



DEVOTED TO TEMPERANCE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND LITERATURE.

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PRAYING FOR RAIN IN INDIA.

While in Christian countries they are planning how to bring down rain on parched districts by exploding gunpowder in the air, in Northern India they try a different method.

"Last winter," says the *London Graphic*, "the season was a very dry one in Kumaon, and consequently there was a failure of the crops, with great scarcity in the district. With the exception of a few showers, there were no winter rains, and that in a country where the population is almost wholly dependent upon grain as a means of subsistence meant a famine and starvation. In consequence of the drought a Hindoo Fakir imposed a penance upon himself, and was suspended by his feet from a wooden beam. In this position he was swung backwards and forwards for a considerable time by means of a rope attached to his body, and pulled by a fellow saint. Both men were plentifully bedaubed with cowdung and ashes, and, save for a small cloth round the waist, were minus all clothing. In such a case, should rain fall within reasonable time after the penance, the Fakir takes the entire credit for the relief to himself, and rises immensely in the estimation of the simple and credulous cultivator of the soil."

"This all in the last decade of the nineteenth century! And yet there are people who say, 'Let the heathen alone, they are well enough off as they are.'"

"WHY CAN'T YOU GO, DEAR?"

Five years ago Alice Cameron's answer to the question, "What is the chief end of man?" was "To gratify self and enjoy life to the utmost."

"I do not mean that she would have replied in just those words had the question been asked her directly, yet that was the answer which for twenty years her life

had been unmistakably, though unconsciously, giving.

It was a bright May day after a fortnight of dismal weather and Alice meant to improve it by visiting a friend. The cars were full and she took a vacant seat beside a little lady dressed in black, who was evidently unused to travelling and somewhat nervous. As the brakeman called out the name of the station which they were approaching, she turned to Alice and asked anxiously, "Did he say Springdale?"

our society elected me, I didn't think I could possibly go. Why, I haven't been away from home over night for fifteen years. But they all just insisted on it, and our folks at home just joined in with them and wouldn't listen to any excuse, and so here I am almost there," and she ended with a contagious little laugh.

"I am glad you could go," said Alice, sincerely, "I hope your meeting will be interesting."

"Of course it will," said her companion with animation. "Why Mrs. B— from

Alice, who was to change cars there, went with her to the platform and saw her and several other delegates cordially welcomed by a committee of ladies. Looking after them Alice thought, "I believe an interest in missions is good for such people. It is an opening into their narrow lives through which they catch some glimpses of the outside world," and with this true thought she dismissed the matter from her mind.

Two days later, when she stopped at Springdale to change cars on her return, she found that the train had just gone and she must wait four hours for another.

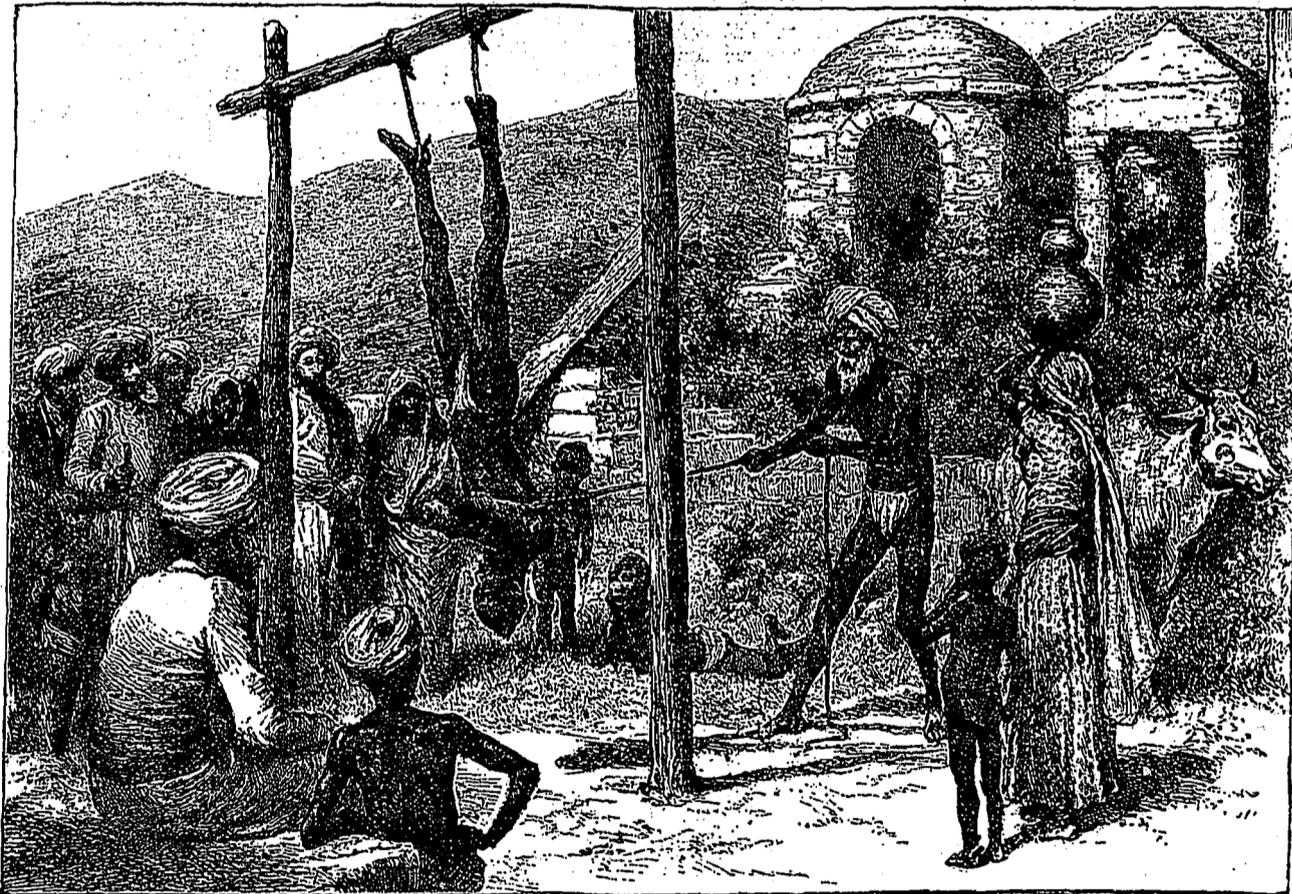
"Four hours! how annoying," she exclaimed. "There's some kind of a ladies' meeting in the church a few blocks down the street," suggested the station agent.

"That wonderful missionary meeting," thought Alice. "I declare I believe I will go and see if my friend is enjoying herself. Anything is better than waiting here;" and in a few moments she stood at the open church door. She was met by a pleasant young lady usher who, singularly enough, seated her beside her travelling companion. Alice's first glance assured her that the little lady had not been disappointed in the meeting, even before

her eager whisper: "I'm so glad you are here. I've been nearer heaven than I ever expected to be in this world."

It was the afternoon devotional hour, and the hymn they were singing when she entered was followed by one voice after another in simple, earnest prayer, and Alice, who had never attended a prayer-meeting nor heard a woman pray, listened with a strange awe.

At the close of the half-hour the president introduced Mrs. B— from India, who spoke of what she had seen and known during her twenty years' experience, and as Alice heard for the first time the sad story of our sisters there, "unwel-



A HINDOO FAKIR INVOKING THE GODS.

"Oh, no," said Alice kindly, "this is Bingdon; we do not reach Springdale for a half hour."

"Thank you," said the other, "I do not always understand what the man says. Perhaps," she added inquiringly, "you are a delegate too?"

"A delegate!" repeated Alice in surprise.

"To the missionary meeting at Springdale, I mean," explained the companion. "I am one and I was hoping you were."

"Oh, no," said Alice with an amused smile.

"It seems almost too good to be true to think I am one myself. You see when

India and Mrs. C— from Africa are to be here. Of course you've read about them? but without waiting for Alice's confession of ignorance she went on: "Isn't it wonderful how we learn to love those women, just reading their letters and praying for them? Many a time when my life has been so hard that it seemed as if I couldn't bear it I've thought of them and the sacrifices they were making, or of the poor heathen women whose lives are so full of poverty and toil and sorrow, until I'd be ashamed to complain and—"

"Springdale," shouted the brakeman, and at once the little lady was all excitement.

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