a good householder, "but she must extend her radiance of love beyond its boundaries on all sides and even leave it to prove her woman's nature when the call comes to her. The human world is the woman's world, be it domestic, or be it full of the other activities of life." (Tagore).

The world is full of miseries, sorrows and inequalities. Woman's sympathy and co-operation is necessary to set them right. It may not be necessary for woman to leave

her immediate duties in search of such services. She has only to look around with a will to help and sympathise, to find a host of people waiting for her sympathy. For this, she has to extend her vision beyond the home. Woman's sphere of life and work is as wide as that of man's, she has got to make her own peculiar contribution in every field of life which is different from that of man; but it is also supplementary and co-ordinate. If she were not given liberal opportunities to receive the best training in education, her latent possibilities would lie dormant, and her vision become distorted and narrow.

Let us aim at the highest culture, which will give us the true value and right understanding of our life in this world and set us thinking of the divine laws. Let us be proud that we are women and let us assert and spiritualise the woman in us lest we should be mere chattels. We shall not lose sight of our national spirit and ideals, and we shall yet remain cosmopolitan in our sympathies, for humanity is one.

AN INDIAN LADY.



AN INDO-QUAKER WEDDING.

I had often wondered how this Indo-Quaker wedding would work itself out and had given it up as one of those charming dreams exquisite yet impracticable. Though all our traditional ideals of life and ancient songs hold up before us the charms of simplicity practised in the home, yet the Indian wedding is anything but simple; this is specially so when the family holds a distinguished place in society and has to keep up a prestige established by the magnificence of a bygone age.

As must be known to all Christians at least, silence is the usual feature of Quaker worship and Quaker Weddings. People can preach sermons if they like, can sing hymns if they want to, but often a Quaker group will be silent for a whole hour, apparently meditating, and then quietly disperse, thoroughly satisfied. A Quaker wedding begins and ends with a period of silent worship. No priest is required to take the vows from the couple: they have just to rise and holding each other's right hand they themselves declare that in the presence of God and the assembly they take each other as husband and wife.

But this Indo-Quaker wedding happened to be held in a small town, where the Christian community, though not large, was apt to dogmatise about church-going and priests performing ceremonies. Evidently, the Quaker wedding would be not only an innovation, but also a highly questionable innovation.

There was the large majority of Hindu friends to be considered. They could not imagine a wedding as simple as all that. No music! No priest! the wedding doesn't take half an hour on the whole! No grandeur about it! Why, what was the matter - such simplicity must hide some mystery! Such would be the talk.

How were all these diverse parties to be reconciled to this wedding, how was the sharp edge of their criticism to be blunted? For surely the sin of the simplicity and the lack of entertainment would be remembered against the family for several generations, and for generations they might be under a social and communal interdict! Along such lines, my thoughts often ran, not that I was any important actor in the coming events, but having always been a student of human nature, and also circumstances having afforded me the pleasure of associating intimately

with the family I could not but watch the course of events with interest. Theorists might declare that society should not be considered, but that only what one deems to be the right thing should be done. But in the river of our lives we have to mingle and inter-mingle with many another river, and all the wisdom of the world is never embarked on one single river! If not Society, there are always the patriarchs of the family to be considered.

Mr. P—was by common consent acknowledged the Master of ceremonies and he, with his far-famed diplomacy, set to work, first promising the couple that the wedding would be as simple as he possibly could make it. Mrs. P—with many a naive argument, tender lecture and soft coaxing, persuaded two pairs of bracelets and a necklace into their places on the Quaker bride; also she convinced her that certain conventions had to be observed, and made her promise to wear a white Benares Saree. After repeated threatening and lecturing, the groom wore a silk dhotie, 'half arm', and *angavasthiram*.

Of course, a pandal had to be erected and as usual was decorated artistically with plantain trees,

cocoanut bunches, and festoons of leaves and flowers. The bridal canopy was, according to custom, gorgeously and elegantly finished.

The great day dawned, and the Muhurtham was fixed at 8 A. M. To propitiate the muses for the lack of the usual brass band, a famous Veena player was engaged. To avert the wrath of the dogmatizing Christian Community, a Minister (who could not however get from Government the license for solemnising marriages!) was present. Before anything happened, he stood up and explained to the bewildered audience the simple ceremonies of a Quaker wedding. Then Basavappa having played a few choice pieces on the Veena, a little sister of the bridegroom, who is very gifted in Music, softly sang a Classical Tamil invocation, while the couple entered from their different houses, first the groom and after a suitable interval the bride, each escorted by a proper number of relatives. The song was followed by silent meditation for 10 minutes, then followed two or three songs by the little sister, while Basavappa played the Veena, with silent prayers and meditations between them. The bride and bridegroom then arose and holding their hands made their simple vows to each other, and the groom in keep-

ing with the Hindu custom, placed the "mangilum" round the bride's neck. This was followed by a silent prayer, a song by the sister, and a prayer offered by the Minister.

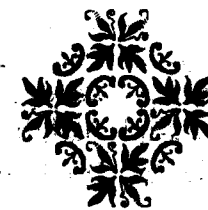
As this wedding was also an occasion of the blending of the orient and the occident, an English friend of the family proposed the toast to the bride, and it was duly responded to by her husband. And once again in keeping with ancient Eastern custom, the ancient members of the family and the parents of the bridegroom garlanded the couple and blessed them, while the latter rose and did their *Namaskaram* to them. Songs and Veena continued, while the sandal and flowers were distributed among the guests, and the rose water was sprinkled.

The presentation of the gifts was held in the evening of the first day and a most delightful little family ceremony was performed on the night of the second day. A beautiful branched brass lamp with 95 wicks was placed in the centre of the drawing room, and the whole

family gathered round it. After appropriate music, prayers and speeches, the bride went up to the lamp and lighted the five petals to the first lotus. The bridegroom followed and did the same. Then every member of that large family from the oldest to the youngest went up one by one, until every little petal of each lotus was a golden flame shedding its mellow beams, mingling almost mystically with the restrained melody of the musician and the subdued tingling of the Veena strings.

Indian convention demands that the marriage festivities should last at least three days, and lays down unwritten rules for sumptuous banquets for each day. Of course *Payasam* (or as it is jocularly called *Pavanasam*), *jillabis* and *laddoos* had their turn, as also the *pulow*. In spite of Quakarism, irrepressible music parties, fun and eating had their sway the three days.

ANNAM.



Visvacarma or the Carpenter's Cave at Ellora.

It is a place of mystery and romance, and the atmosphere is steeped in the greatness of our ancestors and adorned by their stupendous perseverance and their loving service. Religion has done and undone many things in the centuries that have gone; at Ellora, it has surpassed itself in this neighbourhood.

During one of our walks here we came to a part of the road facing a semi-circle of hills. There is a mosque facing this spot. There is a very good echo here and it seems to come from the mosque. Our party greatly enjoyed calling out and singing here. We took Kailas first in our explorations, then the fifteen temples in the southern horn, and lastly the temples. I think there are twenty-six, in the northern horn. I cannot go into any detailed description of the temples here, but will tell you as well as I can of things I saw and heard which have remained clearly in my mind. The attendant Brahmin tells one repeatedly that the God Krishna ever stood at the right hand of the workers and helped them. Indeed in the oft-repeated tales, the help of God to man is made a very tangible element of success. Our ancient fore-fathers and the hoary Temples of Ellora give us as a gift this thought,—that men may do all things through God who strengtheneth them. We know the story of the old blind man, Dhartarashtra by name, who had one brother and a hundred sons. The sons were named the Kuroos and the brother Pandoo. Brahma greatly loved the old man, and so ordered that the world should be

given to the brothers. Disputes arose and at last very bitter feelings. At last Pandoo resigned his sovereignty, and departed from the face of mankind accompanied by his faithful wife Kuntée. They wandered through forests, across great rivers and climbed over many weary mountain heights. At length, weary but strong of heart, with minds clean of bitter memories and bodies strengthened by combat with air and water, they found themselves on the hillsides of Ellora. Behind them stood the granite rocks, below them rolled fair fields and verdant uplands, above them were the cloudless blue skies. Pandoo and Kuntée had found their home. Here, five sons were born to them, men of mighty stature, holy by inheritance, simple in life, inspired by God. It may be that they sheltered in some small natural cave. It may be, to please their mother and father, they prepared for them by their skill and strength a rock mansion more spacious than the one they lived in. It may be that Kuntée and Pandoo, when they entered the new mansion, were filled with thankfulness and devotion as parents are wont to be, when children are dutiful and excellent. Of these simple and eternal emotions of home-life, we find no record and no remembrance, but of one thing we are sure, that from serving their parents lovingly and faithfully, they stepped out into the higher service of God. To please the God Krishna, they began to cut out in the solid granite rock the immemorial Temples of Ellora. Krishna greatly loved the brothers Yudhister, Bheem, Arjun, Nakool and Sahadev. At their request he granted a night which should last for a year. In the calm,

cool, quiet of this long night, the caves of Ellora were fashioned, nobly conceived, painstakingly perfected. It was a gift of service freely given for the love of God. When the work was completed, day broke and wonderful was the work of their hands; they saw it and were rejoiced. We can picture the gratitude and the reverence and awe with which they made their first sacrifice of prayer and praise in the great hall of Kailas, knowing that God had been with them, otherwise, they could not have accomplished so great a work. Pandoo, it is said, for his piety, and patience under affliction, was removed to heaven and the five brothers went forth to the villages and country near by, to invite men to come and worship with them in the Temples.

The architect employed by the Pandoo brothers was Visvacarma. He was the Vulcan of Hindu Mythology. Many wonderful inventions are attributed to him of weapons, instruments and chariots. He was the inventor of self-moving chariots for the Gods. If we could believe it, tanks and motors and flying machines were nothing strange to this god among men. The Temples of Ellora were among his handiwork, and out of these there is one called by his name, the Temple of Visvacarma or the Carpenter's Cave. When I entered this handsome vaulted chapel, I instinctively sat down on the stone door-step, and gave myself up to the spirit of rest. This amazing cavity is hewn out of the solid rock, penetrating 130 feet into it. The vaulted, circular roof is upheld by ranges of pillars, with a passage or small aisle between them. A series of

small figures representing Visvacarma's servants forms a frieze above the pillars. The roof is arched, and from the sides project small beams of rack or rafters, arched and extending over the whole of the orbicular roof. The entire breadth is ribbed in this way. At the eastern end there is an immense piece of detached rock forming an altar. This daghoba is 15 ft. in diameter and nearly 27 ft. high, and in the front, there is the seated figure of Visvacarma, which is 11 ft. high. There is an attendant on either side, and over the figure is the Bodhi tree with Gandharvas on each side. The story goes that after the Tin Thal had been completed, Visvacarma began the Don Thal and wished to surpass all his former works, by making a grand cave here. Soon after he began the work, he crushed his fingers, and since then the cave is also called, by the common people, Dukhiya Ghar or the House of Pain. The legend goes that the great leader crushed his fingers and his feet by accident, and laying aside his implements, sat down in anguish of spirit and pain of body. After a time, the news spread among the workers, of the terrible misfortune that had occurred. With one accord they streamed out of the caves and held a panchayat. At last they hurried away, and in a short time there rose above the unconscious leader, an elegant hut. The branches of the Tari Palm formed the arched roof. Plantain trees bereft of their leafy heads formed graceful pillars, and the women and girls wove garlands of leaves and flowers as a frieze above the pillars. Right round they sat, his faithful, loving servants. They sat, as he did, in the attitude of prayer.

and prayed the prayer of the ages that had gone, and the ages that were to come: "Would God that I could bear this for my beloved," It is said, that in himself. Visvacarma experienced the renewing of his dauntless spirit. The streams of blood in his wounded hands and feet were assuaged, and after his long trance he rose refreshed and rested. Then he beheld the hut which love had fashioned, and looked upon the wounds, which compassion and sympathy had healed, and there came to his heart a great peace, and to his understanding the knowledge, that the fruit of the spirit of self-sacrifice, was the priceless gift, these mighty excavations had brought to him, and to his most humble servants. To make the thought immortal, he fashioned after the fashion of the Jhepra his followers had built, the temple of Visvacarma, which carries to mortals its message to-day.

The subject of Ellora is inexhaustible. Thoughts upon thoughts crowd into the mind and there is no end to the fact and fancy which cling to this wonderful place.

Beautiful and perfect as the carvings, the truth which lies behind them is most tangible and evident. They speak of courage and endurance and love and self-sacrifice, and are worthy monuments of our great fore-fathers.

Before I close, I may be pardoned if I add a few homely details. A Brahmin accompanied us to most of the temples, which are kept in a very orderly state, though there are now

no worshippers, no music, no praise, no offerings of flowers or of fruit. The temples of Ellora are full only of the ghosts of the past, peopled only by spirit visitants, articulate only of eternal thoughts. One day I told our Brahmin friend the story of two American journalists, I had read in a story magazine. Two worn engines lay on a side track. They were scrap iron only and hardly worth any thing. The two journalists saw them and it seemed to them the two old engines might yet be put to use. They bought up the engines for a mere song, interviewed a few railroad directors, and advertised a show of an actual railway collision. Excursion trains were chartered, refreshment places sprang up on the railroad track, and the two old locomotives played their part valiantly in the "Great Collision Show". The journalists, needless to say, scooped in a pile, and every one went home rejoicing at the experience of a real thrill. I suggested to the Brahmin a light railway to Ellora from the line, only ten miles away, a refreshment room and wide advertisement on a liberal scale all over India. The Brahmin looked at me in a vague manner and thinking he could not understand, I suggested a smaller scheme. I asked him why he did not get a camera and take photos, and sell them, say at 4 annas each. This time he smiled and he said 4 annas is the price of a seer of jawari, no one would pay that sum for a scrap of paper.

Come and see for yourself, come and learn for yourself, lessons from the past and the present at Ellora.

Our Children's Pages NANDINI AND HER DOGS.

Budgy was a huge big dog. He looked like a small lion, with his long brownish-grey hair, his big innocent eyes, and his silky ears.

Nandini, a little girl with black ringlets hanging all round her face, was the proud owner of this dog. She was a very sweet and pretty little girl; but she had one big fault, and that was a very bad temper. When she was in a temper, no one could do anything with her. Neither her father's threats nor her mother's coaxings were of any avail when she was in a temper, and in vain did they try to cure her of it.

Nandini had another little dog called Moti. She was a tiny weeny powder puff of a thing. She was pure white, and was very proud of her beautiful curly tail. Her habit was to come running up to Nandini as soon as she had finished her bath, and shake herself, and yelp, and rush about the room, until her little mistress noticed her, and petted her and said; "Good dog, Moti, very pretty little dog."

Budgy did not have much respect for Moti. He liked her, and was kind to her; but he despised her just a little bit; for Moti was so tiny, and he was so big. How could a huge big fellow ever have any respect for a tiny creature like Moti? But Budgy was never rude to her. Nay, he had the kindest heart going, and, even when Moti sometimes

cheekily went and took his bone, he would only look on with beseeching eyes, until his mistress took pity on him, and gave him another bone. Moti was sometimes really too perky for words, and I wonder how Budgy ever kept his temper with her; but the fact remains that he never lost it.

Both the dogs adored their little mistress, and Nandini used to love to take them out for long walks. She had a little *chokra* called Ananda, who used to be in charge of her dogs. He was only nine years himself; but he was extremely proud of his charges. Nandini had strict orders from her mother that she was not to go out into the fields without Ananda.

One morning, Nandini got up in one of her bad moods. The dragon called bad-temper seemed to have her in his grip. She felt very cross and sulky. She gave her ayah a great deal of trouble, and would not eat her breakfast. Because Moti made a little fuss about begging for her food, she smacked her, until Moti, surprised at the harsh treatment, sulked in a corner. She would not say "good morning" to Budgy, and that big dog thought he had done something to displease his little mistress, and worried himself a great deal.

After breakfast, the dogs and Ananda asked her to go for a walk, but she said, "go away, you naughty creatures. I don't like you. I am going out by myself." Before any one could say anything, she was off

like a flash of lightning, across the green fields in front of the house. Ananda ran after her, and Budgy, thinking something had gone wrong, chased Ananda. Moti followed, panting, with her little pink tongue hanging out.

Thus the chase continued, and great was the excitement. Nandini's bad temper increased, and she screamed out to Ananda not to follow her. Suddenly, there was a dead stop. Nandini gave a shrill shriek, and stared in front of her. A huge big cow, with her eyes ablaze, and her horns shining in the sun, came crashing towards her. In another moment Nandini would have been gored to death. Nandini's face became deathly white, as she stared at the raging creature in front of her. But, there was a loud bark from behind, and in a moment Budgy gave one leap and caught the cow by the jaw. In the meanwhile, little Moti gave a tiny yelp, and hung on to the enraged cow's tail. The cow was now really wild with rage; but her onrush on Nandini was stopped, and the little girl was safe.

The cow gave one kick with her hind legs, and Moti went flying to the nearest ditch. There she lay whining and crying for help. In the meanwhile, Budgy hung on to the cow's jaw with all his might. It was bleeding profusely, and the cow, furious with the pain, rushed bellowing round the fields, trying to extricate herself, and hitting Budgy against any object that she came across. But Budgy, although dazed and badly hurt, held on, and

never relaxed his grip. Nandini and Ananda thought he would die; but what could two little children do against a raging cow? Just when the situation was most terrible, however, the servants came rushing out of the house, alarmed with all the noise they had heard. They rushed to the rescue of poor old Budgy, caught the cow, and dragged the dog, now almost senseless, from the jaw of the panting animal. In the meanwhile, Nandini went and carried poor little Moti from the ditch, and it was indeed a sad procession that marched homewards.

"What is the matter? What has happened?" asked Nandini's mother

"Oh mother! it was all my fault," cried Nandini. "I was in a bad temper, and now, on account of me, my poor Budgy is going to die. He is bleeding to death now."

The mother smiled sadly, and went towards the dog. Budgy was lying senseless on the ground; but she saw that he was only stunned and not badly hurt. She sent for the Veterinary doctor, and had Budgy bandaged and cleaned, and all the while Nandini sat crying her eyes out in a corner, thinking that her beloved dog had died on account of her.

When her mother came back to her, she looked up with terrified eyes, expecting to hear the dreadful words, "your dog is dead." But instead, her mother smiled, and said "Budgy is now nearly all right, Nandini, so don't cry."

Nandini heaved one great sigh of relief, and came running towards her mother.

"No, don't come and fall on me," said her mother. "I am angry with you. I have told you over and over again not to lose your temper; but you have been very disobedient, and have never controlled yourself. Did you see that raging cow running towards you with its horrid flashing eyes? Well, you are like that when you are in a temper. Can you imagine how your face becomes? You deserved to have Budgy killed today, and it is mere luck that he is still alive."

Nandini hung down her head. She was now really ashamed of herself. But she had a sweet nature, when she was not in a temper, and after a minute, she came and fell on her mother and begged to be forgiven. "I will never, never, lose my temper again, mother dear," she cried. She then bounded off to see Budgy. He was lying on straw in a corner, and when he saw her, he wagged his tail and looked at her happily. She gave him some milk, and sat down beside him. Little Moti came and rested in her lap.

Budgy was up again in two days, and Nandini and her dogs were once more happy. Nandini kept her word to her mother, ever afterwards and never again lost her temper.

OUR NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

(Selected)

Marbled Paper.

An Easy and Fascinating Craft that can be Utilised in a Number of Colourful Ways.

Would it not rest you, in the round of commonplace duties, if for a few moments now and then you could create a thing of beauty quite your own, a design never before made and impossible to repeat? The door is wide open for you if you will but enter and try.

Some people call these designs accidents, but they are no more accidents than is hoar frost or a fine sunset. Who has not pictured mighty things in the cloud mountains drifting and changing on a summer's day? Is not a vision, caught so for a fleeting moment, more your own than any man-made painting of it, though more often than not the artist must first catch it upon the canvas to make us open our eyes and see the beauty there?

In showing these papers to a great number of people, I have found that invariably the artists accept them for just what they are—a piece of paper having upon its surface an intricate design in colour which is stimulating and beautiful. But the layman always at first exclaims, "What a fascinating design, and isn't the colour lovely!" and at once, upon the heels of this, "But what are they for?"

And so I carried the experiment a little farther, taking one that to my mind looked like a range of rugged mountains with a sky beyond. I painted

with water colour a gnarled tree against it in the foreground, and upon showing this paper first, before I said a word about how it was made, every layman immediately accepted the whole as a definite painting, never questioning the sky as sky, nor the rocks as rocks. Seeing one familiar object which there was no mistaking, the imagination at once built up every detail.

In the same way, most of us will see beauty of colour and design in the paper, once it is used to decorate some object accepted as either useful or purely decorative; so I have suggested some few ways in which the paper may be used for covering boxes. But it is also extremely decorative as wall panels or as panelling for a screen.

I have made hundreds of these sheets, each one leading me into a new world of enchantment and beauty. I never tire of them, because I can never exhaust them of suggestions. I see new pictures each time I look. On some of them Nature has thrown together the image of a mountain range, and the design, the intricate pattern, and the colour harmonies are more beautiful than man can create.

But apart from any pictorial beauty which they may have, they are always exquisitely balanced in pattern and colour. Natural law governs the beauty of design and harmony of colour.

The process is a simple one, that of mixing a few oil colours, separately, in a thin oil, then sprinkling a few drops of each upon a pan of water, stirring the water vigorously a moment, and catching the design so made upon a piece of paper by simply dropping the paper down upon the surface. The moment the paper touches the surface of the water, the design is caught.

One paper never removes all the floating colour, but when a second or third paper is dropped upon the water, more colour having been added, the design becomes more delicate both in texture and colour. If too much colour is floated, the paper picks off so much at times that this spreads and runs over the design after the paper is lifted, destroying much of its beauty.

I have made as many as fifty pictures, using but the same four colours in each of them, and had them entirely different in colour when finished. You can regulate the colour, of course, using sometimes more cool colours, such as blue or green, and sometimes more warm colours, such as yellow and red. Once the paper is wet it will not take the oil, therefore it must be allowed to dry and then you can again dip any portion of it, or the whole, and add more colour and a stronger design.

Now as to materials. In making the large screen panels, I needed a large surface of water, and so I used the bathtub. (A scouring powder will clean it afterwards with very little trouble.) A dishpan all of us have, so I would advise starting with it. Fill it to within 2 in. of the top with cold water.

For colour you need only ordinary house paint; small cans of about four bright colours, a red (vermilion), a blue (ultramarine), a yellow (ochre), a green (any bright green). Of course, later, you can add, if you become interested, two or three shades of each colour. To begin with, four colours are enough.

Next, get four old saucers, a pliable steel kitchen knife, or an artist's palette knife, if you have one, some turpentine or paraffin oil, and a bit of old cloth.

Every kind of paper, from thin typewriter paper or pad paper to heavy

cardboard, seems to work. If the paper is too thin, it is hard to handle when wet. I like, a pure white paper best, although paper of different colours and shades takes the design quite as well.

Now, reach down into the can of blue with the knife, and lift as much of the thick paint out as will stay on the knife-end, and put it in the saucer. So with the red, yellow, and green, being careful to wipe each colour from the knife, so that they do not get mixed. Then into each saucer pour enough turpentine or paraffin to half-fill the saucer. Dissolve each colour thoroughly with the turpentine, by mixing it with the knife end.

Next, have the paper near cut into sizes not too large to fit into the pan. With the knife dip up some blue and shake it off upon the water, wipe the knife, and do the same with the other colours. Some colours spread over the surface of the water as soon as they touch it, others remain in separate floating drops. If the paper is dropped upon the water now, the design is rather monotonous; so first stir the water vigorously with the knife, and at once drop the paper down upon it. The design is fixed upon it immediately, so lift it at once and lay it aside, the painted side up.

Remember this: The more rapidly you work in almost every case the better the design, for if you slowly move the floating colour around, trying to direct it about into a place you think it should be, the less it will become a natural design, and therefore it will be less beautiful. Also, in a very few minutes the colours will gather together in solid patches, and when the paper picks them up they will spread and run, until the design is covered.

Do not judge the result at once, for wet paper is always darker than dry, and you do not fully see the colour or pattern until it dries. It is not necessary to place the paper just so each time. I

have made a great variety of patterns by holding the paper by one edge and lowering it edgewise into the pan, moving it from side to side rapidly, or by spinning it so that it is revolving when it strikes the surface. The only thing you must not do is to get the paper wet before using. When it dries you can dip it again over the first pattern.

For purely decorative uses it will, if you wish, add to the beauty if after the paint is on the water, and before stirring, you shake a little gold or silver powder on the surface of the water. This will float dry without mixing with the turpentine.

Pretty effects can be produced by covering boxes with marbled paper. A pair of sharp scissors, a pencil, and a pot of good paste are the only tools necessary for this fascinating task.

For square and oblong boxes,

it is only necessary to cut the paper about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. larger all round than the surface desired to be covered, place the lid to be covered in the centre on the plain side of the paper, then bring the paper up to cover each side, turning the surplus into the lid and securing it with paste. Fold the paper at the ends of the lid as you would in making a neat parcel.

For the round and oval lids, place the lid to be covered down on to the plain side of the paper and pencil round carefully before cutting out. If the box to be covered has a gilt or black edge, this can be left to show just beyond the new covering, or a fresh strip of plain paper can be pasted over the edge to give this effect. Cover the sides of the oval and round lids by pasting a strip round the width required.

Two small square boxes can be made by carefully folding a square of paper. These can be made any size desired, and the finished box will always be one-third of the size of

every comfort of the guests with cheerfulness and smiles. They were volunteers, and most willingly left their home and family for about a week to undertake this work. The delegates were given free hospitality out of the funds collected from the members of the Reception Committee. Mrs S. R. Das, wife of the Law member and the President of the Reception Committee, was very keen on the success of the Conference, and no work was too high or too low for her to make the delegates feel at home. In short, we were given an Imperial welcome, befitting Imperial Delhi.

The Secretary of the Conference is an able, energetic and popular person. Mrs Sarojini Naidu and Mrs Cousins were the soul and the guiding spirits of the Conference, and I may say that no man could have conducted the business more ably than they did.

Next, to come to the business part of the Conference, if you go through the resolutions framed and passed by the Conference, you will be impressed by the breadth of vision and deep understanding that underlie them. Stress was laid on the social, intellectual, physical, moral and aesthetic aspects of education. Education can be of no

value, if it does not develop in harmony the several sides of the personality of an individual. A carefully mapped-out system of education is even more important for women than for men; for the destiny of the future nation and the happiness of the present are in the hands of women. So, it is important that they should be properly educated.

The delegates assembled in the Conference spoke vehemently and in a united voice on the importance of Compulsory Primary Education, and the stopping of early marriage, which destroys the vitality of the nation. Lack of education and the prevalence of early marriage are depriving women of their full enjoyment of life.

The speeches made by Lady Irwin and H. H. the Begum of Bhopal reveal a touching sympathy for the present disabilities of the Indian women, and they both lay stress on education as the remedy for all ills.

Her Highness the Begum is a magnanimous, highly-cultured and lofty-minded queen, 'a womanly Queen and a Queenly woman' as Mrs Naidu put it; Her knowledge of, and interest in, education is something wonderful. Her pre-

sence at the Conference as its President lent great dignity to it. In spite of her age, she takes a keen interest in the uplift of women.

Her Highness the Begum very graciously invited some of the delegates from the Native states to her palace after the sessions were over, and I was one of them. In the course of the interview, she discussed the educational conditions of Bhopal and the rest of India.

I visited Bhopal on my way back as a State guest, and Her Highness desired that we should see the girls' institutions there. I also visited Sanchi in Bhopal State, a place of historic importance.

The Conference was not one of mere speeches. A proof of the fact that those who assembled meant business is furnished by the several Sub-Committees appointed to carry the resolutions into effect, and the opening of an All-India Women's Educational Fund, which was headed by a donation of Rs. 5000 as a first instalment by the Begum of Bhopal. Lady Irwin has also promised her help. In fifteen minutes, the fund mounted up to Rs. 30,000. Most of the provinces have contributed their quota.

The delegates - who were 200 in number - were taken one afternoon on a visit to the Legislative Assembly. Curious to say, just at that time, the Age of Consent Bill was moved and discussed. As expected, the question was shelved, and the ladies were not satisfied with the Government members' reply that a Committee would be appointed to investigate the whole matter. The women came out burning with indignation, and determined to arrange a deputation to the Viceroy, to urge their views on the question of marriage. This deputation consisted of 20 women, and waited on his Excellency, the next day. The Rani of Mundi read the memorial, which in unmistakable terms condemned the custom of child-marriage and asked for the legal age of marriage to be raised to 16 in the case of girls and 21 for boys. The Viceroy promised his sympathy, and so did the other members. The women learnt the old lesson once again that self-help is the best help, and that in matters touching their welfare they must bestir themselves and rise to the occasion.

the square used, *i. e.*, a 6-in. square makes a 2-in. box.

In folding the square, to get the folds even, first fold the square from corner to corner each way, crease well, then fold corner into the centre, crease and open, then fold each corner again over to the crease last made. This should result in your having a square of paper creased in even squares diagonally.

To cut away, slots and slits must

be made in the corners for fastening the box, cut your square exactly by bringing opposite corners together, folding back the slit edges on the one corner to enable it to be passed through the slot on the other.

These small light boxes are excellent as sweet containers and made in various sizes would provide at very little cost a most attractive addition for a sweet stall at a bazaar.

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