

contaminated. I have seen this man going to wipe the cups for my use with this very duster. Of course, he was ignorant of what ailed the patient; "Kasi" or cough, and "Tarp" or fever, was all that he knew, and of course more or less everyone gets this. I made arrangements to get back to hospital for meals.

Patient ordered linseed poultice to chest. Great difficulty in procuring articles. When poultice removed and replaced, before you can say "knife" the husband, who is in the room, has thrown the used poultice through the window into a lane below, irrespective of passers-by. When told not to do so, shrugs his shoulders and says, "It is nothing." Gramophone with shrieky native airs going for hours at a time. With difficulty get them to turn it off.

Cook a Brahmin, wearing only a loin-cloth or doti (short native trousers, neither cut nor sewn, of cloth, some yards in length, wrapped around the loins and part of the thighs, composed of muslin or other soft material, through which his brown skin showed), the sacred Hindu thread, and that's all, plus contentment. When I ask him for anything, he stands about two feet away and drops it from the height of a foot into my hands, otherwise places it on a table. "His Majesty" the cook treats me with contempt (being a heaven-born Brahmin). If I happen to touch his person, he cannot eat or touch any utensil without bathing himself first. I have polluted him. I dare not place a foot in the kitchen, otherwise it must be properly washed. Once I did so, and was told it was a sacred place. A peep into the kitchen. Brass vessels as bright as looking-glasses, and everything so clean. These people at times used to take their meals in the kitchen. No dining-table was needed. Low wooden stools about 4 in. high were placed for them to sit on. The brass "tali," equivalent to our plate, but about four times its size, was placed on the ground in front of them. On this was piled rice, and from four to six small bowls containing a variety of dishes made of vegetables, &c. (but no meat), some highly spiced, others oily, and others again were chutney, the last-mentioned being a favourite. They used to fold their legs under them and eat with their hands.

Although my patient was so young, she had a married step-son aged about 18 years, his wife being about 14 years of age. I used to find it so strange, this young couple would never speak to one another or to friends in the presence of their parents. I never found out the reason for this, but I believe it would have been considered disrespectful to their elders to

have done so. The daughter-in-law had to obey any order given by the mother-in-law. Both these young Indian women were anxious to copy English ways. They had a nice library with English books. It looked to me as if this library was only for show, as not one of them could read. On a balcony near the sick-room was placed the "Tulsi" plant. This is considered a sacred tree. The young daughter-in-law every morning would make her salaams (salutations) to it. She would sprinkle it with water. I was too afraid to go close enough to see this special form of worship. If I happened to peep, she would at once stop except when sprinkling water, and not knowing Hindu caste regulations, it was difficult to know when I would offend. I have, however, found out from an educated Hindu patient the reasons for this special worship. There are two:—One says that the "Tulsi" is the wife of the God Vishnu, much beloved by the Hindus, and when the morning salutations are made to it, a little bit of the red mud which the Hindu uses to make a caste mark (these caste marks vary in size and shape and colour) is placed on one of the stems of the tree, grains of rice are also thrown around the tree, which is then sprinkled with water. The second is that the aroma from the tree improves the room. Rice, water, &c., are used, because they can easily be secured, even by the poor. I believe on the fifteenth day of the Hindu New Year is commemorated the event of the marriage of the "Tulsi" with the God Vishnu. Of course, I myself cannot vouch for the accuracy of the above legend.

The astrologer plays a great part in their lives. He is brought from great distances to foretell whether the patient will get well or not. My patient used to delight in showing me her silk sarees and telling me the cost of each—"This cost Rs. 450," and so on. They love sporting jewellery. I can assure you it would be difficult for a European nurse, to keep on a case like this for long, as some of their customs are strange; many things we would blush to mention are openly discussed with friends, and more openly on the telephone. It is only these constant peculiarities which keep her going for a time. It is quite true that East is East and West is West. Her parting gift to me was a lady's gold watch with an enamelled peacock on the back, with tail fully spread. This watch, with the emblem of the peacock, was specially given to me for luck, as this bird is considered sacred by the Hindus. I may mention it was stolen by a pickpocket about a month after receiving it.

Bombay.

A. M. B.

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