

THE ORANGE LILY.

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Docten.

Change and Decay.

The bud that bursts with morning's breeze,
And blushes bright with noontide's ray,
The silent sunset often sees,
Strip of its beauty by decay.
Eed, Bloom and Blast are writ on all,
The fairest flower and tallest tree,
The vine that trails the cottage wall,
And vernal heather of the sea,
All, all to every eye declare;
That Change is earth's inher't share!

You reptile crawling in our gaze,
To-morrow flutters forth a fly,
And from its wings the rainbow rays,
Reflected are with varried dye,
A few short hours—to it no doubt,
Long as the three score years and ten,
The Great Almighty's meted out,
Its fellow reptiles termed—men!
And it will droop its polished wing,
And drop to earth—an innate thing!

Change and Decay—we see it writ,
On ev'ry thing—in ev'ry birth,
For rocks eternal have been split,
And crumbled to their mother earth.
The rolling and tempestuous deep,
Hath changed in many wondrous forms,
Since God broke its chaotic sleep,
And lashed its billows with his storm—
Deep vallies in its bosom lay,
While mountains sleep beneath its spray.

HENRY KEARVILLE.

Bytown, 1851.

NARGISI.

A TALE OF INDIA.

It was no brilliant occasion that first induced me to draw my maiden sword in the name of my country—or, if I confess it, my paymasters, the Honorable East India Company. The Pindaree war had terminated before I reached Madras in 1818; and though hordes of looters, or banditti—offshoots and remnants of the broken up army—still overran the Upper Provinces, rendering a distribution of the native troops, and numerous detachments necessary to protect the agricultural and pecorably disposed habitations, it was not often that we were called upon to exercise any startling amount of bravery in a stand-up hand to hand fight. The freebooters rarely combined in any great numerical force, and as rarely retained any post from which a strong detachment could be sent to their aid. They were easily dispersed by a small force, and as rarely retained any post from which a strong detachment could be sent to their aid. They were easily dispersed by a small force, and as rarely retained any post from which a strong detachment could be sent to their aid. They were easily dispersed by a small force, and as rarely retained any post from which a strong detachment could be sent to their aid.

action that was said to demand both resolution and judgement; and the 17th's light turned out of less brilliant lustre than was anticipated, the blame is not to be attached to me. I need scarcely explain that the term "griffin-hood" is apportioned to the first twelve months passed by an individual, not a native, in the East Indies; who, until the expiration of that period, is dubbed a "griffin."—In other words a greenhorn—subject to be played upon by all who have craft or wit enough to impose upon him by any sportive sort of hoax. Now, I had passed my novitiate hitherto with tolerable credit, and it was no longer remembered that the year of ordeal had some days to run, when my first Christmas dinner in the East was to be partaken of at the lonely station of Chanda, a fortified town of some extent in the province of Ceandwana, subject to the Nagapore Maharata, and about eighty-seven miles distant from the city of Negapore.

Information reached the officer commanding the regiment to which I was attached, that a little hill-fort called Ameerkote, about twenty miles off, had been suddenly entered by a body of errant Pindarees, under the command of a distinguished robber chieftain. The fort, garrisoned only by some thirty worn-out veterans of the Rajah's troops, since the place was considered too unimportant to attract the attention of even the humblest class of marauders, was seized by a coup de main in the night, when all who did not instantly submit were slaughtered; and while the plunderers, amounting as was reported to about a hundred men, freely sacked the houses of the inhabitants, and were commencing a series of depredations on the surrounding hamlets, carrying off the cattle and appropriating the corps of the poor Ryots. A wing of the regiment was immediately ordered to march upon Ameerkote, accompanied by fifty troopers belonging to the army of Rajah of Nagapore, also stationed at Chanda; and, as it so wide a fresh stimulant to the general indignation, tidings were brought us, just as we were starting in light marching order, that the wife and only child of Yoesef Khan, one of our most respected native officers, had been arrested on their way from Negapore to Chanda by the banditti, and conveyed prisoners to Ameerkote, I need not delay the current of my story in its commencement by detailing the trivial incidents of our march, but proceed at once to the main fact in connection with my first episode in a prolonged war life. We reached the little fort just in time to dash upon the sag end of the retreating Pindarees, whose spies had been on the alert, acquainting them with our advance: by which precaution they escaped almost scatheless. It is true that we found that rumor had marvellously exaggerated, not only their numbers but the mischief they had perpetrated, for the inhabitants of Ameerkote—plundered it is true—had by timely submission, escaped massacre. No attempt had been made to fortify the little enclosure, nor did it appear that the intention of the enemy was to retain it for more than a few days. The retreating party, consisting of about sixty men, were charged by us as they fled from the gates, and followed up by the troopers. Myself, a few were taken pris-

oners, whilst of our detachment only three men were wounded. I had been ordered to take possession of the house of the Killader, or governor of the fort, and had to force my way into it through a party of fleeing Pindarees, one of which fell beneath the bayonet of sepooy, who probably, by that act, saved my life: the poor wretch was stabbed through the heart, and we found him dead after we had obeyed instructions by searching the old ruinous house. From the superiority of his dress and accoutrements, we afterwards discovered that we had guessed rightly in considering him the chief of the gang.

In the inner chamber of the edifice I found the all-frighted wife of Soobadar Yoesef Khan, with her young son, a fine boy of some six years old. They were unhurt; but close to them lay, in the agonies of death, a young and handsome woman, beside whom, on the same mat, slept sweetly unconsciously a little babe.

"It is the spouse of the chief," said Doodunbee, the wife of the Soobadar, "she has been dangerously ill for some days, and her husband promised me bushets of pearls and pecks of rubies, if I would but bring her to health and protect her child. Ufsof! alas! she is dying; see her hands are gathering the dust of her undug grave! but she is a Moccusmanee, and I will close her eyes; yea! and so help me, Alla, be mother to her infant daughter!" And the good lady rose up, waved her arms thrice over the head of the child, significant of her adoption of it, and then knelt by the dying woman. Once the poor creature attempted to speak, once she raised her hand, every finger of which was loaded with jewels, but death was stronger than life or love, and in the next moment she was a corpse.

"Behold, sahib!" said the good Doodunbee, "this is my daughter!" and she uplifted the still slumbering babe and kissed it. It was a fair young thing, almost of European fairness, but with that rich tinge of blood in the skin which, in after life, is so beautiful in the higher castes of Hindoo and Mahomedan women.

"La how! la walla kooowatta illa billa! There is no power like unto Alla's!" ejaculated Doodunbee. "Look here! on the child's breast is a flower mark: it is the Nargisi of Gool-hun—the lily of the rose garden. Let her name be therefore Nargisi!" And so the little girl received its pretty name, which Anglicised would be Narcissa.

That night was passed cheerfully enough by us in the old fortress of Ameerkote, but not until we were seated at our somewhat scanty repast did we recollect that it was our Christmas dinner. We laughed heartily as we cut up a peafowl, which had been shot in the jungle in the course of the day, and which proved the most tender of ornithological food; a plentiful and savoury curry of young kid was our substitute for roast beef; we had rice in abundance, the Soobadar's lady had tossed up some excellent banana fritters, by way of plum pudding; and for bread we were disposed to be thankful for some thin cakes, prepared by one of the sepoy's from the sweet but dark meal of the Bajree—the seed of the *Pencilurru rudgaris*. But on the other