

old friend and pastor, so many thousands of miles away from you, yet ever near in love.

Now, to give you some news. Imagine me, then, sitting in a room of a friend's house in the fashionable part of this great city, inhabited by a few thousands of Englishmen, and half a million of Hindoos. The Englishmen live pretty much together, and have great large, open, airy houses almost like palaces, and that is the reason why Calcutta is called the "City of Palaces." The English inhabitants are the rulers of the city—in fact, of all this great continent of India. You may form some idea of India when I tell you that its population is almost exactly *six times* that of the whole of the United States, and nearly *fifty times* that of the whole Dominion of Canada. So you can think what a great country Britain is, when it rules over such an enormous number of people so far away from it, and rules them well and prosperously.

Well, I am now sitting in a room in the house of a friend, with whom I am spending a few days. The room is large, far larger than one of the same kind would be in Halifax, and the ceiling is nearly twice as high. This is to give plenty of air, otherwise the heat would be intolerable. At this moment the sun shines with such force, that, if I were to go out with an ordinary black hat, in all probability I would have a fatal sun stroke before 10 minutes. The consequence is, that Englishmen seldom or never venture out during the heat of the day, except in a Garrie (which is a carriage like a cab), and when they move outside at all they wear, instead of a black hat (black, you know, attracts the sun), a large affair called a *Sola topa*—a hat made of a very light substance like *cork*, and called *pith*. This is very comical looking, and I am sure you would have a hearty laugh if you could see me walking about with one. It is about two inches thick—some of them nearly two feet long and one foot broad, and when you see it for the first time you would think no one could wear it, as it must be so heavy. But when you put it on you find that it is not so heavy as an ordinary beaver hat.

It is peculiar that, though the sun is so dangerous to all Englishmen, yet the natives go about quite safely *bare-headed*. Even the wealthy natives (called the "Baboos,") never put on a cap or a hat from one year's end to another.—The Mohammedans wear a light and very thin skull-cap, but the Hindoos, (who constitute the mass of the population), wear nothing at all.

There is a queer article swinging about over my head which would astonish you greatly, but which is almost necessary for any degree of comfort here in the hot season. It consists of a narrow board suspended from the roof of the room, and along its lower edge runs a broad piece of cloth. A string is attached to the board, and passes outside through a small hole in the wall. A man is stationed outside, and pulls this string backwards and forwards. This makes the board and the cloth running along its lower edge to sway from side to side, and so causes a current of air, which keeps me, as I sit below it, sufficiently cool to write this letter. You understand then, that this is just a great big *fan*. It is called a "punkah," and the man who pulls it is called a "punkah-bearer." Very often the "bearer" falls asleep, the "punkah" moves very slowly or even stops altogether, sometimes starting on with a sudden jerk as the man wakes up. I declare my "bearer" must be dozing off just now; the "punkah" is scarcely moving, and I feel the perspiration beginning to run down my face. I shout out "bearer;" he starts up, answers "Sahib," (*i. e.* "Sir,"—the word applied to all Europeans, and originally meaning "lord" or "master,") and pulls away vigorously.

The natives dress very nicely, and even beautifully. In winter, over their snowy-white underclothing, they wear a large scarf or shawl gracefully thrown around the body and falling from their shoulders. On "great occasions" they are very grand, and a large number of them assemble together, with the bright variegated cashmere scarfs glittering above the pure white, and contrasting with