

## THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

India is once again overwhelmed by famine in many of her provinces. Owing to the failure of rain, and the continual drought, the wheat and cotton crops will be very short, especially in Northern India. The southern and Western provinces will also be seriously affected. How great the deficiency may prove cannot as yet be ascertained, but the evidence in the shortage is of a serious character. While the Indian Empire, as a whole, produces sufficient food each year for its enormous population, at certain points the food fails, and where the means of transportation between the provinces are inadequate, terrible suffering arises and multitudes of people starve and die. These constantly recurring famines have caused unusual anxiety and exertion to the English government in India's behalf, the cost of the famine of 1874-76, costing England about \$32,500,000, and that of 1877 nearly \$50,000,000.

During the famine of 1876, there was the most frightful suffering throughout the whole country. Parents sold their children for a small supply of rice, barely sufficient to last the adults in the family three days. Thousands died in the streets and highways. An English writer at the time, describing an incident of frequent occurrence, said he was present in a part of one of the cities where the native relieving officers were distributing rice. Men and women were sitting around patiently waiting, many with gaunt hunger written on their faces. But they got nothing, although the rice bags, full to bursting, were piled up in a corner. The native officials had lists of names, and only those who were on the list received relief. The turn of the patient watchers would come some time—if they lived. A few questions by the English officer, a sudden exclamation, and then, drawing his sword, he ripped the rice bags open one after another and scattered the precious food in the direction of the watchers. The native officials were horror-stricken, and explained that "their names were not on the list, and now they would be fed twice!" "Better feed them a dozen times than have them die here," was the impetuous answer.

This famine seems to be very likely to threaten the country lying between Madras, Bangalore and Bellary, in the north. The people inhabiting this portion are largely agriculturists and cotton-weavers. For several seasons suffering has been on the increase, and a few months ago, the rivers overflowed and washed out all the fields that had been planted chiefly with rice. There was practically no rain during the last four months.

"The people are largely vegetarians," said Mr. Rutnam, the young Hindu lecturer, to the writer, "and when they are deprived of the natural products of the land, they will necessarily look forward to the government officials or the missionaries for help. In the year 1876, when they had one of the worst famines India ever saw, the government took up the relief work, and the people were provided with one scanty meal a day, and the only alternative left for the poor was to go into the jungles and feed on the noxious weeds. Many people who had not even these weeds to eat, went to the lakes, and took wet clay and swallowed it. A great many died in that way. More than a hundred thousand perished during this famine. My brother-in-law said that he went and found all the servants who were in charge of the relief work looking well fed, while the people who were supposed to have received relief looked thin and sickly. I hear that the ambassador at St. Petersburg is arranging to send wheat to Northern India through Tibet. A large part of the population lives on a great deal of rice. In Northern India they live on wheat. When deprived of rain, everything stops short. They do not eat meat; those who live on wheat could manage to get along on rice, and vice versa. I understand this famine is likely to spread over



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Northern and Central India, and that the government is already making preparations to start relief work in Rajputana, Punjab and Oudh."—Christian Herald.

## THE FIRST EASTER.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she sitting, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.—John 20. 11-18

## HE KNEW HOW

A baby beaver was caught and given to a gentleman as a pet. Beavers, as you know, build dams in which they can make their houses. But here was this poor baby living in a house where there was no possibility of his having the kind of home that he would love to have. One day, when the little beaver was in the kitchen, a leaky pail was put on the floor. The moment the baby beaver saw the water running in a little stream across the floor he ran out in the yard, and appeared in a minute with a chip. The gentleman who owned the

beaver was called to see him. The chip was placed in such a way as to stop the water, and the beaver hurried out and came in with another bit of wood, and then some mud. Orders were given that the beaver was not to be disturbed, but allowed to work out his plan; and in four weeks he had built a solid dam around the pail in which was the water.—The Outlook.

## THE OBEDIENT ELEPHANT.

In some countries in Asia an elephant is made to carry the flag in battle. This is because the elephant is tall, and the soldiers can easily see the flag flying from his back.

One of these elephants, which belonged to the Poona host, was very brave and very kind, but he would obey the orders of no one except his mahout, or driver.

One time, while a very fierce fight was raging, the driver called to him. "Stand, my brave beast, stand!" A moment later the mahout received a fatal wound and fell to the ground, where he lay beneath a pile of wounded and slain.

The obedient animal would not move, though the battle waged wildly about him. The Poona soldiers, who feared they were being overcome, were cheered on by the sight of the flag still floating from his back.

He never stirred a foot, and all through the hot fight, the noise, the smoke, the confusion, listened patiently for the voice of his master. Sharp spears were hurled at him, a score of javelins pierced his side, his long ears dripped with blood, but he stood like a rock.

"Come forward, my men," cried the war-brought to the battle-ground the the battle will yet be ours."

His men, discouraged and ready to fly, rallied at his command, and with a cheer for the flag, pressed forward. In a short time they won the victory, and put the enemy to flight.

And then they gathered round the brave elephant, offering to lead him where he could be fed and cared for. But, though wounded and worn, the obedient creature would not move until

he heard his master's voice. That master could never speak again.

A rider was sent in great haste to a place fifty miles away, where lived the driver's little son, whom the elephant knew and loved. When the little boy was brought to the battle-ground the elephant showed very plainly that he was glad to see him, and permitted the child to lead him away.

## An Apt Answer.

Why are there no more members ready to assist in the juvenile temperance work? was a question found in the question box at Monroe County Lodge, and has been aptly answered by Miss Ella R. Scoble, of Rochester.

Some are too busy, some will shirk  
Whatever calls for outside work.  
Some do not like the fourfold pledge.  
These are the smokers, I allege.

For want of time, and want of thought,  
Some do not do the thing they ought.  
Indifference rules in many a heart,  
So they take not the children's part.

The boys we teach will soon be men,  
The girls be women true, and then  
The temperance ranks will be increased  
By foes to all that makes men beasts.

If they the first glass always shun,  
Will they be drunkards? No, not one.  
Our pledge is not to merely save  
The fallen man from a drunkard's grave.

To keep from falling young and old  
And a multitude that can't be told,  
This is one solemn, earnest vow,  
Then help us, Lord, to keep it now.

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THE FIRST EASTER.