SOUVENIR

OF THE

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE EXHIBITION

SOUVENIR

OF THE

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE EXHIBITION

DELHI 1920

CONTENTS.

PREFACE.

This little volume is intended as a Souvenir of the Maternity and Infant Welfare Exhibition held at Delhi in 1920. The thanks of the General Committee are due to those who have contributed to it.

FOREWORD.

I am glad to write a few words as a send off to this, the first Exhibition for Maternity and Infant Welfare held in India.

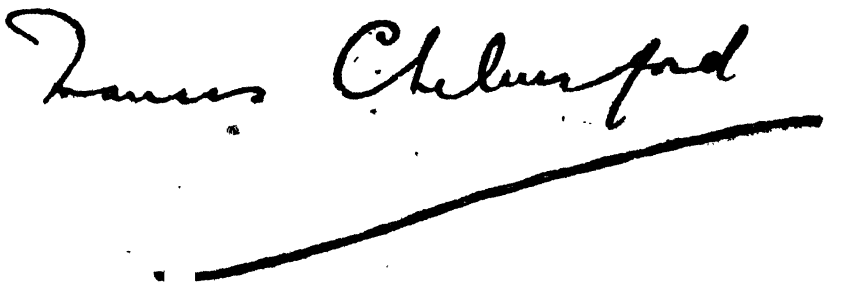
I have always taken the deepest interest in all that concerns the welfare of the women and children, and it is a very real gratification to me to find something actually taking shape to deal with their special needs.

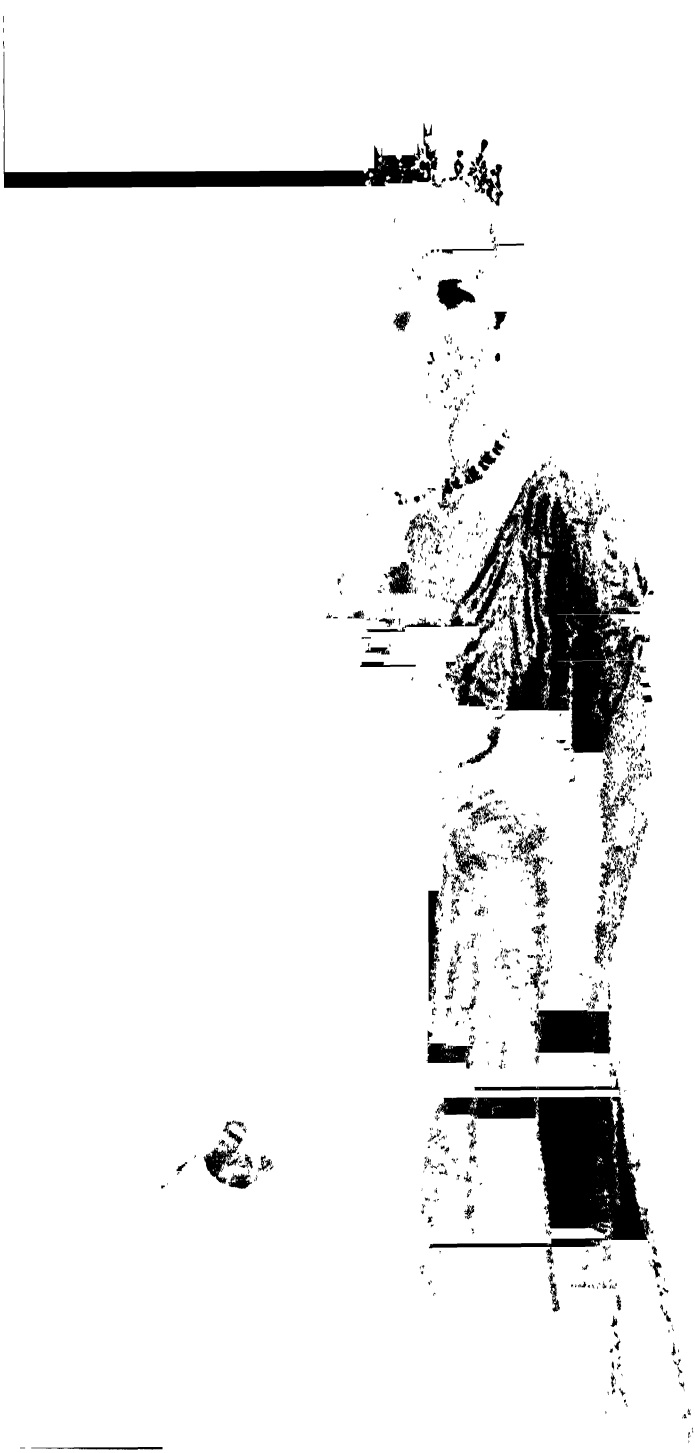
I hope this venture will encourage those who are already engaged in working for the good of the Community and stimulate in others a desire to do the same.

As a stone thrown into the water causes ripples in an ever widening circumference so may the work inaugurated today spread from small beginnings till it reaches the furthest confines of India and its effects be traced in even the poorest and humblest homes in the land.

An organisation to be effective must be a big thing, and the help, the goodwill, the personal service and the money of all are needed if success is to be attained.

It will be no insignificant reward if the future generations record their gratitude for any efforts we may make today.





H. E. LADY CHELMSFORD.

SOUVENIR.

Maternity and Infant Welfare Exhibition.

The Exhibition was opened on the 21st February 1920 by Her Excellency Lady Chelmsford. The following address was presented to Her Excellency.

THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

To

HER EXCELLENCY LADY CHELMSFORD, C.I., G.B.E.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the members of the General Committee of the Maternity and Infant Welfare Exhibition, welcome Your Excellency here to-day.

We should like, in the first place, although Your Excellency is fully acquainted with the reasons which have led to the inauguration of this Exhibition and the interest which you have taken in it is well-known, to rehearse briefly the reasons which gave rise to the undertaking. There has been founded an Association under Your Excellency's presidentship called the "Association for the provision of Health and Maternity Supervisors." Its object is to remove the adverse conditions which too often attend child-birth in India and to educate and enlighten the people in those matters in which care is essential if the population of the country is to be conserved and the rising generations are to grow up as strong and healthy citizens. It has been computed that each year India loses two million babies while many others

survive only to grow up weakly and feeble owing to inattention and bad hygienic surroundings during infancy. It is the intention of this Association, so far as in it lies, to combat these evils by spreading knowledge and by training up skilled workers. The Association has founded a school in Delhi for the training of Health and Maternity Supervisors and it proposes to lend encouragement and financial assistance to local authorities which desire to maintain such supervisors in various cities. Such is the modest beginning which has been made. Deeply interested as you are in the welfare of the said Association, we are thankful for the interest which Your Excellency has extended to it and for the appeal which you have recently issued for its support. We feel assured that owing to these exertions of Your Excellency it will soon be in a position to extend the scope of its labours in a manner commensurate to the ample field which lies before it.

The Exhibition, with whose organisation we have been entrusted and which we ask Your Excellency to open to-day, is closely allied in aim to the objects of the Association just mentioned. We hope that our humble endeavours in this respect may assist in stimulating public interest, in convincing people by practical demonstrations of the danger of neglect at the time of child-birth and in spreading knowledge of the ideal conditions for early childhood which are obtainable by care and method.

The Exhibition is divided into seven main sections, dealing with Pre-maternity, Maternity, Infant Welfare, Childhood, First Aid, Home Nursing, Domestic Hygiene and Sanitation. There are also pathological and poster exhibits.

We are grateful for the loan of an elaborate exhibit of women's work sent from Madras by Her Excellency

Lady Willingdon and for a social service exhibit arranged by Mrs. Whitehead. The Calcutta Corporation has kindly sent us an exhibit showing maternity work carried out under its auspices. Our thanks are due also to others, too numerous to mention, who have assisted us with exhibits, loans, etc. A prize has been offered by Lady Willingdon for the best essay on "How to organize a Maternity and Child Welfare Exhibition in my own district" to be written by a genuine visitor to the Exhibition and we believe that this will be of great assistance in rousing public interest in the movement. Another prize has been offered to the school girl who writes the best essay on "What I learned from the Exhibition." Another valuable prize has been offered by the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Mian Muhammad Shafi. In addition 17 medals have been offered for various competitions and the exhibits forwarded in connection with these will, we trust, prove of value and interest.

Another feature of the Exhibition is a room organised by Lala Bhagat Ishwar Das of Lahore from a description in the Mahabharata showing that natal and ante-natal care were matters of moment in ancient days in India. An exhibit of interest is one shown by Messrs. Cooper Allen and Company of Welfare work carried on among the employees of the North-West Tannery Company, Cawnpore—an excellent example of the way in which large employers of labour in India should recognise their responsibilities to their employees and give a lead to local bodies in the organisation of Welfare work. I also wish to draw attention to the exhibit of the Society for the Promotion of Scientific knowledge, an un-official organisation in Lahore of which the members in addition to carrying on their ordinary professional or scholastic

duties have devoted much time and pains to the improvement of the conditions of their poorer fellow citizens.

We welcome among us to-day a number of workers both men and women who are engaged in Welfare work in different parts of India and who have arranged to hold a conference, under the chairmanship of Lieutenant-Colonel Hutchinson, during the coming week and discuss various important aspects of their work and its future development. We also welcome about 40 representatives of the Association of Medical Women in India, the Association to whose initiative the present scheme was originally due; and we have a large number of medical men, nurses, midwives and health visitors, each of whom we hope will do something in their own station to organise and carry out such work as is shown here to-day.

I am glad to be able to inform Your Excellency that a considerable number of our exhibits will be sent first to Bombay and then to Calcutta for somewhat similar exhibitions. We hope immediately to form a permanent Committee in order that the exhibits collected with so much care and labour may be used to form a permanent loan collection.

Finally, we desire to take this opportunity of acknowledging the encouragement which we have always received from Your Excellency, who consented to accept the presidentship of the exhibition and throughout took a lively interest in its promotion. It is now our privilege to request you formally to declare the exhibition opened and we trust that the results of it may be of no small value in ameliorating the matters which it is our object to remedy not merely in Delhi but also in many other areas of India.

The Chairman then added :—

"Such, Your Excellency, is the address which the members of the Committee present to you to-day. But there is one matter which I desire to mention on my own behalf. I should like to acknowledge the ungrudging assistance I have received from the members of that Committee and also from others, especially from the chairmen of the various sub-committees. I should like especially to mention Mrs. Barron, who has worked so hard in organising a camp, and the Hon'ble Mrs. Spence, who is in charge of the Amusements and Refreshments Committee; Major Salkield deserves my special thanks as Secretary of the Ground Arrangements Committee; and Mr. Smith, the Deputy Commissioner, has given unfailing assistance in this and other directions. Mrs. Chatterjee has been indefatigable in arranging the baby-show and accommodation for Indian visitors. Dr. Sethna, our zealous Health Officer, has put together an admirable exhibition of sanitation. Nor can I too generously thank our Secretaries, Dr. Balfour, Dr. Curjel and Miss Darbyshire for the enthusiasm and industry with which they have carried out their duties. There are others whom I would like to mention but I must not further trespass upon Your Excellency's time."

HER EXCELLENCY'S REPLY.

MR. CHAIRMAN, YOUR HIGHNESSES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It is with the greatest pleasure that I rise to perform the pleasing duty which you have asked me to undertake to-day.

I consider that we are gathered together on a most important occasion, and it is my sincere hope that this meeting may be the small seed from which will spring a great tree laden with fruit of health and healing for the people of India.

I should like to say one word of appreciation of the work which has been done by the Health Department of the Delhi Municipality, as to my mind they have set a fine example of how a Municipality should tackle this vital problem.

The work was initiated in the first instance by a handsome grant from the Government of India, and the Municipality was fortunate in possessing a Health Officer in the person of Dr. Sethna, who sympathised warmly with the objects of the work and who has been constant and energetic in the support he has given to the movement. The Municipality was also fortunate in securing the services of the Lady Health Visitors, Miss Graham and Miss Griffin, whose persistent and unwearying devotion to their duties no words can adequately describe. The result is a system of supervision of the indigenous dais by means of which real improvement is taking place in the conditions of child-birth in the city and the establishment of two Baby Welcomes which are centres where a knowledge of infant welfare and domestic hygiene is spread.

What is being done in one Municipality can be done in another, but to succeed two things are essential. A really efficient personnel and the whole-hearted and impartial support by the Municipality.

It may seem strange that this question of giving the children a fair chance should have sprung so suddenly upon India. In part it may be attributed to the change

gradually taking place in the conditions of life in India to-day.

Given space, open air and sunshine, the lack of knowledge was made up for by lack of microbes, but since the tendency to live in the towns has become greater and, as in Bombay, even in workmen's blocks, the close proximity has greatly increased the risks by which young children are surrounded and in the same degree has increased the need for the methods for which this Exhibition stands.

That we are fully conscious of the serious state of things now attending early childhood in India, is, I think evidenced by the movements springing up on all sides to form Societies to cope with it; but the subject is of such paramount importance, and is likely to assume such large dimensions that I have come to the conclusion that I ought to endeavour to link up all these efforts; place them on a firmer basis and generally enlarge the scope of their work.

I therefore take this opportunity of announcing that it is my intention to found a League, which it is suggested should bear my name for Maternity and Child Welfare in India. It is of the first importance that this League should assume an All-India character. I do not mean by this that it should in any way supersede or interfere with other efforts which have been made along the same lines in other parts of India. I feel, however, that co-operation is essential to success and that much can be done by a central organisation which will serve to bring isolated efforts into touch with one another, render assistance where possible, and stimulate such communities as have hitherto taken no steps in this matter.

It was with this object that I recently made an appeal to the Ruling Princes and in various provinces of India for funds which would serve as a permanent endowment. In this, as in all causes for the Welfare of India, the Ruling Princes have not only given me the most generous financial support, but have also expressed the very deepest interest in the movement and their full concurrence of its immediate necessity. I trust at an early date to make known the constitution and general organisation of the League, and I can assure you all that every endeavour will be made to give full representation to local interests wherever activities are displayed in this respect. We could not have a more tangible proof of this interest than in the action taken by Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal who is actually delivering an address on hygiene at the Exhibition this week, thus setting a splendid example which I hope will not be lost on the Mohomedan ladies of whom she is the teacher.

The details of the scheme, however will be made public later. But I should like to indicate briefly and very generally the kind of activities which in my opinion this League should promote. Its main object will be to bring into prominence the vital importance to the national weal of motherhood. It is necessary if India is to prosper that this subject should have its place in the sun. Among its other objects therefore the League will attempt first and foremost to obtain the following results.

It will try to secure the provision of increased accommodation for lying-in women in hospitals or maternity homes, to promote the better education and training of dais, to establish centres for the loan or gift of necessary articles for women who cannot attend hospitals

during the time of their confinement, to multiply the number of maternity and infant welfare centres and of schools for mothers, to make if possible an endowment which will be used in order to prevent any privation among women at the time of child-birth and finally to educate and qualify health visitors and to assist in paying their stipends.

All these indeed are truly national objects and in founding a national league we should not be doing more than imitating what has been done elsewhere. I need only mention the Associations which exists in the United Kingdom such as the National League for Health, Maternity and Child Welfare, the National Health Society, the National Society for the prevention of Infant Mortality, etc. In July 1917 a National Baby week was held in England, which was opened by Her Majesty the Queen in person. Shows were held in connection with it in many hundreds of Municipalities and villages. So that we not only have the precedent of the Home country but also the highest example of patronage for our work.

As I said previously this is not the occasion for going into detail. But the kind of constitution which I have in mind is a body of patrons, councillors, life members and annual members, with branches in all the important cities of India. There would have to be a central council, with an executive committee, whose duty it would be to work in conjunction with the provinicial councils and provincial executive committees. If we put our enterprise upon a broad national footing, then I think we may with safety anticipate donations from the wealthy. But the main source of our income will necessarily have to be the contributions of annual members.

Our work could not be better summed up than in the following words "to arouse the sense of racial responsibility in every citizen in order to secure to every child born in India a birth-right of mental and bodily health."

Every healthy citizen is a wealth producer, while every enfeebled one is a drain on the community. I commend this great work to the enlightened members of the nation who will be the first to profit from the enhanced health and happiness and contentment of the millions of India.

India has been very generous in providing hospitals for its sick, but this movement is to start at the other end and its labours ought to check the unnecessary flow of patients to these institutions by building up a healthy community who have no need for them. Prevention is better than cure and let me tell you it is also cheaper. I believe the philanthropic and the charitably-minded will not be slow to see that along these lines they can most profitably and successfully help in the uplift of the community and ensure a great and beneficent future.

THE DUTY OWED BY EDUCATED INDIAN WOMEN TO THEIR COUNTRYWOMEN.

By H. H. THE NAWAB BEGUM OF BHOPAL, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., C.I.

My object in writing these few lines is to emphasize the importance of women's assistance in the strengthening of the foundations of a nation's prosperity and culture. I feel it my duty to lay stress on the imperative necessity of Indian women lending their whole-hearted support to the attainment of the objects of the Maternity and Infant Welfare Exhibition which we owe to Her Excellency Lady Chelmsford's earnest solicitude for the well-being of our race. It is difficult to conceive anything better calculated than this Exhibition to serve the interests of the rising generation of the country, and to promote national welfare.

It is only too obvious that the future of a race lies with the coming generations, and a great deal depends upon the preservation of the best and the strongest. Education, upbringing, and health are the most important factors in nation-building. This Exhibition is a great step forward in the direction to which energies must be bent if we wish to equip our women for the sacred duty of bringing up strong and healthy children who will stand the wear and tear of the strenuous times ahead, and be a source of pride to their race. I wish to make a particular appeal to the women of higher and educated classes, round whom centre all hopes of our future progress, and

who alone can help our frail barque out of the troubled waters. They are well able to realise the present plight of Indian womanhood, and it is they who are best fitted to lend a helping hand. I am sure they will agree with me that on them rests a great responsibility at this juncture, and just as in the field of education it is the educated classes who ought to give the lead to their less fortunate countrymen, so in the promotion of national culture it is the richer classes who can hasten the pace of progress, and by example and precept inspire their race. Into the avenues of progress the cultured and the intelligent have always led the masses; it is those who can see who can guide the blind, and therefore it is incumbent on the highly placed to supply the wants of the lowly, and on those who are abreast of the times, to devise practical means to ensure the well-being of mothers, and healthy upbringing of children, which are the greatest desiderata of these days. From the morass of poverty and ignorance only our combined efforts can rescue the people, but the first step towards practical endeavour is a consciousness of the duty which the rich owe to the poor, and unless this consciousness is awakened, it is useless to think of triumphing over the tremendous difficulties ahead.

I will confine my remarks just now to one solitary groove, that of maternity and infant welfare, but the matter is vitally important and the need is pressing. What could be a higher object than the happiness of our children and the good cheer of their mothers? Could there be a better ideal than the compassing of that purpose by human endeavour? It is the road to this ideal which must be traversed if we wish to reach the sweet waters of culture and enlightenment, if we wish our children to be free from the taint of moral poverty, and

if we wish our eyes to feast on the rosy landscape of progress and contentment. Let me repeat at the risk of reiteration that we cannot reach that goal without our richer and educated classes realising the duty they owe to women and children generally.

"Mankind," says Sadi, "is but parts of a single body"—and if the relationship of all mankind to each other is so close, how intimate must be the interdependence of the people of a race. All religious books, all ethical codes, all sayings of the wise, are at one in insisting on this aspect of human sympathy which, by universal consent, is an essential preliminary to the attainment of Divine pleasure. Differences of religions amongst us may be the cause of some divergence of views, but the bond of nationality is common to us all, and history tells us that the happy era of prosperity never dawns unless the richer classes of the nation make common cause with the poor, and the national foundations can never be well and strong unless the highest classes shoulder the responsibilities they owe to the women and the children of their race.

I do hope I have made the object of these brief lines clear. It is to the deep thought given to this question by Lady Chelmsford that the Maternity and Infant Welfare Exhibition owes its existence, and if we will second Her Excellency's high-minded endeavours unitedly and wholeheartedly, it is our own well-being which we will be working for, and the happiness of our own mothers and children which we will be bringing nearer. With sympathy and self-sacrifice, the godly attributes of mankind, much can be done, and if the recognition of that truth guides our footsteps, the richer women can, each in her own way, co-operate in this beneficent work. Some

of us can help in nursing the poor, and others assist in upbringing the children. Some can open small schools in their towns, and even in their houses, and with help and counsel cheer the lot of our less fortunate sisters. A good practical way of helping is to visit the habitations of the poor, and teach them the rudiments of sanitation and hygiene. If we had more " schools for mothers " attached to, or even in place of, the Ladies Clubs, good practical work could be done. I should be glad to lend the scheme of the " School for mothers " at Bhopal to those desirous of carrying out the idea.

Other practical lines of work are abstention from needless extravagance and foolish display at festive occasions, the suppression of child-marriage, and the inducement of frugal habits and clean ways of living. Every little helps, and every worker can do a great deal.

I cannot end these lines better than with the prayer that the pall of prejudice and ignorance may lift, that Her Excellency Lady Chelmsford's noble endeavours be returned with genuine gratefulness, and that her sincere solicitude evoke a hearty response.

OUR LANE.

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Our Lane is tortuous, full of indecision in its turnings to the right and the left. It seems as if ages ago she started in quest of a goal but has remained for ever bewildered at the obstructions on every side. Above in the air, between her buildings, hangs like a ribbon a torn out strip of space ; and she asks,

"Tell me my sister Lane, to what blue town you belong ?"

The sun is seen by her only for a few moments at midday, and she is puzzled, and asks herself in wise doubt :

"It seems glorious but is it real ?"

In June the shadow of the rainclouds is drawn like a pencil scratch over her line of daylight. The path grows slippery and mud laden, umbrellas collide, sudden jets of water from spouts overhead splash over the startled pavement. She in her dismay takes it to be an unmannerly joke of an unmeaning plan of creation.

The spring breeze gone astray in the coil of her contortions, stumbles like a drunken vagabond against all angles and corners, filling the air with dust and paper scraps and rags. "What fury of foolishness of the Gods gone mad !" she exclaims in indignation.

But the daily refuse from the houses on both sides—scales of fish mixed with ashes, peelings of vegetables,

rotten fruits and dead rats—never rouses the question in her mind, " Why should these be ? "

She is at ease with each piece of her paving stones, but when from between them there steals out a blade of grass, it baffles her to think how such intrusion could happen out of solid facts.

But, some morning, at the finger touch of autumn's light, her houses wake up into beauty from their foul dreams, and she whispers to herself ; " There must be a limitless wonder somewhere beyond these buildings, which troubles my heart in its depths."

But the morning hours pass on ; the households are astir ; the maid walks back from the market clasping the basket of provision at her side ; the air grows thick with the smell and smoke of the kitchen ; again it becomes clear to our Lane that all that is real and normal dwells in the time honoured dinginess of these rows of houses.

RUPAVATI.

By JOGENDRA SINGH.

No welcome awaited her at her birth. Her father and mother were both grieved when she came and yet in a few days they loved her more than they cared to own. Rupavati survived the diseases of infancy to which so many succumb. She grew into a sprightly girl, tall, straight and well formed with large black almond shaped eyes, an oval face and an ivory complexion. Her parents found the house empty without her and her friends missed her at spinning gatherings whenever she was absent. She was gay like birds that live in the present and lay no store for the future. Rupavati went to no school. The idea that the art of reading and writing could be helpful to a girl was ridiculed by her parents. Her schooling began and ended in the narrow environment of the home and its immediate surroundings. Her mind received its sustenance from the flow of talk that went round from house to house, and on the example which her parents and their friends set her. The broadening influence of books was barred out as dangerous; taking a woman out of her depths. The village limited her knowledge of the world except a pilgrimage of Hardwar which gave her a glimpse of the outer world, where she saw many new things and heard recitations from ancient books and came in direct touch with ideals, which for unnumbered generations moulded the minds of men. She imbibed clear ideas as to her social and moral duties

with her mother's milk. It meant an unquestioning acceptance of fixed rules. Rupavati was not aware of it but her mind quietly shaped in response to influences that constantly played round her stimulating quick growth and early maturity.

She was just at the vestibule of the spring tide of youth when she was given away in marriage. She was never consulted about it. She saw strange women come and talk in whispers and then heard the news that she was going to be married. She asked no questions and was given no further details. Her girl friends discussed the coming event and she wondered at the mystery and the marvel of marriage which occupied the minds of her friends. The great event, which made life for some supremely sweet and for others filled it with gall and wormwood, was celebrated with great ceremony. On the propitious day the bridal party came and carried her away from her home with beating of drums and playing of pipes.

Rupavati wept for days in her new home. She was still a merely grown up child and her mother-in-law allowed her to sleep in her own room. She did not see her husband for nearly three years. He was still at school. But when he came their courtship and love making began. She was hardly seventeen when her first child was born. No skilled nurses attended her. Her vitality alone saved her from death. She rose from her bed a changed woman. Her health was shattered and with it went the spirit of gaiety and the love of song and laughter which had charmed her husband. Right through her illness she had to nurse her child. She knew little about feeding bottles and child welfare.

Her husband loved her little baby son, his mother doted over him but they did little to discover whether he was getting his proper food to satisfy the needs of his growth. The girl mother had not enough milk and the child was starved and the whole household talked and mourned his getting thin and emaciated. They did everything else except giving him proper food ; sooth sayers and wonder workers were consulted, offerings were promised to the various shrines, magic words were enclosed in copper amulets and hung round his neck and yet the child did not prosper.

The mother sat, hollow cheeked and pale on her little scarlet Peerhee, which was a present from her mother and drooped while the infant swathed in heavy clothes rested in her lap panting for breath and food. One day he caught cold which developed suddenly into pneumonia and carried him away as it does thousands of infants every cold weather. It is known as the fatal disease of infancy. The whole household went into mourning. The women wept and beat their breasts, the men sat with drooping heads and received visits of condolence and yet no one cared to set the evil right. The child welfare received no attention. The luxury and squalor which mix in Indian homes is evidence of ignorance and disorganisation, the two great enemies that block the way of social progress. It needs intelligent mothers to reduce chaos to order and transform squalor to beauty.

Rupavati in due course got another child and lost it and with it lost all the joy of her life. Her mother-in-law turned upon her and called her unlucky and used names which went like barbs in her heart. Her husband

too began to neglect her, childbearing and long illness had broken her physically and he found her dull and unattractive. Rupavati fought her battle alone and went back to her father's house to recoup her health, but it was too late, her health was broken, fever and cough brought on consumption which carried her away before she was twenty. This is the story of thousands of girl mothers who resign their lives at the gates of motherhood or rear only weak and emaciated children who grow into weak and incapable men, adding to the millions of Indians who live in a state of suspended animation from the cradle to the grave.

"A HAPPY NEW YEAR."

By MAUD DIVER.

Author of "Captain Desmond, V.C.," "Desmond's Daughter," "Lilamani," etc.

It was half-past eleven on the last night of the year. The staring white moonlight flooded the empty Mess verandah. A strange quiet was over the place, broken only by occasional voices from the card room. Youth and frivolity—in the shape of Captains and Subalterns—were dancing the New Year in, with Colombo's maids and matrons, at Government House.

Footsteps and voices in the anteroom, and the next moment two officers stepped out into the verandah. The ends of three cigars glowed fiery red in the white light.

"Let's finish our smoke in the cool, Major," said the younger man. "It's getting on for twelve; so, if you're game, we can watch the New Year in, as the saying is. Might have our chairs put out under the tree at the corner. If there is a ghost of a breeze going, we may as well be in it, eh?"

"Right you are, I'm agreeable," quoth the accommodating Major; but there was an absent look in his eyes as he strolled across the "compound" and stood silent a moment, looking down the moonlit strip of road that runs past the Field Officer's quarters.

"Here boy!" called Captain Stuart. "Bring chairs, cigars and drinks." Then turning to his abstracted companion: "we may get a sight of the good folk returning

from the show, if we manage to keep awake. How awfully white the moonlight is in this country."

The Major nodded: and the "boy" having set two long-sleeve chairs under the tree, retired, leaving them alone with the eerie moonlight and the ghost of a breeze; and the soft swish of unseen breakers; and their own diverse thoughts.

For a while they lay back in their chairs and smoked in a contented silence. Either would have missed the other, had he risen and moved off; yet neither seemed to feel any desire for conversation.

Captain Stuart was a tall fair man, looking wonderfully young for his rank. He had known no foreign service; and was only temporarily out from Home. Penrose, the older man, had the stamp of India on his furrowed face and grizzled hair. There were bitter lines round his mouth and a kindly light in his grey eyes. For carefully hidden, beneath a hard exterior, the Major owned a heart several degrees too soft for his peace of mind. To appear soft-hearted was against his principles; and among his fellows he passed for a misogynist, sceptical of the virtues of humanity at large. Now and again his true nature would assert itself, in spite of severe repression; for which cause he was not unpopular, though the newly-joined stood in awe of his tongue.

"Clang! Clang! Clang!" The strident tones of the Clock Tower seemed to rebuke their unsociable behaviour.

"Twelve O'clock," remarked Stuart superfluously, from the depths of his chair.

The Major sat suddenly upright, flung away the end of his cigar, and resting his elbows on the long arms, seemed prepared for conversation.

"You've heard me speak of Geoff Berton, Stuart?"

"What! the Boy, as they call him?"

"Yes—well—this day last year he and I saw the New Year in together, just as we are doing to-night. It all comes back to me as fresh as if it were yesterday. Did you ever hear the details of that affair of his?"

"Would it bore you? Its very much on my mind to-night. Talking of the thing might clear the air—of ghosts."

"Fire away, old chap," was the laconic response. It was not often that the Major played the part of story-teller. "Great mistake to encourage—ghosts."

"Quite so. I'm not given that way, not 'soft' as a rule," he added as if by way of apology for what was to follow. "But I had a weakness—for Geoff. The fellows used to chaff me because I maintained that he had only one fault—an unreasoning faith in human nature, which even my perpetual croaking couldn't knock out of him. 'I'm no better than the usual crowd, Major,' was always his clinching argument, 'and I wouldn't dream of doing so and so'—referring to the special case in point. And somehow I hadn't the heart to rub in the truth, though it might have been kinder in the long run."

"He never meant to stick to the Service, did he?" asked Stuart, in whose eyes that was a far graver fault than the faith in human nature.

"No. He had money coming to him. But he was as keen as the best of them, anyway. In fact, a promising

lad, all round. One could guess he had a good mother. He was stamped with the hall-mark good women leave on their sons and husbands. Never met any virtuous enough to leave it on me, worse luck! The fellows said I made too much of Geoff. So he got a good deal of chaff and snubbing by way of 'keeping him under.' They made fun of his taste for choir practice, and his distaste for betting and gambling. But he took it all for what it was worth and was so full of life and good humour that they jolly soon dropped it. He was a great dancer and keen on women's society. He took 'em all for Angels, poor chap. 'Fallen Angels, my son,' I used to say. But he was apt to get hot on that point."

"Well—to get on with the story, there was a woman here, just then; an independent globe-trotting female, all eyes and money. The eyes were enough for Geoff. She must have been five years his senior—but there was no reasoning with him. He just set her in some inner shrine and worshipped her; and she took it all as a matter of course, confound her.

"I saw from the first that she was spreading her lines for Tilson, a planter chap, with a fat purse. But she played a dark game—one that might easily have blinded a 'cuter man than Geoff. She rode with him and danced with him and fed his infatuation with looks and smiles till the Boy fancied himself at the Gate of Paradise. He couldn't stand the fellows' chaff on this point, though, and naturally that made them worse. I did what I could to ease things, but I was handicapped by my reputation as a woman hater.

"The lady herself brought him a brief respite by making a sudden bolt up-country—on the trail of the

red haired planter—the boys told Geoff. He took it very quietly. Returned to his polo and cricket with new zest. In fact, we all began to believe he was cured—when, in December, the woman turned up again, like the dam' bad penny she was.

" The planter came along also ; and they were pretty thick at first. But it soon became clear she had a rival—an awfully pretty girl, fresh out from Home. That didn't suit her book ; so if you please, she drew Geoff on again as easily as if he had been an old glove. It was a clever move ; and it pricked up the planter's zeal a bit. For he was keen on her money. I spoke up and warned Geoff ; but she was one too many for me. With the hints and inuendoes, in which her sex excels, she gave him to understand that Tilson's attentions rather annoyed her than otherwise. Her word against mine—what earthly chance for a mere man, and a heretic at that..?

About the middle of the month, we gave a dance ; and what with her beeswax and chalk and decorations, the Mess was unbearable for days. Geoff was the leading spirit of course ; and I gathered from hints he let fall that he meant to put it to the touch, and win or lose the great Miss Willmott.

" When the evening came, I lounged around watching the rank and fashion of Colombo twirling and twisting like tee-to-tums, till overcome with sheer boredom, I took refuge in the card room. But I was anxious and worried. Couldn't keep my mind on the game.

" About one o'clock, just as I had finished a successful rubber, in came Geoff Barton—white as a ghost ; disaster in his eyes.

" ' Can you spare ten minutes for a smoke, Major ? ' he asked casually.

" I rose like a shot and went out with him. We lighted our cheeroots in silence, avoiding each other's eyes. In the darkness I felt bolder. 'Be a man, Geoff,' I said. 'There are other good things in life besides women.'

" 'It's not that, Major,' he answered with a queer catch in his voice. 'She's free to make her own choice, of course, but why should she deliberately take me in—lie to me?'

" 'It's the way they're made, old boy,' said I: but I hadn't much heart for raillery at that moment.

" 'I went to claim her for that last dance,' Geoff went on, in a dull voice. " And I found her—at least, I saw her. She was in that fellow's arms...'

There was a considerable pause before Penrose went on with his story. Stuart opened a bottle of soda water, poured out a 'peg' and lit a fresh cigar. But he said nothing. He saw that his companion was deeply moved.

" I told you I was a bit weak over Geoff," Penrose went on at length. " And no doubt you're beginning to believe it. But he was a plucky chap. It was a sight to see him go straight up and congratulate that smiling serpent of a woman. And he spoke of the whole affair so coolly that the fellows were too much taken aback to chaff him. He became as cheery and energetic as ever. But he pretty well gave up general society and took to mine instead. And I confess—being no altruist—I didn't feel half sorry for a contretemps that had saved Barton from a rotten wife, and given me back my friend. For a friend I reckoned him, mere boy though he was...Quite sure I'm not boring you?"

" Lord, no, forge ahead," Stuart was leaning forward now, interested—expectant.

"Well—New Year's Eve came along, and the inevitable dance. Geoff refused to go—and the fellows made no comment. They knew him better by then. Fact, he was first favourite with most of 'em."

"The Mess was deserted—just like to-night, except for the chronic card players, Geoff and myself. Gave me a queer turn just now, when you proposed seeing the New Year in, almost in his very words. The moon was as brilliant as it is now; and we sat till one o'clock under this very tree, thrashing out no end of things. For he was a great talker, but not much of a smoker.

"A sudden clatter of wheels and hoofs interrupted us. Next moment an open carriage came dashing round this far corner and down that straight bit there. We sprang to our feet, and as it came nearer the occupants were plainly visible in the moonlight—Miss Willmott and her planter! The reins dangled among the horse's hoofs. The driver was not on the box.

"One look at Geoff made me exclaim: 'Don't do anything rash, for God's sake.'

"But before I had finished speaking he was out in the street. I saw him stand up to the approaching horse—then—in a flash, the carriage shot past, leaving a ghastly 'something' out there in the road, which it turned me sick to see."

Again Penrose paused; and his voice was husky as he went on:

"The Boy was not quite dead. But—it was a horrid smash. I got him to his quarters with a little help, sent for Carter, and did all I could. But I knew things were hopeless. It was a foolhardy affair, but it showed how fiercely that unfortunate love of his still burnt beneath his outward composure. A fellow came in with

news that his desperate attempt at obstruction had seemed to sober the horse. Someone had collared the reins, and the occupants sent 'kind enquiries' or words to that effect. I felt a kind of furious, miserable satisfaction in giving them the blunt truth.

"Geoff opened his eyes and smiled. God knows if he heard me. He was only conscious a few minutes. 'Don't you fret, Major,' he said. 'Wish me a Happy New Year. Happier this way, perhaps, for me. But it's a bit rough—on Mother.' That was—the end."

There fell a prolonged pause.

"Clang! Clang!" The strident tones rang out again, recording the half hour.

The sound of wheels made both men start and look up, to see an open carriage coming down the moonlight strip of road at a sober trot. Its occupants—a squarely made man and a handsome smiling woman were returning from the ball evidently enjoying some mutual joke. A very dark look came over the Major's face.

"There she sits—confound her—" he said in a voice of repressed rage. "Laughing—laughing—with the stain of that Boy's blood on her soul—Goodnight, Stuart. I fear I've been poor company."

"Goodnight, Major."

The conventional Wish stuck in his throat, after what he had just heard.

AWAKENING.

Standing beside thy couch, mine eyes bright with smiles, fondly I gaze upon thee. Swiftly the morning light quickens in the sky, and my heart is filled with joy irresistible.

Laughing dost thou look into mine eyes. The birds are roused in their nests and the waking world overflows with a rising tide of song.

Priyambada Devi.

SHUDHA-RANI AND THE FEVER FIEND.

By CORNELIA SORABJI.

They were sisters, Shanti and Shudha, Queens of Peace and of Beauty.

The Beauty-Queen, literally the-one-without-spot or blemish, was the less beautiful in character. She was self-centred and domineering, albeit she had a pretty way with her in her selfishness, and would wheedle out of you what she wished—yes—at the very moment that you were breathing protestations and refusals.

Perhaps it was just as well that this was so. Shudha sulky, meant penace and discomfort for the entire household : and the Peace-Queen would be kept busy all day smoothing away friction in Zenana and kitchen, nor resting till she had bought-back sunshine for the Sulky One herself !

But that was seldom before bed time, when Shanti would seek out the Beauty with a mess of her favourite pottage, puff-ball *loochis* fine as egg-shell-china, and curds made by her own hands after an ancient family recipe—a bright silver rupee thrown into an earthen pot of newly-drawn milk.

It was the children's Grandmother who owned all the money and ruled the household : and she rather despised Shanti for her lack of self-love.

" Oh ! *that* one," she said, " we will marry her to a fool who will be an in-the-house Son-in-law, and our

guest to the end of the days : so shall there be no comings and goings to any other house-place and Shanti shall be ever at out service." And in truth no better lot, did Shanti herself desire.

But for the Queen of Beauty was planned a noble wedding ; and into the preparations Shanti threw herself with ardour.

On the great day it was she who directed the cooking, she who supervised the rice-flour decorations and the Bride's bathing and anointing and dressing, and—what not !.....And when every one had gone to the lower floor to peep at the Bridegroom's procession and to watch the Priestly ceremonies no one missed Shanti left alone on the roof to "finish up."

And now the Bridegroom procession was nearing the house, the drums and trumpets and conch shells, made an orgy of festive noise. Shanti paused in her work of polishing the brass dishes. "There would be lovely clothes too," she reflected, "and lights and flowers. Oh she *must* look, just for a minute from the edge of the roof. It was dusk, and no one would see her." And Shanti ran forward, forgetful of the rope stretched only that morning across the roof terrace for the drying of the maid servant's *saris*.

The rope caught and trapped her, and she crashed down on the stone parapet.....

It was late at night when they found her moaning in great agony, "My head" ! "My head" !

Attempt to save her there was none, for the ill-luck of the happening on such a day, and the *selfishness* of the happening when so much was still to do—prevented action. Besides, who should save her ? This was a

case for the magic-men Priests: and the magic-men Priests were busy making the Beauty-Queen's marriage.

It was three years after Shanti's death from concussion of the brain, and the Beauty-Queen was on a visit to her Mother. She had been ailing for some little time.

The drains at her husband's great Palace were ancient and unhealthy: and the Zenana cow was tuberculous—so a friend of her husband's had said. But the mother-in-law lady had been furious, when told this: it was, she said, her favourite cow, and she refused to send it away for treatment, or to admit another to the byre.

Yet—the Spotless-One was drooping sadly, even she could see that: and being a kindly, though so obstinate an old woman where cows were concerned, she suggested that Shudha Rani should cheer herself up, by a visit to her Mother.

That was how it came about, that Shudha was in her early home, when her illness declared itself to be enteric.

The Mother, Grandmother, Great Grandmother and Aunt people were stricken with grief.

"We must propitiate," they said, "every agency: all the gods and all the demons. We must employ all remedies—the doctors of the English, and the Doctors of Us-people, and the magic men—all together."

So they engaged the Civil Surgeon and two English Nurses; and secretly, they engaged the other kind of medicine man and necromancer, as well.

On the second day the fever had not gone. They consulted a local practitioner, who advised Homœopathy: and a quack Homœopath was engaged from

Calcutta at 5,000 rupees a day. He was established at the guest house: and prescribed for the patient upon symptoms set forth by the oldest of the maid servants—she who had nursed the Grandmother lady at her birth.

He prescribed some minute globules, which the *ji* tied into the corner of her unsavoury *sari*, and he ordered a diet of nuts and green mangoes. But, back again among the other *ji-s*, the old woman said "The child will starve. It is want of food which is her disease, do I not know it?" And she fried pulse cakes and pasties for the frequent meals which her fingers pushed through unwilling lips, during the night watches.

The Priest learned in Magic was now in charge of the sick room, and the English Nurses had been banished to their quarters across the road.

The Priest's first care was to place the patient on a filthy mattress, obtained from a holy man, who had sanctified it by long usage, as he lay bedridden at the gates of the Juggernath Temple at Puri.

He next hung pictures of the gods and goddesses who preside over various diseases, round the sick-room—the *ji-s* being directed to worship and make lamentations before these shrines, while he and his disciple burnt melted butter beside the Patient's mattress, and did incantations, ringing bells and snapping their fingers at the pulses of the body, calling upon poor little Shudha Rani to come back from dreaming and say the name of Mother Kali. Oh he was a wonderful magic-man, with an all-India reputation for casting out devils!

Shudha, poor child, had a temperature of 105° and was tossing and moaning in delirium, crying to her Shanti Sister to come and save her.

It was at this stage of the treatment that the friend for whom by way of propitiating all agencies the Ranee had telegraphed—arrived on the scenes, and was enabled treading warily, to arrange for the incantations and magic to be continued in an adjoining courtyard, while the Nurses and the more prosaic recognized enteric treatment, were given a chance. The argument which weighed with the Priest man being that the credit of the Cure would be the greater, surely, if he worked his magic from a distance!

So Shudha was sponged, and laid on a clean mattress in a clean and peaceful room: and her diet was regulated, and her Nurses watched her night and day, while the quack Homœopath occupied the distant guest house, and the Priests spells were a-wearing, and the *ji-s* beat their breasts in the private Chapel.

And when the disease had at last run its long and anxious course, and the fever-chart showed that all danger was overpast—a wan little ghost sat up in bed, and the magic-man peeping through the key-hole, said to his admiring disciples, "Behold, I have raised the dead. My fee is 10,000 rupees: give it quickly, that I may go hence to work more wonders, and that my disciple may spread my fame in the North and the South."

And the Grandmother Rani took the dust of his feet, and said "Truly it was your magic alone which helped us: but being women without protection were we not wise to propitiate all agencies?"

And, "carry no anxiety on that account," made answer the magic-man, "so great was my magic, that even the remedies which you used, could do no harm. I go to take the road. Let the price of healing be paid

in Notes, for these can live in my wallet or in a corner of my loin cloth."

But the Great-Aunt watched the wonder-worker secure his ten crisp rolls, with scowls and misgivings.

"In my opinion," she said "it was the holy man's mattress which wrought the cure: and on to that the child should once more be lifted."

But Shudha said "I move not. Ye both are wrong. It was Sister-Shanti who healed me, bringing me dishes of my favourite curds, when all the house was still."

THE STORY OF MADHAB AND HIS WIFE.

By H. H. The Maharani Sunnity Devi of Cooch Bihar.

A long time ago there lived a Brahmin named Madhab, who was so poor, that he and his wife could not afford to buy ordinary brass utensils for their household use. They had resorted to the strange expedient of digging nine little holes in the floor of their hut, for themselves and their seven children. Every morning the little ones helped their mother plaster the holes and floor with scrupulous care, and when the time came for their only meal, she daintily served the plain boiled rice into each little hole, and called her family to partake of it. With reverent gratitude they blessed God for His tender gift of daily food and ate their meagre meal.

Madhab earned a scanty livelihood by collecting wood from the adjoining jungle, and selling it to the villagers. These small sums provided the family with cloths of the poorest quality. Now and again a handful of vegetables might be added to their daily fare and then the little ones thought they had dined like princes.

Despite their grinding poverty Madhab and his wife were always serene and cheerful. They taught their children to serve God with every fibre of their beings and to accept all that came to them as gifts from His Hands. The sweet summer brings the life giving rain, the field flowers and the bright sunshine were all favours of Divine Providence for which the children learned to love and bless God.

The hardships of the humble lives were sweetened by their inward spirituality and content. Nor did Madhab and his wife neglect the physical culture of their children. At dawn of day the mother's gentle voice wakened them from their slumbers and with her they wended their way through the fragrant *Mende* hedges to the river near their home, and in its limpid waters laved their bodies and washed their garments. The morning sun and breeze soon dried them as they ran home rejoicing, the girls laden with water and river mud to wash and plaster the hut, the boys darting here and there to pick up stray twigs and brambles to add to their store of firewood.

The mother taught her daughters to gather herbs and make them into healing ointments, for wounds and bruises, to gather and dry grasses for their humble beds, to knead the soft clay into images of worship, and to twist and plait reeds and creepers into baskets and ropes for household use. Anon they spun and wove their own simple cloths and coverings.

The boys followed their father into the forest and learned from him much jungle lore, and the history of their own land and race. With him they hewed trees and split up the wood into faggots. He taught them to run and wrestle and shoot with bow and arrows. Sometimes they returned home with a bundle of bamboos and learned how to skilfully separate the outer bark and weave it into mats.

The children returned their parents love and care with a like devotion and unswerving obedience, and were great favourites in the village. When a handy boy was wanted to help, carry, or tend the sick, Madhab's sons were called upon. If a quarrel arose in the village play ground, Madhab's children could be depended on

to tell the truth about it, and were called as peacemakers. Thus Madhab's family lived and loved each other, and served their native village, and the lowly little hut near the river was known as The Good Family's Cottage.

The Goddess Shashti, who sends babes into this world had long noted the piety, and patience reigning in Madhab's home, and said to herself: "This poor Brahmin does not seem to complain of his poverty, neither does his wife, I must test their love for their children."

A few days later a strange little boy wandered near the hut and joined the brothers and sisters in their play. When evening was closing in, the eldest said: Brothers and sisters, it grows late, mother will be waiting for us, we must return. The game was quickly abandoned, and the little stranger found himself about to be left alone. With tear filled eyes and trembling voice, he appealed to the brothers and sisters: "What shall I do? My home is very far from here! I am afraid to go alone." The seven grouped themselves sympathetically around him, some lovingly caught his hands, the girls wiped away his tears and all cheeringly said: "Never mind, little brother, you shall come with us. Mother will be only too pleased to see you." The little boy asked anxiously: "Are you sure your mother will be pleased? Will she not be rather annoyed to see a stranger?" "Oh no, little brother," answered the seven in chorus, "Our mother is the dearest and kindest of mothers and she loves all children." The stranger felt assured, and went contentedly to the hut with the seven.

Madhab and his wife were waiting for their children, who immediately explained how the strange little boy came to be with them. The mother's gentle eyes filled

with pity and she lifted the lost child in her arms and kissed him saying : " Poor little lad, I am very sorry you cannot return home to-night. You shall stay here, I am also a mother, mother to my children, and I will be your mother to-night. You won't cry, will you ? " The child nestled close in her arms and said : " No, I won't cry. I feel happy and safe with you." The evening meal was ready for serving and the children watched their father dig a tenth little hole, and helped to deftly plaster up the other holes a bit, to reduce their size so that the rice might suffice for the unexpected but welcome guest.

Somehow or other the little boy's home could not be found and he stayed on, in Madhab's family, cherished by father and mother as one of their own, and guarded and petted by the seven brothers and sisters who called him " Little Brother." Time passed on, and in much the same way, two more boys and two girls entered the family, and were welcomed and loved by each and all, each newcomer arrived, a fresh hole was dug, and the other ones reduced in size, to allow of there being sufficient for all, for though the family increased, their means did not, yet love and unity prevailed. The children's love for the strangers was as strong and generous as that of their parents, all shared hearts content and food with the homeless ones, and the self-sacrifice of themselves, seemed to bring its own reward in their splendid health and contentment.

A third stranger girl drifted into their midst and the food holes now numbered fifteen and were very small indeed. Still never a murmur was heard and Goddess Shasti living with the family as their " little daughter " but unknown to them, mused within herself : " The

world is full of the children I send into it. I send them all to be brothers and sisters, but those seven children here, are the only ones, who truly realise fraternal love. I must reward them and their parents."

About midnight Madhab and his wife were wakened by their names being softly called, and looking up they say a beautiful illumination above the roofless hut, and saw Goddess Shasti and five Debtas floating in the air. Goddess Shasti spoke :—

"My children, I am pleased with you. Your love for children is the true and ideal love, and seems like a chord of my own heart. I would that all parents were like you and all children like yours. Though Goddess Lakkhi and I do not live happily in the same family, I am going to ask her to come and live in your house and bless you, because I am so pleased with both of you." With these words the vision disappeared and Madhab and his wife discovered that the strange children whom they had adopted had also vanished.

The next day when wandering in the jungle as usual, Madhab came to a grand sandalwood forest. He collected large pieces of the scented wood and sold them in the market for a good sum. Overjoyed at his discovery he journeyed to the sandalwood forest every day, and brought home more money than he had ever before earned. He and his wife thanked God for this bounty, but did not alter their mode of living. The only use they made of their unexpected good fortune was to help and cherish poor children. In the winter they distributed warm clothing to them, and in the summer months cool drinks and fruits. The neighbouring villagers noticed their benevolence and marvelled that Madhab and his wife spent no money on comforts for themselves. The same

roofless hut was their home. The same plain boiled rice and a few vegetables served in the little holes their daily meal. The extra holes remained for any welcome stranger who came perchance hungry, and left clothed and refreshed. Thus they spent a few more beautiful years. Then another vision blessed them.

This time the Goddess Lakkhi came with heavenly music. Its glorious strains and the blowing of conch shells wakened them from their well earned slumbers, and they opened their eyes to see her standing resplendent before them. In a gentle loving voice she said :— "My children, I am pleased with you. You have used my treasures well. I have a great wish to live in your house for ever, and, Madhab, listen to me. You know that Goddess Sarwasati (wisdom) and I are not good friends and never live in the same family together, but you have pleased me so much that I wish to ask Goddess Sarwasati to come and live in your house." Then the vision vanished but the desire of the Goddess Lakkhi was realised the next day. Madhab arranged to send his sons to school and to teach his daughters himself, and the blessings of wisdom were soon evident in the Good Family Home.

The years passed on and their sons and daughters were scattered but not one of them forgot the teachings of their parents, and each united in their lives the blessings of the three Goddesses, Shasti, Lakkhi and Sarwasati.

PETER PAN.

By TAYLOR DARBYSHIRE.

Across the years there comes a note
Faint, crystal clear and true
'Tis Peter playing on his pipes
Summoning me and you
Back to the land of Let's Pretend
When all the world was new.

The veil we thought for ever down
Shutting our yearning gaze
Out from the many dear delights
Of childhood's glowing days
Lifts at the call and tempts us forth
Along the golden ways.

Once more we pace purposedly
Some scene from fairy Lore
Once more we seek some high emprise
Culled from the precious store
Of boyhood's books, till each becomes
A little child once more.

Fate fearful of our discontent
Had placed on us a ban
Forbidding us the dear dream days
Of memory's page to scan
But you—you gave us back our youth
God bless you Peter Pan.

AN APPEAL TO INDIAN LADIES.

By SHAH BANO BEGAM.

The Constitution and development of human society is governed by the same immutable laws as regulate the phenomena of the physical universe. The inequality of men as regards the material conditions of life is also a result of their unerring operation. But these variations in the social scale, ordained by God for the progress of humanity, involve an obligation on the rich to help their less favoured brethren who cannot, sometimes, afford even the bare necessaries of life.

The impulse for the discharge of this duty comes from the feeling of sympathy which is implanted by nature in the heart of every human being. The deeper this feeling, the stronger the impulse towards philanthropic effort. It is the mainspring of all those works of charity which are performed by man for the amelioration of his kind. Eliminate this feeling from human nature, and the world will present a spectacle of sordid selfishness and callous brutality which can better be imagined than described.

This feeling is strengthened and fortified by the teachings of every religion. Islam, in particular, which we Mohammadans regard as the last and most perfect of all religious systems in the world, enjoins on us in the clearest commandments the exercise of this feeling in various forms. It points out to us our duties to our fellow-men, and lays down for us rules of action to direct and organise all beneficent endeavour. If we discharge these duties

in the spirit of our faith and help those who stand in need of succour, we shall not only follow the will of God, but shall also earn the gratitude of our fellow-men, produce a spirit of harmony in the human family, and make the world a better place to live in.

Even if we leave aside revealed religion and dogmatic belief, our common humanity entitles the deserving members of the human race to a share of worldly goods. This claim has been recognised from time immemorial, but the form which our charity should take has differed in every age and changed with local conditions. In my opinion the best form of charity is not ministering to individual needs in a haphazard way, but to organise charitable institutions for the lasting good of the community. This system has been approved by all the civilised and advanced countries of the world. Public institutions of a charitable character such as hospitals, schools, colleges, and poor-houses have proved more useful and more conducive to the well-being of mankind than the distribution of alms to beggars in an unsystematic manner. The people of India have always been lavish in their generosity towards the poor and the needy; their innumerable endowments for charitable purposes, which exist even to the present day in every town and village, are a standing testimony to the free distribution of their wealth. But the objects for which most of these endowments have been created have not been justified by results. Instead of doing good to the people for whom they were intended they have destroyed the spirit of honest hard work for earning a living, and made the beneficiaries dependent on a beggarly dole of alms. They have no grit or stamina to hold their own in the fierce battle of life, and pass their lives as idle drones.

These habits of ignoble ease are transmitted from generation to generation, till the object of the charity is completely defeated, and the progress of the recipients of this charity comes to a standstill.

The enlightened countries of the West have set us an example of organising our charities to the best advantage of all concerned, and if we follow in their footsteps, we can, with the resources at our disposal, confer the maximum of benefit on our less fortunate fellow-countrymen who stand in need of our help and guidance.

My main object in writing this article is to address an appeal to the well-to-do ladies of India on behalf of those women whose condition calls for sympathetic notice. Our Indian ladies have always been noted for generosity and philanthropic activity of every kind. I should be going beyond the limits of an article if I should enumerate even a few instances of such unselfish beneficence. Is it not then a pity that the very sex which has made such unsparing efforts to alleviate human suffering has at the present time become an object of commiseration. Ignorance and superstition have played havoc with their lives; thousands of new-born babes die every year because their mothers lack proper knowledge and guidance; and the loss of these budding lives makes their own existence a constant misery. With eyes dimmed by sorrow, and flooded with tears, they look to their wealthy and educated sisters for some kind of assistance and relief, but nobody extends to them a helping hand or drags them out of the slough of despond. Nobody points them the way to ameliorate their condition or improve the position in which they are placed. There is not a ray of sunshine to brighten their gloomy lives and their future is as dark as the present.

I have made a close study of Indian women and I have no hesitation in saying that they are more patient, contented, hard-working, and intelligent, than their sisters elsewhere. But poverty, ignorance and preventible disease, have reduced them to a condition that they can be called human beings only by courtesy. The first and foremost duty of our wealthy Indian ladies is to come forward to their rescue and better their conditions of life. A little over half a century ago the women of England, whom we now place before us as ideals of progress and culture, were no better off than the Indian women of to-day; but the wealthier section of their sex realised their duty, and applied themselves to the task of improving their lot. They set apart a considerable portion of their wealth for the good of their helpless sisters; started schools for the primary education of girls; established institutions for training them in various industrial arts and crafts; provided for them such work as might secure them a living without subjecting them to intolerable labour conditions; and afforded them facilities for obtaining medical relief and preserving their health. A few years of devoted service to this noble cause revolutionised their conditions of life, and raised them to a position which we now regard with envy and admiration. Those tireless workers in the field of social reform who achieved these wonderful results are still busy with their work; and it is our duty to emulate them and follow the path they have trodden before.

The ladies of the royal family and a host of others occupying the highest positions in English society, are devoting most of their time and energy to works of charity and their beneficent activities during the world-wide war have considerably lessened the hardships of poor and

indigent women in the United Kingdom. Our Indian ladies have got the capacity to do likewise, and we pray to God that we may be inspired with the same spirit of self-sacrifice and altruistic effort.

India is a much larger country than England and is inhabited by people differing from one another in racial characteristics, forms of belief and social customs. But the problem of uplifting the female sex is common to all the sections of the Indian population. If our Indian ladies of wealth and position tackle this problem in right earnest, and attend to the wants and deficiencies of Indian women all over the country with a view to raising their standard of comfort and happiness, the long distances of the country and the variety of its inhabitants cannot be an insuperable barrier in their way. By making a united effort on a large scale they can form a network of societies for different kinds of charitable and social work at important centres, and these may extend to less important places in course of time.

The most essential item on the programme of reform is the extension of female education. It was with this object in view that the Muslim Ladies Conference was started at Aligarh which is a seat of Muslim education. It was followed later by a larger and more influential organisation, the All-India Ladies Conference, which was started by Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal. But to our great disappointment and regret our Indian ladies have not taken much interest in these movements.

The next requirement of Indian women, which is not less pressing than the first, is sanitary reform and the provision of adequate means for preserving their health. This work was initiated on a considerable scale by Lady

Hardinge and the movement was supported by a number of distinguished workers. Its scope and sphere of operations are in need of much further extension. Hundreds and thousands of places in India have no access to skilled medical relief which is one of the prime necessities of life. As an inevitable result of this deplorable state of affairs there is a perceptible decline in the health and physical fitness of women which is followed by the enfeeblement of their mental powers.

The third item on the agenda is to find means for combating poverty. This can be accomplished by giving them proper training in such industrial arts as may suit their physical powers and secure them a decent livelihood without much hard labour. There are many cottage industries such as knitting, lace-making, hand-loom weaving, etc., which can bring them good wages without impairing their physical powers.

It will not be sufficient for our charitably disposed ladies to give a large donation to a charity fund and take no further interest in the work started under their auspices; it will be absolutely necessary to take an active part in the actual working of the scheme. The example set by men and women of high social standing, whether for good or for evil, is very infectious; and if some ladies of light and leading come forward to shoulder this burden, their example will have a far-reaching effect in evoking enthusiasm for the cause of social service. For instance if a few ladies of distinguished families take up the work of teaching in schools their example will greatly help our educational reformers in getting lady teachers for their schools from all classes of society. If we cast a glance at the past history of India we can see that among the ladies who have distinguished themselves

in arts and sciences, the pioneers have always been members of some illustrious family, who have acquired proficiency in their work as amateurs and the example set by them has later on been followed by other workers who have taken it up as an honourable profession.

Among outstanding figures in Muslim history I shall mention only two names to illustrate my point. The lady Ayesha, wife of our prophet, used to do teaching; and Zainab, his daughter, used to tan hides and sell them for the benefit of the poor. If the wealthy members of our sex undertake to give such practical lessons in self-help and self-denial, the social regeneration of Indian women is assured. They will by their practice which is more effective than precept instil into their minds the value of education and the advantages of sanitary living; teach them to be generous in their dealings and economical in their household management; induce them to sacrifice their own interests for the good of others and to love their neighbours in the true sense of the word.

The Parsis in India are a small community, but their public spirit, organised charity and social reform might put the larger communities to shame.

This Exhibition of which the foundation-stone is being laid by Lady Chelmsford marks the dawn of a new era in the annals of this country. If it is supported by the wealthy and influential ladies of India in the fullest measure, it will do an immense amount of good to our female population.

The future of every country and every nation on the face of the earth is largely dependent on the physical and mental capacity of their rising generations, and these generations are moulded by their mothers. They also inherit from them their physical and mental faculties.