

upon the palace, which we were ap-proaching. It is built upon a hill, and presents an extremely picturesque apdancing in the shadow of the trees. At a bend of the road an exclamation of delight broke from each of us simul-taneously as we gazed upon one of the most glorious scenes it has ever been pearance, as ther upon ther rises its succession of domes and watch towers, in bewildering confusion. The entire my privilege to witness. Glistening in the white light of the moon lay the magnificent palace of the Rajah of Dymtoliah, its innumerable marble building is of white stone, exquisitely carved while in place of windows are rows of arches, leading out on to ve-randas, or the flat roofs of the build-ings below. domes, and minarets, with their gilded jinnacles, standing out like a bas relief, against the deep saphire of the sky. Built upon a slight elevation, in the de-

Our conductors led us to the princlpal entrance, where our cyce took charge of the carriage, while we folceptive light it appeared without foun-dation, as if suspended in air. lowed our guides through an archway into an open courtyard, paved with tiles of various colors, in the center of which was a large fountain and tank Instinctively I recalled a stanza from surrounded by palms and ferns. Here were seated several native gentlemen, reclining in bamboo chairs, chatting and smoking their hookahs, who eyed us curiously, but did not attempt to rise. The rajah, however, upon observing us, advanced with many salaams and protestations of pleasure at our visit, the rest continuing their smoking as complacently as ever. He walked with us to the further end of the courtyard making enquiries after the health of different members of the misston, whom he had met, and begged our acceptance of two long strings of unpolished amber beads, which gave us great pleasure, not only on account of their value, but as souvenirs of our Taking leave of us he returned to his companions, while we followed our guide up a flight of marble steps into an immense reception hall. The floor, as in the case of the outer court, was paved with mosale, but of still finer marbles. The ceiling, the center of which was in the form of a dome, was built of carved sandal wood, emitting an exquisite odor. The roof was supported by square pillars, composed ight slender columns of different kinds of stone, in contrasting colors, the base and cap stones being alternately of black and pure white marble. Upon he walls were hung reed mats, of vaous designs and from the ceiling large lamps, of curious workmanhip, inlaid with medallions of different olored glass. This auditorium was surrounded by arches, leading into smaller courts, and ante rooms. The intrances to the latter were covered with curtains, made of reeds or beads. one of these our guide stopped and apped his hands. Immediately a young man appeared (a eunuch) who led us through a long vinding passage into a smaller courtyard, around which were situated the enana khannas, or women's apartents On entering one of these, a most picuresque scene met our view. Reclin-ng upon the floor on Turkish rugs, and ushlons, covered with tiger skins, were n or twelve beautiful girls, gorgeousattired in soft sliks and handsomelbroidered satins. Upon their heads ey wore gauge vells worked with gold read, beetles wings and even preous stones, They lay with a grace peculiar to astern women, with one arm resting pon a large bolster, the richness of heir attire and surroundings adding not a little to the beauty of their luseyes, long, silky hair, and warthy complexions,



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direct from Santa Claus, came to collect them!

Supper was then served in the dining supper was then served in the damage room, and upon returning to the parlor we found in the middle of the floor an immense Christmas tree, beautifully decorated, and ablaze with light. It was an event never to be forgotten by the youngsters, who danced around the

the youngsters, who danced around the tree with joyous shouts. But the great event of the evening was yet to come, for my husband, dressed to impersonate Santa Claus, en-tered the room, staggering under the weight of his sack of presents, containing just the article most desired by each child. e of the smaller ones were a little at first but soon made frightened friends with him and crowded round in eager expectation. When all the gifts had been distributed, he sat down while clambered upon his knees, and they plied him with the extraordinary questions that only infant minds can conjure up, while we children of larger growth laughed and enjoyed the fun s much as the youngest. In their childish innocence they kissed him, and thanked him for their toys, telling him about their little friends, and what they wanted for Christmas. Finally, he said: "It was his very busiest night, so he must leave them," and following him out on to the veranda, they watched him mount his little carriage drawn by two white shetland ponies and disappear in the distance. As long as his vehicle was in sight, he was foilowed by gleeful shouts, and good-byes accompanied by most cordial invita-tions to come back next Christmas, and

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ing like fre through my veins. Noth-ing will appease the gods, but your life, or mine, and, mighty God 4f the Christians, what is mine conpared with yours? Live! Live! Wonderful, merciful God! Live to bless the chil-dren of men. Do not tarry, Sahib, go, continue your journey. I see the little children waiting with outstretched palms. Gurrab Pawwah (motestor of palms. palms. Gurrah Pawwah, (protector of the poor), will you not heed their plead-ing cries? Go, wonderful, merciful God! Fill their hands with your gracious gifts. But before you depart, grant me this one request, promise me, that dying I may live with you forever! The Mem-Sahib said, if I would forgive the Maharance, you were so gracious thatall ignorant as I am, great Christian God-you would love me, and take me to live with you. She cannot harm me now, and I will forgive her, so that you may love me. "I do not know how the Christians worship but I do love you, Mighty God of Love. With these words she proc-trated herself at his feet, then rising, passionately kissed the border of his Thinking the fright had bereft her of reason, and knowing the awful rapidity with which the poison from the bite of a cobra acts upon the system, he was about to leave to procure medical aid, when catching hold of his gown, she cried wildly! "Oh, Sahib, don't leave me, it is growing dark, I can scarcely see you. Gurrah Pauwah, (protector of the poor), do not leave me now, but take me with you to your beautiful home! Acting upon this sugestion, thinking it was to our home she wanted to go, he gathered her in his arms and bors her to me. . . .

sprang to her feet crying: "Sahib! Sahib! You shall not risk your life for me, nothing can save me! Already I feel the deadly venom cours-ing like fire through my yelns. Noth-

The Holy City And once again the scene waschanged, New earth there seemed to be I saw the Holy City Beside the tideless sea. The light of God was on its streets, The gates were opened wide And all who would might enter, And no one was denied.

These last words dispelled my reverie, as I remembered that into the beau-tiful acre of palaces before me a European foot is rarely permitted to tread. It has been said "There is nothing so sweet as the unattainable." In any case, from that time forth I was seized with a burning desire to see the interior of the home of this mighty Indian prince.

I wondered especially how the women occupied their time, and, if they could possibly be as happy as I? Although knew them to be surrounded by every luxury, they were kept in such uiter seclusion, if one might judge from reports, that they were little better than prisoners it seemed to me. Occasion-ally we met one of the ladies of the Zenana going down to the Ganges to perform her ceremonial ablutions, but, she was closely concealed in her nalkee, which was covered on all sides by thick curtains, and even then she would be carried into the water in her sedan chair and return to her home in her wet clothes, so immodest would it be for her face to be seen, however closely colled

I tried to gain a little information my ayah (or native maid-servant) but she could tell me nothing, the daily lives of these great ladies being as jealously guarded from the gaze, as those of a royal household in Europe.

In connection with the military hospital at Serangpore, is a corps of de-voted nurses, who make a practice of visiting the native women in times of sickness, and, while it would be abso lutely impossible for a male physician to obtain admission, rich natives often send for these ladles to attend their wives, and children, thus making an

opening for missionary work. The following day I called upon Miss ook, the president of the Ladies Medical mission, and in the course of conversation expressed my curiosity to visit the Rajah's zanana. She way highly amused at my enthusiasm, and kindly promised to call for me on the

occasion of her next visit. True to her word, a few days later she came. As is usually the case, the time could not have been more inop It was the day before Christ portune. mas, and she found me busily engaged in preparations for a large childrens party, which was to be held at our house that evening, but the desire was irresistible, and I would allow no obstacle to stand in the way of its gratification

Accordingly we started off in a high state of excitement, so far as I was concerned, and soon reached the en trance to the Rajah's palace. The grounds were surrounded by a high cactus hedge, so that but little could seen of the gardens from the road. but the gates were a modern importation, beautifully formed of twisted brass and iron. I had often caught glimpses of the park in passing this entrance, but had no idea of its extent beauty until this visit, and turally it would be still re attractive in the luxurnaturally more of its summer garb. By gate stood a majestic Brahman sentinel, who received us with great suavi-ty of manner, but beneath his courteous exterior, I fancled I could detect a sentiment of distrust, as if in his opinion "Feringues" had already made sufficient inroads upon their territory, without invading the sacred limits of their prince's domains. However, enering his little pagodalike sentr he beat upon a metal gong, when in answer to his summons two natives ap-peared who at his request conducted us through the grounds, by running on

each side of our carriage. The gardens were laid out with broad

The air of the room was redolent with berfume, and through an arch on one ide, could be seen a conservatory, containing a choice collection of tropical plants. In this a fountain was playing, te gentle splashing of the water seem-ag to lull our senses into harmony with the restful spirit of the place. From the ceiling hung lamps of different shades, casting a roseate hug

ver the entire apartment, so undefined one that it reminded me rather of a unrise than any definite color. On ebony pedestals, inlaid with silver

and mother-of-pearl, stood jardiniers containing palms and flowering shrubs, nd in the conservatory birds were flying about as fearlessly as if it were a part of the beautiful garden of Eden. were As we approached the ladies rose with sclamations of joy and crowded round s, clapping their hands gleefully, and Ill talking at once. I, being a stranger, as naturally an object of curiosity nd after asking my name they repeatit, one after another, laughing merly the while, some of them adding dischlevously the English word "pretty" as a prefix. Then, when they thought my attention was diverted they ouched my clothing with the tips of their fingers, laughing like children when they found I had discovered their

The gardens were laid out with broad hawna, and artistically shaped flower-beds. In the latter were now blooming every variety of Chrysanthemum, and

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nothing further to work upon and they preferred to make the pleasure last as ong as possible. For us, to whom the hours of the day are all too short, to accomplish the amount of work we have to do, it seems wonderful that these women can endure such idleness and be happy. After a while refreshments

served, consisting of fruit and "Hull-wahsone," a delicious sweetmeat, brought from Cabul, which is much enjoyed by the natives, and baskets of which they insisted upon our taking home with us. When we had done jus tice to these good things the ladies again crowded round clamoring for stories which Miss Cook was in the habit of relating to them. Today she narrated the history of the birth of Christ, telling in what manner we should celebrate the event the following day. They appeared very much inter-ested in the story of "the Christian God," as they called Him, and made her

repeat it several times as if never tired of hearing it. While she was talking I had time to take further note of our surroundings. In the center of the room upon divan, lounged an extremely beautiful woman, but she carried herself with an air of haughtiness which detracted, in my eyes, somewhat from her grace This was the favorite Rance, or quee

of the rajah; so great was her influence with him that the rest gave her the ti tle of Maharanee, or Great Ranee, al though there were three other wives equal in rank with herself. Near the entrance of the conservatory noticed an ayah seated up upon the floor with a baby upon her knee Beside her, playing with the child, sat a young girl of about 17 years of age, whose face immediately attracted my attention. She was dressed in pure white, even the edge of her chuddah, or cell, was devoid of even a border. She also wore no ornaments, a marked contrast to the rest of the ladies, who had them not only in their ears, and upon

their arms and fingers, but upon thei toes, and ankles, and even on a gold ring through their nostrils! Her face wore evidence of remarkable intelligence, and as she laughed, and talked, with the little one, the variation

of her expression was wonderful to be hold. Once she turned, but catching sight of the Maharanee, her face assumed a look of such fierce hatred, that thrill of horror ran through my velns Here was a girl, I thought, that should her life be spared, would grow into an influential woman, in spite of the narrowness of her sphere, and a powerful instrument for good, or evil, as the cir-cumstances of her life should mould her. While Miss Cook was talking, she still sat apart, playing with the baby but I noticed that not a word escaped her, I naturally concluded that she was a young mother, and this her firstborn, and thought what a beautiful pic-

ture they presented. After awhile Miss Cook suggested that as this was my first visit the ladies should take me to see their apartments a proposal which gave me much pleasure. Certainly the rajah spared no expense, to make the habitation of the feminine portion of his household, as beautiful, as possible. At every turn, expressions of admiration burst from my lips, and the ladles were no less de-

lighted than I to see my enjoyment. It seemed to me though that the palace was more like a large hotel than a private dwelling place, for not only was this the home of the rajah, and his family, but of his brothers, and even his uncles, and their families. The men, however, all inhabited this side of the palace, though occupying different sultes of rooms, but they were constantly in social intercourse one with an-

other. In spite of the elegance of the draperies and furniture, I could not but feel amused, to see articles in daily use in

our homes exhibited here as ornaments. For instance, upon a handsome little ebony table, stood a large silver coffe haranee pot, and upon another a set of parlor fire-irons in their brass stand. To still

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further protect these curiosities, they were covered by tall glass shades. In one room was a plano, or rather a spinet, upon which, although it was horribly out of tune, I played. Their wonder was boundless, and still more so, when I played some melodies with which they were familiar, and crowding ing: round me, they begged me to show them how to "make music," evidently imagining that plano playing was a purely mechanical process like turning the handle of a hand organ!

When we returned to the conservatory they picked the choicest blossoms. and presented them to me, and, indeed was afraid to admire anything, so great was their generosity.

Re-entering the room we had left, found Miss Cook with the little baby in her arms, talking to the Maharanee and it was then I learned that she, and not the girl in white, was the mother. Miss Cook had been present at the child's birth, and was naturally interested in the little fellow, and, in course of conversation, spoke of him as "her little son." This seemed to please the Maharanee but not so the young girl, who frowned resentfully. Miss Cook ticing her anger, laughingly exclaimed, "I do not know Maharanee if either you or I may lay much claim to him, for Jumeera loves him better than either of us I do believe." The Maharanee's lip curled scornfully, as taking the babe and straining him to her bosom she replied haughtily, "Oh, Mem-Sahib what has she to do with my son, she is cursed of the gods, and her love

would only blight him!" At this cruel speech the tears started to Jumeera's eyes and drawing herchudlah over her head, she rushed past me and disappeared through an opening at the end of the conservatory. I could see that a rebuke was upon

Miss Cook's lips, but she controlled herself, perhaps feeling that discretion was the better part of valor, but my interest in the zenana was gone, and longed to depart, cherishing the wild hope that possibly I might see Jumeera to comfort her. I urged Miss Cook to leave, but she said in a whisper that this would be contrary to efiquette and that the Maharanee would dismis

us presently. I had brought some Christmas cards and distributed them to the ladies, be ing careful to save one for Jumeera, in I should be fortunate enough find her, but even this did not seem to restore the harmony of the meeting, and after a few moments of awkward silence, the Maharanee arose nad. making us a profound salaam, struck a small gong, when the eunuch again appeared, and conducted us from their presence.

While waiting for our carriage, we paced too and fro in the women's court, when I learned from Miss Cook a few particulars of my protege. I that she was a widow, her young husband, brother to the rajah, having died five years previously. Although at the time the poor child was only twelve years of age, custom forbade her to remarry and as a sign of mourning, she was condemned to wear her hair short, and dress only in white. The British law had abolished the suttee or sacrifice of the widow, on the funeral pile of her husband, but as Miss Cook marked, it was open to question, if the law was humane, since the life widow was so unhappy-she was practically the slave of the rest of the famlly who, instead of consoling her, anxious to impress upon her mind that this trial had come upon her as a punishment for some crime committed in a pre-existent state. No wonder the poor girl yearned for the love of the little innocent babe, who could not un-

braid her, yet even this slight consola tion was denied her by the cruel Maby this means close the avenue that

had been made for missionary work. Just as 1 was losing hope we caught sight of Jumeera's slender form through an arch at the further end of the court. Without a moment's hesitation, I bounded after her, she fled from me like a fawn, but overtaking her I threw my arms around her gasp "Jumeera, Jumeera, don't run away. I have something to say to you! Rejuctantly she turned, her face wearing an expression of defiance. 'What do you want?" she asked

sulkily. "I want to talk to you, Jumeera," I said, kindly, throwing myself upon a mat, and drawing her towards me. She squatted in front of me, but would not allow me to take her hand.

"What do you want with me Mem Sahib?" she asked again in a haughty

"I want you to let me come and see you sometimes," I said.

You want to come and see me, Mem-Sahib?" she replied frowning resent-fully, "what for? I have no presents to give you! 'And I want none, Jumeera," I said,

"I want nothing, but that you should let me love you." She stared at me incredulously.

"Wont you try and love me, Ju-meera?" I pleaded. "Why, I don't know how to love Mem-Sahib," she replied, (smiling a little this time), "and even if I did, you would not believe it, I have no gifts to prove it to you." gifts to prove it to you."

"O Jumeera!" I cried, "it pains me so much, that you will not understand that I do not want anything from you except your love, for I love you, Ju-meera, indeed I do." Sobs choked my utterance, and even she seemed touched, for she drew closer to me, and taking the end of my sash in her hand, she pressed it to her lips and said in a softened tone:

"Gurrah Pawwah" (protector of the poor) "how can you speak like that; I am an outcast, a widow, and cursed by the gods, no one can love me."

"That is just why I came, Jumeera," I said, drying my eyes, "because I know some one who loves you very much.' Taking her hand I told her of our loving lieavenly Father, who made this beautiful world for us, his children, to live in, and assured her that she was just as dear to him, as I. She seemed to understand, for the frown vanished from her brow, and her beautiful eyes assumed a dreamy expression, searching in her mind for some forgotten memory

"How I should like to see the Christain God!" she murmured.

"You may, Jumeera," I replied. "If you will live for it," and I explained that if we were worthy in this life, we should one day return into His presence.

"And are you quite sure He loves mc, Mem-Sahib?" she asked with eager anxiety. I assured her that I knew that He did and also that He had promised to take special care of widows and orphans. Suddenly an idea seemed to strike her, and springing to her feet, her eyes flashing, and an expression of intense hatred, upon her face she demanded fiercely

"Then why doesn't He kill the Maharanee

I was terribly shocked, and gravely told her that our Heavenly Father did not work in that way, but was gentle and forgiving, and if she allowed a spirit of vengeance to take possession f her, He would be greatly displeased. The poor girl was broken-hearted at the rebuke, and wept bitterly.

"I knew he would not love me if he knew me," she sobbed, and it was some time before she was sufficiently calm for me to explain, that inasmuch as we see them again.

This brought our festivities to close, and tired, and happy, the little ones returned to their homes, to live over again in dreams the wonderful things they had seen and heard. While my husband and I sat by the smouldering embers laughing and talking each feeling that to thoroughly enjoy Christmas one must make others happy.

I related to him my visit to the palace, and meeting with Jumeera. He was deeply interested in the young girl, and said I ought certainly to see her again. Suddenly I remembered that, owing to my visit, I had omitted to take over to the meeting house some presents that he had purchased for his singers. I was very sorry as we had intended to surprise them when they took their places the following morning. We were both too happy, however, to worry over anything, so rising and kissing me he said cheerily: "Never mind, little woman, put them into my sack and Santa Claus will take another trip." Laughing, complied with his request, and flinging his sack over his shoulder he strode out into the darkness, lighting his path by a lantern, which he carried in his hand. Shouting after him I bade him

back, little thinking of the danhurry ger in store for my loved one before I should see his dear face again. After my departure, Jumeera, mus-

ing over the strange story I had told her, was seized with a passionate desire to see this great Being who was watching over her with such loving care. She knew that we, unlike the Hindoos, worship one God only, and to her excited imagination, the story of the birth of Jesus, and the account 1 gave of Santa Claus, and his nocturnal visit, were part of the same story. What she thought could be more natural, and in keeping with his kind and gracious character, than his return to earth on the anniversary of his birthnight bringing gifts to his children? In that case he would certainly visit his temple, and by going there she would possibly have the opportunity of

seeing him and proving for her own satisfaction if what I had said was true. During our conversation I had pointed the spire of our meeting house out and by keeping that in view, she thought she should be able to find the place, ignorant as she was of the city. The idea no sooner presented itself her mind, than she deterto mined upon its execution, and in pursuance of this resolve, silently glid-ed behind the bushes and, with a native Indian's cunning, set fire to part of the cactus hedge, and later torn and bleeding, she crept through the aper-

ture, and made her way to the chapel. Hour after hour she waited for some sign of his coming. The door of the meeting house was securely locked, but crouching behind a tree she patiently ingered.

When she had almost lost hope and was sick with fatigue and exposure, she saw a form approaching bearing a lantern. Her heart beat so fast she could scarcely breathe. Kodah! Kodah! (God) it is he! she muttered. She recognized him by his snow white

I had grown a little anxious at my husband's prolonged absence, so throwing a shewl around me, stood on the veranda waiting for him. Seeing me there, exhausted as he was with the weight of his burden, he shouted to me to send one of the servants to his assistance. Thoroughly alarmed, I called to the bearer to bring a lantern, and

together we went to meet him. As soon as I caught sight of the white robed form in his arms, my thoughts reverted to Jumeera, and I wondered if she had made her escape from the palace in search of me, and losing her way had fainted with fright, for after the utter seclusion of the Zenana, although we lived less than half a mile from the palace, the country would be unexplored territory to

In a few words, however, he explained what had occurred, and hurrying home, threw off his disguise, and went in search of the best medical aid the city could afford.

With tender solicitude we undressed her, and laid her upon my bed, when she opened her eyes, recognizing me with a glad smile. Knowing that by her brave act she had saved my husband's life, I knelt by her side, and covering her hands with kisses, poured forth my fervent expressions of gratitude, but she gazed at me vacantly, and did not seem to understand. time to time she would raise her head, as if in the act of listening intently. then, with a gesture of wild excitement exclaim: "Kodah! Kodah!" Then passing her hand wearily across her brow, again lapse into a semi-conscious

state. Her arm by this time had become so swollen and inflamed that we could not distinguish at what point the poison had entered, but my ayah used every remedy that she knew of, although she assured me emphatically that the case was hopeless. In her more lucid mo-ments I drew from the poor girl the details of her escape, and the extraor-dinary idea which had prompted her action.

Discovering her strange hallucination that she had been instrumental in sav-ing the life of the great Being whom she called "the Christian God," and seeing the exquisite joy she derived from the thought, I felt that it would be cruelty in her dying condition to try and disillusion her mind. Moreover, as I sat by the bedside watching, and thinking that but for this my husband's life on earth would have been cut short. I felt with a thrill of ectasy that her sacrifice would be accepted in the light in which it was made, for, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the

least of these ye did it unto me." When the doctors arrived, as we had feared, they could only assure us that human aid was of no avail; they could beard, and the sack upon his should-

