

"All Around India"

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Ah, I see that you recognize that once your little Parsee sister to whom we introduced you in our last paper. You remember where she lives? Yes, she lives far across the sea, in a country called India. Let us go home with her, and see the strange country in which she lives. [Look up India on a globe or map]



"Almost the shape of a triangle!" You say.

Yes, that's true, but it is a much larger triangle than it seems to be from the small view that we can have of it.

If you should divide India into twenty-five parts, each part would be as large as

England and Wales! We

shall therefore need to

make haste or we shall not

see the half of it, for

although all the principal

cities are connected by railways, yet there are many places which cannot be reached without walking, or riding

horses, or in different kinds of

carts, drawn by horses, oxen,

or buffaloes [or people], in

mourwheels (hammocks swung on strong bamboos and borne by six men), in small

boats, or in a sort of box called a palanquin, which is borne upon the shoulders of the natives.

The railways have been built by the British, as the greater part of this vast country belongs to the Queen of England. About one-third of

India is still owned by native tribes that wander through the great forests free from all law and civilization.



At this time of the year, from October to March, we find the climate cool and pleasant. The days are bright and sunny, and the pleasant nights "just cool enough to demand the protection of the tent, and light covering for one's bed."

Sometimes a light frost falls in December, but ice is never formed. Therefore instead of finding leafless trees and dead flowers, as we do at home during this season of the year, we find everything beautifully

green: "The grass upon the river, the rushes by the shallow ponds, the springing fields and cheerful trees—all are full of life and beauty."

The trees are never stripped of their leaves, and the flowers bloom all the year round!



But if we should try to travel during the months of June to September, we would be reminded of the time of Noah. The rain pours down in such torrents that in many places rivers cannot carry



it off, and the country is flooded. For miles and miles around the mouths of the River Ganges, in the rainy season, nothing can be seen but villages, houses, trees, and vessels of every kind, all appearing to stand upon the water. It is said that along the western coast of India probably more rain falls in the year than in any other part of the earth.

From March to June we should, day after day, see cloudless skies and a burning sun, with never a drop of rain to moist or cool the dry, hot air. So hot it would be that we should not be able to do anything except very early in the morning and quite late in the evening. We should be glad, indeed, to escape up into the hills and mountains, away from the fevers and other diseases which often visit the people during the hot months. The small streams and brooks become dried up, and the fields have to be watered from wells, tanks, and large rivers, or everything would die.

One strange thing in India is that the wind blows from the southwest for one half of the year, and from the north-east for the other half of the year. These strange winds are called monsoons.

But India is not all warm. If you notice carefully you will see that on the north-east it is separated from China by the lofty walls of mountains, known as the Himalaya mountains. Up, up they go, in mighty, glistening, snow-capped peaks, far, far



above the clouds. Above them all towers Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world. Whatever the time of year, and however hot the lowlands and valleys

beneath, here is snow always,—nothing but snow, while the higher valleys and gorges are filled with mighty glaciers of blue ice.

As we come down the mountainsides we find it growing warmer, and here and there from beneath the melting glaciers, come rushing torrents of icy water, cutting their way down into the valleys. Here they form two great rivers, the Indus and the Ganges. See if you can find them on the map.

The people of India say that the Ganges came from the sweat of one of their gods, named Siva. It causes things to grow so well in all the country around, that they look upon it, and all the towns along its banks, as holy.

"Fifty rivers find their way through the valleys and wilds of India into the ocean; mighty mountains divide its plains; forests of wondrous trees enwrap great tracts in savage gloom; white plains delight in rays of continual sunshine; vast jungles form the home of beasts and reptiles, and gentle brooks ripple through lovely green valleys. There are deserts of dry sands, where white men have never trod, high steppes broken into natural walled plateaus, great waterfalls, beautiful cascades, and natural mountain arches."

But the most interesting of all things in India are its people. We find men and women and little boys and girls from one end of this broad land to the other. It is true that all of them do not look like us, nor dress as we do, but they all are our brothers and sisters, for God says that He made us all of one blood.

There are about ten times as many people as in England and Wales, and if you should take all the people in the world, and divide them into six companies, one of those vast companies would not contain as many people as India!

And just think of it! thousands and thousands of these brothers and sisters do not love Jesus; and what is worse, they do not know about Him; they have never heard how He gave His life to save them.

"And don't the boys and girls know 'Our Father,' and 'Now I lay me'?" you ask.

No, and they know nothing about "Sweet by and by," "Jesus loves me," and "When He cometh." Even the dear little children are taught to worship fire and water, and the sun and moon and stars!