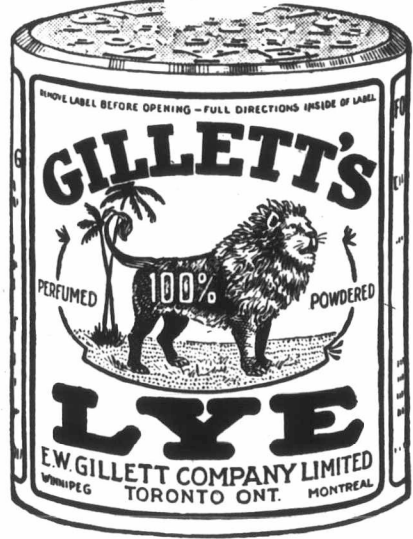


GILNETT'S LYE
EAT IT



a large building called the Taj, all of white marble—far more beautiful than any building in England; and if you ask, "Who built this?" the people will tell you that the Emperor Shah Jehan built it as a mausoleum to his beloved wife, who died before he did. This building took more than thirty years to build, and many thousands of workmen were employed upon it, hundreds of whom lost their lives by falling from the high scaffoldings; it cost many millions of money. Shah Jehan's wife is buried beneath this immense building, so that it is her tombstone.

By the side of the Taj flows the great river, the Jumna. It is one of the sacred rivers of the Hindus, and flows down to Allahabad, where it joins the Ganges, which in turn flows on to Calcutta. At Calcutta is the great Temple of Kali, and the place where the pilgrims bathe in the Ganges at Calcutta is called Kali Ghat, which we English people have Anglicized into Calcutta.

Shah Jehan was a Mussulman and did not worship idols; but all the Hindus worship Kali, and are very much afraid of her. If you could see her picture you would see what a terrible creature she is—with a corpse under her feet, a sword in one of her right hands, and a decapitated head in one of the left hands, a necklace of skulls, and a belt of human hands. Her tongue is red and very long, and protrudes horribly out of her mouth. The Hindus bring many offerings to Kali,

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make a little bow, with the hands clasped together, and then go away. Of course the Brahman priest comes and takes away the offerings, which he either keeps for his own use, or sells in the market.

The fakeers are holy men, who have given themselves up to search after holiness. They wander all over India, and visit all the sacred places. They often go to Kali Ghat and start at the mouth of the Ganges, and wander up the course of the river, visiting all the sacred places upon its banks—Benares, Allahabad, Hurdwar, and many other places—till they come to the foot of the hills, and then they climb over many ranges of the Himalayas till they come to Gangotri, which is just under the snows, far up in the Himalayas, and is one of the sources of the Ganges.

Once I was journeying along the foot-track to Gangotri, and I saw many pilgrims and fakeers coming and going. One fakeer was quite a young fellow, and he had hardly any clothing on, but he did not seem to feel the bitter cold at all. He used to smoke an intoxicating kind of herb called "bhang," and cared very little for food or for anything else. I asked him what he was doing, and he replied "pun"—i.e., good works. I replied that intoxication was not good, but bad. He burst into a loud laugh, and sang a wild song praising up "bhang," and saying that it helped a man to forget his cares, his riches, his body, and everything, and therefore it must be good. I asked him if he would come with me and I would teach him about the love of God, and show him the good book of the True Teacher, which pointed out the way of salvation. He only shook his head, took two or three deep inhalations of "bhang," then put his pipe into his waistband, and hurried on his way towards the snows of Gangotri.

Some of these fakeers are very much in earnest about their salvation, and listen very gladly to the Gospel; and I am glad to say that a few of them have learnt to trust in Jesus, and have found what they sought for in Him—i.e., joy and peace in their souls, and the assurance of sins forgiven.

I must bring you back to Agra, and show you how the native gentlemen ride about. In a picture I have seen, a native lady is shown riding in the bullock carriage, but we never see the ladies when they go out riding, for none of them are allowed to show their faces in public, but always sit in purdah—that is, behind a curtain—whenever men folk are about. These bullock carriages have no springs or seats, and the riders must be content with a big cushion, on which he or she sits and tucks up the legs underneath, tailor fashion. The bullocks have the pole of the carriage coming up to their humps, and there is a crosspiece passes in front of each hump, and is tied by a cord passing under the bullocks' necks. Sometimes the bullocks are naughty and back away from the yoke; then they slip their heads out, and the pole falls to the ground. The driver does

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not guide them with reins fastened to a bit and bridle as we drive our horses, but he holds a rope passed through the cartilage of the nose, and pulls at this to make them stop, or to prevent them from running away. He makes them go by twisting their tails, and guides them by pulling their tails whichever way he wants them to go. Sometimes when bullocks have heavy loads behind them, and they become obstinate, the drivers twist their tails till the joints break, and I have seen some bullocks with their tails twisted right off.

Bullocks are used for nearly everything in India. They are driven in carriages, they draw the plough, they tread out the grain on the threshing-floor, they draw water from the wells to water the fields, they carry all sorts of burdens on their backs; and you see a water-carrier with his bullocks, which has leather bags upon its back, full of water from the well, and the waterman will take this water to the houses of his employers every night and morning. He has not many clothes to wear, poor fellow! for he is very poor, and only gets about sixpence a day to feed himself and his bullock.

Clothes do not cost much in India, for the tailors live very cheaply, and will make up a cotton suit for about 1s. 6d., buttons and all. These men have all got their heads covered

and their feet bare; that is because it is disrespectful to uncover the head, or to step upon a carpet with boots on. There is a hookah standing on the ground in front of them, and they keep sucking at it all day long, passing it from one to another. Without their smoke the working classes in India would be very unhappy.

You see that the people of India are not half so well off as we are in England, and God means us to do something for them, for the strong must always help the weak. When the Lord Jesus comes to reward His servants, I wonder what you and I will have to show Him, of work done for Him? He has given us a lot of things that the Hindus and Mohammedans have not got in India. We have got prayer and a God to pray to; but the Hindus have never learned to pray to the true God, so we must always pray for them and for somebody to go and preach to them (see St. Matt. ix. 38). We have good clothes, good food, good friends, and happy homes; and out of our abundance how much are we going to give to the Hindus in God's service? Perhaps some day some of you will go out to India to show what Jesus Christ has done for England, and for each one of us who believe in Him.

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