

animals and easily frightened away. When no stones were thrown at them, you would occasionally find them trooping into the tent, but on the slightest movement they would be off.

Our ayah would stay with us night and day. She was a funny old thing, about fifty years of age—very fat, very black, with grey hair and a wrinkled kindly old face. Her costume was a blue petticoat with plenty of gatherings at the waist; a dark maroon warm jacket with long sleeves; and a white cloth over her head, shoulders and blouse, which she tucked into her waist, and called a "hornee." She was supposed to be a general help. In the night she used to sleep on the ground on a carpet near the bed.

My turn of nights in bed was a moonlight one, and often I used to lie awake listening to the different noises. It happened that I looked towards the entrance door from which a stream of moonlight entered, and there, standing near the sleeping ayah was a hungry hyena, a much larger sized animal than the jackal, and known to have attacked man (but this is rare). It had come to try for some of the dainties laid out on the table. I was afraid to drive it out as it looked so fierce, but eventually made a noise and it calmly walked out of the tent. It must, however, have come in again, as in the morning the bacon had disappeared. I told the ayah the following morning about this beast, so she always after took a long bamboo stick to bed with her. I used often to be waked up in the nights by this old woman beating the bed and furniture and shouting to drive away an imaginary animal. I do believe she often did this in her sleep, as she was surprised at my shouting at her to stop.

When seated in the isolation hut doing night duty, jackals would actually come smelling around us. The stage of isolation was most trying, as it was difficult to keep the patients amused. Near the Isolation Camp the natives had set up an idol, and every day would see our ayah making her salutations to it. She firmly believed that she would not take the pox, but said she would be delighted to have it, as it was considered lucky and was a gift from the gods. Such are the ironies of the East. Things we abhor and know are avoidable, the ignorant native believes to be a visitation from the gods, for good or bad works done.

The smallpox ran its course with no dreadful happenings, and the day for our departure arrived. The order was given for the tonga to take us to the station. The cook wanted a certificate, the sweeper also wanted one, and, of course, our old friend the ayah. With big salaams from them all and buksheesh and broad grins on their faces and ours, we got into the tonga and were off. The tonga tried our patience. Harnessed to it were two fat bulls, who generally preferred to walk except when encouraged by the driver with a twist of the tail or a knock from the stick, when they would start off running with a great jerk to the carriage, almost throwing us out and as suddenly would commence walking

again. The driver, to remind them, would twist their tails and beat them, at the same time shouting all sorts of curses on them and their ancestors for generations back, when the same would be enacted. Why, we could have walked with more comfort, but it was proper to sit where we were, and there we did stay till the station was reached. Our driver was off his seat in a minute and very attentive. We gave him buksheesh! Our luggage had gone ahead. The next one we met was the station babu who sold the tickets. He seemed so pleased to see us that we had to laugh. The train steamed in after a while, and we got into the reserved seats and were quite comfortable. Our journey back took sixteen hours.

AMELIA BURKE.

P.S.—The word "buksheesh" means a tip in Hindustani.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

The Court of the Clothworkers' Company has promised £1,000 towards the £50,000 required by the Household and Social Science Department of King's College for Women for the completion of the new buildings on Campden Hill.

The Home Secretary, on the recommendation of the Prison Commissioners, has appointed Miss Selina Fox, M.D., at present Superintendent of the Bermondsey Medical Mission, to be Lady Superintendent and Deputy Medical Officer of the institutions for women at Aylesbury, comprising the Female Convict Prison, the Borstal Institution for Females, the State Inebriate Reformatory for Women, and the Preventive Detention Prison for Women.

The interesting correspondence on "Women's Discontent—And Why" has continued during the week in the *Daily Graphic*. Many instructive articles and letters have appeared. Nursing conditions have not been approved of. For instance, the Rev. Percy Dearmer writes:—"Speaking generally of unrest and change, there has been of late a profound revolution in customs and manners. One has only to read present-time novels to know that women are no longer expected to faint. Parents, too, are bringing up their girls in a much healthier way, although that problem is not yet faced in the right way. Women are not contented in the old way to be household drudges, and girls to-day are not going to sacrifice their lives playing patience with some old creature. Christianity means the right of full development to every creature, and here the woman's note comes in. To deny the right of individuality is short of Christianity, and to do this is not being fair to women. In the professions for women alone conditions are bad. Take, for example, the nurses. The people talk of hospitals, and have their Hospital Sundays, but nothing is done for the nurses. Their hours are a disgrace to civilisation, the time for meals

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)