

The fair young couple, "strength and beauty met together," found an appropriate nest in a quaint house just out of Bombay which they called "The Aviary," the folly of a mad Englishman, built expressly with a view to its being shared with him by the birds. This pretty pair accepted the omen and fulfilled it. Later they were moved to Singapore. It was a singularly happy union. There was the tie of congenial tastes and studies to knit both hearts and heads; for these young people ran coupled in a high quest; they were both ardent in their zeal to learn the thought and languages of the East. Together they worked hard at Sanscrit, travelled hand-in-hand through many of the strange scenes and cities of that fascinating country; each heightening the other's zest, and catching the other's thought before it had been spoken. But alas! like most perfect things, this sweet and fruitful comradeship was brief. In spite of his young wife's overwhelming presentiments of impending evil and her entreaties that he should not go, Captain Leonowens set out with some friends of his on a tiger-shooting expedition, promising to return without fail on a certain day. He kept his tryst, true to his word. But, just by keeping it, he made her bodings come true; for, in his impatient eagerness to belie them, and return to Singapore on the promised day, he had disregarded the remonstrances of his friends, pushed on in the terrible moist heat, and when he reached home, punctually almost to the hour, it was only to die of sunstroke. His bride was left with very little money, and two children, a widow of twenty-five. She never married again though many sought her hand, many who would have been proud and well able to relieve her of her heavy burden, and though to the eyes of some, of whom this writer was one, she never ceased, even after she had been promoted to the proud dignities of a great-grandmother, to be one of the fairest sights in the flower-garden of English womanhood.

It was perhaps a blessing in disguise that a blow so crushing was, at the same time, an imperative call to action. At any rate the shock of this bereavement was certainly what