ONE QUEEN IN INDIA.

The Maharanee of Kunigal and Her Mode of Living.

Surrounded by Luxury and Beauty the Royal Prisoner Dreams Away Her Days in Oriental Splendor.

The maharanee of Kunigal is a very beautiful woman. Her tall figure is draped with airy and artistic effect. The robe consists of much soft India silk, elaborately embroidered, arranged about her in mysterious grace, a very enigma of garment without the explanation of a single stitch. It is closely plaited at the waist in front, falling in a fan-like train over the feet, and fastened with a band of gold that is studded with crescents of pearls. This garment is short in the back and is brought over the shoulders, hanging in soft, loose folds. Her left arm displays a bracelet of costly gems of rare beauty and of profound historic interest which carries one back to the time of Cleopatra. It was found among some other buried treasures more than a century ago, when the remote ancestors of the late king acquired it. This bracelet is supposed to have the power to resist the venom of all species of reptiles. A tiny linked chain connects it to one of no less value at the wrist. Jeweled sandals grace her otherwise unclad nether limbs, surmounted by anklets of gold.

She will often express to her friends the great pleasure it would afford her to be able to go freely among her people. This is, however, forbidden her by the exacting and severe law of her caste, for, being a Brahmin, she is obliged to adhere strictly to the "law of inclosure." This compels her at the age of twelve to be veiled and live in seclusion for the remainder of her life. This rigid deprivation of all enjoyment of the world is necessarily a severe shock to the sensibibility of even an eastern queen. Never again does she receive or converse with one of the opposite sex, save only her husband, the maharajah. Neither is a domestic of her household permitted to look upon her, otherwise her caste would be broken and her birthright canceled. This law among high caste seems cruel and inconsistent, but the penalty of disobedience is supreme. The violator of a law so sacred among the sex as that of "inclosure" has a horrible destiny awaiting her. She is expelled from among her tribe in shame to become an outcast, exiled from within the walls of the city for her crime.

But the present maharanee, says a foreign exchange, now in her twenty-fourth year, has six little brown faces to cheer her solitude. Her apartments, large and luxurious, occupy one side of the palace, opening one into another. Through long tapestried windows she steps into her private gardens, where the air is perfumed with the delicious fragrance of flowers. The little rustic bridges that greet the eye occasionally through these grounds connect the many beautiful terraces beneath which flows a refreshing and babbling brook, which, however, must babble no secrets. Rivulets and brooks are treasures in India. They are few and far between in this region of magnificence. Here the royal prisoner, for so she is, takes her daily exercise, joined occasionally by her children, who come with the delightful anticipation of hearing some new fairy tales from the lips of the beautiful memsahib—who happens to be a rare story teller—as she is seated in one of her favorite arbors where the citron vines envelop the happy little group, a picture only eastern.

When the maharanee wishes to leave her apartments the command is given, and in a moment the turbaned attendants that crowd the halls disappear as if by magic. The silence that follows endues the surroundings with the air of a sanctuary rather than that of a palace. Presently there breaks upon the stillness the faint tinkling of a bell that announces the royal presence, and the maharanee comes forward, stately, gracious, kindly, "every inch a queen."

When she drives into the country in her state carriage—a relaxation which she thoroughly enjoys, being a true lover of nature—she must go closely veiled. Rarely a week passes without a trip through the picturesque miedown lying between Kunigal and Bangalore. Here the range of mountains to the west with their majestic skylines show to the greatest advantage the play of light and shade at sunset.

In traveling, the maharanee occupies private compartments, which are highly decorated and delicately furnished in oriental style, arranged so that she may with ease enjoy the view of the hills and plains and yet not be seen, accompanied by her ladies in waiting, who share the same privilege. When the destination is reached an awning is immediately erected which forms a complete passage to the state carriage that awaits her, so that there is no possible chance of satisfying the curious gaze of all castes who patiently look for her arrival. She is always glad to see "European ladies," as she is pleased to call all foreigners, no matter of what nationality. She converses freely in several of the native languages, especially Hindostani and Canarease, and speaks English fluently. She loves to hear of other countries, and the habits and customs of other people. She is particularly interested in all that pertains to America.

A Glimpse of the Pope.

The pope is fond of sitting in his garden with his secretary on clear, warm days. He is a most attractive figure, seated thus, in his pure white robes of exquisite texture and immaculate cleanliness. He is a precise and fastidious man, and on those robes is never seen a trace of the snuff to which Pio Nono was so devoted. The face of Leo XIII. is a benevolent one, and his fine skin and white hair combine with his gentle expression to create the atmosphere of purity and sweetness about him.

THE FLORIDA FREEZE.

Graphic Picture of the Cold Snap from a Window.

Blossoms and Butterflies Suddenly Transformed Into Limp and Lifeless Things—A Terrible Visitation.

It was Christmas day, 1894, and as I sat at my open window, the sweet fragrance of roses filled the air, mingled with that of sweet violets and pinks, writes a correspondent of the New York Advertiser.

Just beyond a bed of the latter towered a large grape-fruit tree, its green-clad branches bending beneath the weight of the great golden fruit balls they bore, many of them as large as the head of a year-old infant. A little further on was a large peach tree, a perfect picture of beauty, with its limbs arrayed in delicate pink blossoms, and the fresh green leaves peeping out here and there. On the topmost branch a mocking bird was perched, trilling a sweet song from his very heart.

And there, alighting amidst the sweet blossoms of the yellow jasmine, were several dainty butterflies. Had they lost their calendar, that they ventured out in midwinter? Well, small wonder if they had.

Still further off stood row upon row of beautiful trees, dressed in shiny robes of green and spangled all over with golden balls that presently would be gathered and sent to the frozen northland, where they would gladden the palates of the thousands that love our luscious juicy oranges.

Flowers and vines and trees were full of life and beauty, and the birds, how they sang! The mocking bird, a half-tamed pet of the household, trilled forth his hymn of thanksgiving, and presently down beside him came, like a flame-colored flash, a scarlet-clad cardinal bird. A pause, as the two eyed each other. War or peace? Peace, ah yes, better so than war, above all on this hallowed day, and so the two sweet voices were raised in song together, until the bright eyes caught sight of those butterflies sailing away over the green grass. That was more than they could bear unmoved, and away they darted in hot pursuit.

Farther off still, just visible through the garden fence, were luxuriant rows of peas and beans and lettuce, and other vegetables.

Brightly the sun shone, softly the wind blew, sweetly the birds sang All was beauty and peace and prosperity in the fair "Land of Flowers," where it was midsummer even on Christmas day. And so it was three days later. The thermometer marked seventy-five degrees at noon and all nature rejoiced in the balmy air.

But suddenly the soft breezes died away and from the northwest came rushing down a mighty wind, hurling into our dismayed faces a bitter, stinging cold. Down, down, down sank the mercury in its little tube, until before dawn of next day it marked fifteen degrees. Think of it. A drop of sixty degrees within a few hours!

Such a thing was never known in Florida before, and we hope may never be known again. There was ice, thick ice, indoors as well as out, in pitchers, basins and cups, and vases filled with flowers were shattered. Milk was solid in the pans, butter and vegetables and meat were as brittle as ice itself. But these things, and the physical discomfort, were of small account beside the disaster that had befallen those beautiful growing trees and plants.

Again I looked from my window, not open now, and what did I see? First, our pet mockingbird, crouched close by amidst the dead leaves, and as I looked he stirred and fell upon his back on the ground almost lifeless. But the warmth of a fire soon revived him and he flew away to join the cardinal, which sat in the sunshine like a scarlet puffball. Gone were the roses, the violets, the pinks, all the pretty flowers and vines; brown and somber was the emerald green of the lawn!

But the trees, the poor trees! The delicate peach blossoms hung limp and withered. The glossy leaves of grape fruit and orange trees were brown and scorched as though a fire had passed over them, and their golden fruit was frozen solid ice to its very heart, and soon it would fall upon the ground, valueless.

Even the song of the birds was stilled. They, like their human friends, had no heart to sing, albeit they did not know, as we did, all that it meant to us, that one cruel night of the Ice King's visit. Young trees killed, old ones set back, millions upon millions of luscious fruits destroyed and thousands of acres of thrifty vegetables swept from the face of the land! A scene of beauty changed to a scene of desolation, and all in a few hours' time!

See Both Ways.

Nature has enabled some animals to see objects behind them as well as in front, and that, too, without turning around. The common hare or rabbit has this power in a marked degree. Its eyes are large, prominent and placed on the side of the head. The deer is another example of an animal of this class. The power of rabbits and deer to see things in the rear is very noticeable in greyhound coursing, for though that species of dog is mute while on the chase, the rabbit is able to judge to a nicety the exact moment which will be best for "doubling," on the trail. The deer, too, can run at high speed and tell just exactly when to increase its gait to full speed without once turning to measure the distance between itself and the mute pursuer.

A Patriotic Marriage Ceremony.

An attorney at Excelsior Springs, Mo., says the most loyal and patriotic marriage ceremony pronounced in the United States is the one used by a Clay county justice of the peace, which runs as follows: "Do you promise that you will support the constitution of the United States, the constitution of the state of Missouri, and that you will faithfully perform the duties of husband and wife?"

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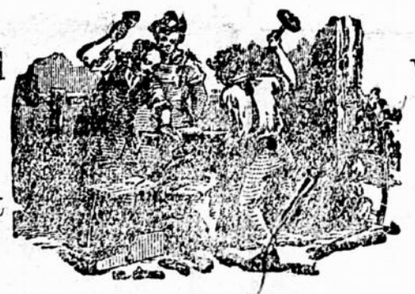

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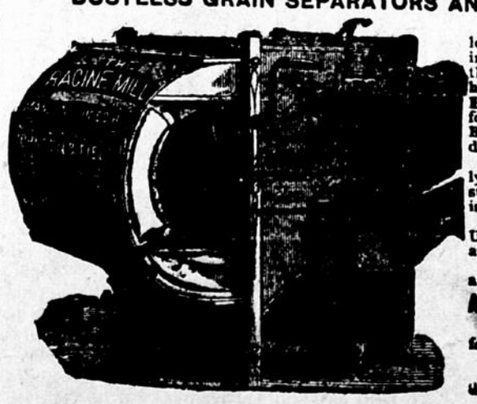

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