

got no satisfaction, so that I was considerably surprised a few days later to be awakened at one a.m. to receive four new cases, brought from the fanatical caste first visited on the Kantha. Two of these died, and two recovered; these, Asebai and Joosab, were very good patients, not afraid of us, and were in no hurry to be discharged. After this the plague seemed to have spent itself on the coast, for we had no more cases or reports therefrom.

My first search party is well remembered, partly because it was my first ride on a camel, and the fatigue remained for days, but chiefly because, being imperfectly instructed in caste prejudices, I caused the family much inconvenience. The father we found had plague, with a definite bubo, then I turned to the wife and felt her pulse. That was all, but the effect was that the whole of the midday meal which was preparing, and the fire, were thrown away, and the floor white-washed, and she had to bathe and put on fresh clothes. She was getting the dinner, and my touch had defiled both it and her. They were not ill-tempered over it, it was their "dastur" or custom, and they would not take compensation, but gave me fruit and flowers, and promised to bring Uko up to the hospital later, when it got cooler. Mamoo here climbed up a thin, lofty cocoanut palm, with an open pocket knife in his mouth, and cut us down some young fruit, full of clear, cool, fresh water, which we were grateful for.

By the end of October plague had disappeared from Gundiali and its near neighbourhood, and I only remained to care for the convalescing patients not yet fit to be discharged.

On the 25th October the Hindu holidays began—they are called "Divali," and last four days. One superstition is that the spirits of all who have died during the year walk abroad on the night before Divali begins, and especially in the place where they had been cremated. My patients said, since so many had died in hospital, they would be sure to revisit it, and should they be seen by any one that person would certainly die during the year, so they begged with tears that they might be discharged on the morning of the 24th inst. Since they had their friends ranged on their side, I did not see what I could do, so gave them their discharge, making each promise to come up daily for dressings, and if they got worse instead of better they would then let me take them to Kodaga Hospital. One Mahomedan woman, Ranebai, we kept in as long as I remained in Gundiali, as they have no superstition for these Hindu holidays, and made arrangements for food to be supplied to the husband to cook; thus the establishment was reduced and expenses curtailed wherever possible.

A day or two before the holidays begin the horns and tails of all the bullocks and the manes and tails of the horses are dyed red, which has a curious, not unpleasant effect. The first day is called "Divali." All my patients were as good as their word, and arrived early to be dressed, and then I got the Dhroo to set men to work to dig up a three-inch layer of our late hospital floors, and have it carried away, prior to having a new clay floor put down and the place white-washed.

At sunset the whole village was (for Gundiali) brilliantly lighted, quaint little native lamps burnt in every niche outside the houses and round the doors, while the small girls carried crude fairy lamps, or pierced native pottery, and went singing from door to

door, while fireworks were going off in every direction, a grand display being made before my tent. I was taken to see the native village doctor—every village possesses one or more men who gain their knowledge by tradition and experience, and are looked up to by their people, but have no college education. This one ran away when plague appeared, but now returned, seeing the danger was past. He was a fine looking man, said to be clever, and his house was very neat and orderly—one set of shelves containing country medicines, two other glass cupboards were filled with European medicines, of which he was not a little proud, while on the walls hung pictures of the gods. Then I was requested to go and look at a beautiful, fair young Bhattia girl, who was ill, but on the condition that I gave her no medicine, a condition I was willing to fulfil, as she appeared to be beyond human aid.

Later the people came to my tent, saying they had brought Memsahib a man to sing and play. Having permission to do so, they were soon happy, sitting on the ground smoking their native cigarettes, a dried leaf rolled conically, with a minute quantity of tobacco at the larger end, and eating sipari, or betel nut, without which a Hindu could scarcely exist.

The old man sang, and played the "sittara,"—which is a clumsy kind of violin—it has eleven wire strings of different tones, and three catgut and one wire above them which are really played on, with a clumsy bow. I did not understand, but Dhroo said he sang first of love, then some martial songs of the ancient wars of Cutch, and the first coming of the English.

The day following was "Salaam Day," on which the people go to "Salaam," the headmen of the village, and much backsheesh in money, fruit, and other presents is given. I was dressing the out-patients when they called me to my tent, as the people were coming to salaam me. Carrying off little Gungerbai, I awaited them there, and presently they came in, in single file, each took my right hand in both theirs, and put it to their foreheads saying "salaam"; then passed on to the Dhroo, doing the same. After this they sat down, and yesterday's musician sang and played; but having to salaam some of the Rao's relatives, they soon went their way.

I had barely finished my work when my orderlies told me a horse had been brought to take me to the races, which is one of the features of this day. The beautiful black Scindie cob looked a bit frisky in his red and gold trappings and native saddle, and there was not much sense of security with a lame foot in the stirrup, and no pommel, but he trotted quietly on, not much disturbed by the crowds and noise around.

Under a huge banyan tree a very picturesque crowd of men and children was gathered all in brilliant holiday attire and much jewellery. No native women who respected themselves were there, only young girls. It is always a mystery how these same girls who are allowed a considerable amount of liberty, settle down, after their early marriages, to their monotonous home-keeping lives.

The racing began informally, there was no umpire, no rules, no judge, betting, or prizes, and only two horses ran at a time. These last ranged from small ponies to big Cutchee horses. The method of procedure was as follows:—Two horses, or ponies, are brought out, the riders join hands, or more often put their arms on each other's shoulders, and then ride at

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