

Bombay, Dec. 4th, 1896.

"We are certainly living here in the midst of death. The death returns in Bombay are exactly double what they have been in the same week for the last two years. The plague is on the increase, there have been cases amongst people of every nationality here, though as yet very few amongst the English. The daily papers try to minimise the cases, and very many are not published, but they cannot deny that it is on the increase, and the mortality amongst those attacked is enormous.

People are still flying from Bombay, which is perhaps a good thing, as it gives more power to the municipal officers to get the place cleansed. But Bombay not being drained, we are now suffering from the exudation of a soil that is soaked several feet deep in filth of every kind. So much water is being used for cleaning now, that the next fear will be that there will be a dearth of water when the hot weather comes. God has heard the prayers for rain, and we were full of thankfulness when a delightful downpour refreshed the parched crops.

When one reads the dreadful judgments pronounced in the Old Testament against extortioners—those who take bribes—and against liars, one cannot wonder that a judgment has come on this nation, where one who is above a bribe is a marked man, and where to make a rupee any lie is considered allowable as long as it is not found out.

It makes one so sad to live in the midst of it, as we do here, in the native part of the city, and you cannot understand the depressing work it is to be always suspecting everyone. It seems as if it must deteriorate one's character, unless one is continually alive to the danger.

Famine prices still continue, but as yet grain can be got, except in some of the northern provinces, I believe, where there has been great suffering amongst the poor. I am afraid to think much about going home this year lest it should not come to pass. I should hope to be allowed to stay and help."

Bombay, Dec. 11th, 1896.

"If the plague continues to increase, as at present, I should hope not to go and leave my dear people here. There is such a panic amongst the natives, and they are so afraid the doctors will poison them, that they have taken to conceal the cases of plague in their dirty houses, throwing the dead bodies into the public drain at night, to avoid the disinfecting of their houses which they know follows on the discovery of a case, so you may fancy they do a great deal to spread the disease.

Happily they are flying from Bombay into the country, so the municipal authorities will have a chance of cleansing their dens. Don't be anxious about us. With care and cleanliness I think there is little danger, and as long as the panic does not spread to the English, I think we are all right. Our nurses are not at all frightened."

December 26th, 1896.

"I think we have very much to be thankful for, that so far none of our people have been attacked with plague, though we here are in the very midst of it, and cases are continually being brought, thinking they are malaria, which turn out to be plague. I am sorry to say we have had two cases in the Lying-in

Hospital, which is very serious, and two of our native servants have died of it; but on the whole, considering we have a hundred native servants, with their families, in the compound, it is not much. But the depression all over Bombay is most distressing. One is continually meeting funerals, and the servants, who are obliged to stay here on account of work, look so sad and careworn. Thousands are leaving Bombay. Last Tuesday the Bishop ordered a general day of prayer and humiliation for the plague and famine . . . which ended up with a hymn of thanksgiving for our preservation in the midst of the danger. The nurses all seemed impressed, and I must say, considering that most of them are Bombay people who have friends living in the most infected parts, they are very brave and good, and are ready to do anything to help. They have had three or four deaths from plague at St. George's (European) Hospital, and I believe three or four have recovered. If anyone gets ill here I mean to give quinine and brandy *ad libitum* at once. I cannot help thinking if the exhaustion could be met by stimulant at first, the system would have time to struggle against the poison. So many of the cases seem to sink from failure of heart (perhaps you will say that is what most people die of, but I mean that it is exhaustion that seems to kill the people, and while the doctors are trying to reduce the fever, people sink.) How one realises at these times one's littleness, and the impotence of one's earthly nature to take in more than the little spot which is within one's horizon. Here one's thoughts and interests seem so centred for the time on the troubles hanging over us, and yet to the world in general I don't suppose they are of more than momentary interest, and in another year or two it will all be a matter of history here."

Bombay, January 10th, 1897.

"I know you will be anxious to hear from me, as you will have heard by this mail that we have been asked to nurse the Parsee Bubonic Hospital. . . . We are lent for a month at least. I am just to get the nursing into order. It is a new hospital, just started for Parsees who have the plague. It is intensely interesting work, and I do feel so thankful I was allowed to come. . . . It is such a comfort to feel that one can do something to help these poor people; but oh! we do see such sad cases. One man has lost his wife, his sister, his nephew, and one or two other relatives, and is now watching here by the bedside of his married daughter, who is, I fear, dying. They come in often with just a little fever, and before night they are raving with delirium, and often die in the course of a few hours. This afternoon we have had three deaths, and three more are now actually dying, and all this afternoon Sister and I have been going from bed to bed trying to quiet delirious patients. We have not got a proper staff of nurses at present, so that the work is rather heavy, but we seem to have extra strength given us for the work. It is such joy to see the relief of the friends of the sick at our coming. They say it has so reassured them to feel that Europeans will come and nurse them. The Parsee priests who have relations here are most nice to us, and say they wish they could rouse their own people to do the same. They are quite curious as to our motive for doing it. . . . They say the only thing to stop the plague will be hot weather. At present it is raging in all this part of the town. Most of the houses are

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