

Brahmin like himself. It had been a very depressing day, with two deaths in the hospital; the bodies had been removed to a burning ghat not far distant. The ghat was hidden from the hospital by the plateau, but Vishnu could see the flames leaping into the air in the distance. A tree covered with white blossoms which stood near and appeared at the end of the ridge was dyed blood red. Overhead the moon was shining brightly in a cloudless sky, the wind had risen and blew in from the sea disturbing the rushes on the bank, among which the frogs were croaking loudly, rustling the dry leaves on the thatched roof of the hospital and touching the top of the palm trees along the ridge. It was a cold wind and Vishnu shivered impatiently. He had hurt his leg a few nights previously crossing the ground in the dark, and the wound was sore and painful—he had not thought of having it attended to. Inside the hospital the patient was screaming wildly in delirium; outside a screech owl settled among the boughs of the tree behind the apothecary's hut, and joined with the frogs in making night hideous with their noise.

On any ordinary ordinary occasion Vishnu would not have noticed such common everyday sounds, but he was tired and depressed and could not get the calculation of his wages right. He had eaten very little food that day, and, in fact, for days past being loathe to draw any more advances on his salary. After all, there would be none too much when divided among himself, his wife and child; then, too, doubtless, the uncle would exact something in payment for all the time he had lived at home, earning nothing or next to nothing. When at last the food came he was disinclined to eat it, and soon returned to the ward. There, at least, it was warm, and there was company however far from lively. His duties had to be performed and he set about them in a mechanical way; at his friend's bed he waited a moment.

'I am all right now,' said the man, and shall be out to-morrow and back at my work again soon. I hope you may have good luck and not get ill yourself.'

It was his way of thanking the lad. Soon after the doctor made his round for the night and would not come again unless sent for to his house in the city. The apothecary was close at hand, and came in from time to time to see if anything was required.

The hospital was very quiet at first, and presently Vishnu sitting huddled in a corner wrapped in his blanket, fell asleep. Once in the night a woman who wanted something came and touched him on the shoulder, but he did not wake; he was sleeping very heavily, and shivered from time to time. When the dim gray morning light stole in and the patients began to rouse themselves, there were calls for the ward boy. They called loudly and the women impatiently, and yet the boy did not stir, though he was lying in their midst, lying as he had fallen over during the night.

One of the women shook him, but still he did not move. 'He must be dead,' screamed another. 'Run and fetch the apothecary.'

The apothecary came over leisurely. 'Dead' he said, contemptuously. 'I saw him sleeping quite peacefully when I passed through the ward.'

The boy still lay just as before, but his breath was coming in fast, short, gasps.

The apothecary dispersed the women crowding around the lad and had him removed to a bed. His experienced eye told him at once that Vishnu was down with the plague. It was not astonishing. Later the doctor came; he looked across at the apothecary and shook his head.

'A malignant case,' he said, thoughtfully; he was a clever, practical man: then they discovered the wound on the leg, and he spoke even more hopelessly than before.

'We must do our best, but it is a bad case.' Both he and the apothecary had taken a fancy to the boy who had worked so cheerfully and bravely in the ward.

Two 'coolies' were pressed into service, for it was not easy to procure ward boys, now that all knew the dangers attending the post. They were wild, half-stupid, sullen-looking creatures, but better than none at all, and quite willing to remain for high wages.

All that day and the next Vishnu lay in a stupor, from which he only roused on the third evening. Then came wild delirium, during which he was forever making hopeless calculations. 'Sixteen days at 20 rupees a month, cut one rupee three annas, 20 days at 16 rupees. Cut a day, cut two rupees, 20 rupees at 16 days,' and so it went on and on all through the long hours.

Toward morning he fell into a quiet sleep, from which he woke almost free from fever and with his senses clear.

When the doctor had been and gone, and the apothecary alone stood beside him for a minute, Vishnu tried to speak.

'I am all right now—how long have I been ill?' he asked.

'Only two or three days; you are better, but you must remain quite still,' the other answered.

'Shall I get no wages while I am ill?' he inquired anxiously.

'You will get your full wages,' was the reply—the apothecary's answer was unauthorised, but he spoke as his feelings dictated, being a humane man.

'That is good,' replied Vishnu, turning his face to the wall contentedly.

The long hot hours of the day passed; toward evening a breeze sprang up and blew in at the open door. Presently the moon rose and Vishnu could see the light on the waters of the harbor. The doctor had been again and pronounced the boy decidedly better, but that he would need much care. At 11 the apothecary came on his round.

'I have served 16 days,' said Vishnu, anxiously; 'do you think the Sahibs would give me a few rupees in advance to send to my family? It can be cut from my wages at the end of the month.'

'I will speak to the doctor about it,' answered the apothecary, soothingly, as he passed on round the hospital.

The only sounds in the ward that night were those from the sleeping coolies, who snored loudly. The patients were better, all but one, who had been buried the previous day; the others lay sleeping quietly. Vishnu lay quite still, looking out over the rushes toward the moonlit waters. He was in no pain now, only very weak. How fortunate it was, he thought, that he had not died this time, without any son to perform the ceremony necessary to rescue his soul from hell; it was the one thing of his religion which was a real practical fact to him. Then he wondered if his wife would cry and tear her hair; but no, she need never know he had been ill and she so nearly a widow. Presently, looking round the ward, he began to wonder how the other patients were, particularly the man who had lain like himself, without a relative to tend him; it occurred to him he would go and see for himself—the man's bed was near the door. Getting off the bed he felt strangely weak and giddy, and was obliged to hold the bedsteads for support as he passed. The moonlight lay in a broad white streak from the open door to the wall, and that was where the bed should be; he made another step forward and fell prone on the earthen floor. A shriek ran through the ward—the patients turned restlessly, but did not wake—the snoring coolies raised their heads and dropped them again, for all was still. Outside in the tree behind the hut the screech owl woke, and its piercing, unearthly cry filled the air; soon it, too, ceased, and then all was still, very still.

In the morning, when the light stole glimmering in, some one moved. Presently the apothecary came in, unusually early, before any one was astir.

'I had a bad dream about the boy,' he said afterward, when recording the facts to the doctor, 'and woke thinking I heard him scream. It was only the screech owl, though, so I just went back to bed. When I found him this morning he was quite dead, stiff and cold.'

The two men looked at each other and then at the form lying on the bed.

'He was a good ward boy,' said the doctor; 'it will be difficult to get another like him.'

'Vishnu Bulwunt died from failure of the heart's action'; this was the official report.

His body was burned, as that of a high caste Brahmin should be, on the principal burning ghat of the city, and his wages for 16 days at 20 rupees a month duly forwarded to the meek-eyed child widow, not even deducting the fees for the burning of the corpse, which were paid out of the funds of that public body in whose service he had died.—*Longman's Magazine*.

The Catholic World.

BELGIUM.—Half a Century of self-sacrificing labor.—

Fifty years of continuous and self-sacrificing labor in behalf of the poor and suffering may well claim recognition. This is the record of two Sisters of St. Vincent, members of the community in charge of the orphanage for girls and home for the aged at St. Denys-Westrem, a suburb of Ghent. The anniversary was celebrated with no small religious pomp, in prose and verse the worth and merits of the good Sisters were duly set forth, and many appropriate presents were made to them on the joyful occasion. Between orphans and aged the hospice counts some 250 inmates, and it is not a bad index of the care taken of the old folk that no fewer than 30 of them have passed the age of 80. And among the nuns one venerable Sister is not far from completing her century.

ENGLAND.—Discovery of a Valuable Picture.—

Much attention has been directed to the Rubens found at the Catholic church at Wapping. The dust, as well as a thick coat of varnish, which concealed the picture, have been successfully removed, and it is now seen that the subject forms the link between the Descent from the Cross and the Burial. The Rev. Father Beckley is having photographs of the painting taken. It is stated that £800 has been offered for the picture—a pretty nice windfall for a poor London mission. The picture represents the taking of the Body of the Saviour from the cross by St. John. It was found among a heap of rubbish and narrowly escaped destruction.

Stonyhurst College parts with a Valuable Painting.—

Seventy years ago Lady Arundel of Wardour, mother of the present peer, saw a small painting of a madonna in Rome, liked it, bought it, and gave it to Stonyhurst College, in Lancashire. The price she paid for it was £5, and one hopes that nobody scolded her for her extravagance or her credulous taste; but there is never any knowing. The hand that painted the little picture was Crivelli's, and though time has wrought a good deal of havoc on the canvas it has just been sold by the college authorities for £1000.

Pilgrimage to the Eternal City.—

The Bishops of Nottingham and Liverpool will represent the episcopacy on the occasion of the Jubilee pilgrimage to Rome, which leaves England this month under the auspices of the Catholic Association. The Very Rev. Canons Green, Waterton, and Stark, Father Fletcher, Mgr. Thomas Reekie, Rev. Reginald Buckler, O.P., Count Rivarola, Mr. C. J. Munich (vice-president), Mr. Nicholas Cockshutt, Mr. Lister Drummond, Father Bannin (chairman), Mr. Valentine M. Dunford (hon. secretary), as well as many of the prominent clergy and laity from all parts of England take part in the pilgrimage.

Catholics and the Oxford Local Examination.—

The Jesuit Fathers are certainly distinguishing themselves at the Oxford Local Examinations. It is but two years since Mount St. Mary's College gained the enviable honor of heading the list of successful Senior candidates for all England. This year, if it has not actually won first place in the Senior or Junior Competition, it has right well maintained its eminent reputation by the high places its candidates have secured, and Father Huggins and his assistants