

Alleeherbed. Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>

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send  
to  
the  
editor

John has gone out to a meeting and I have a long quiet evening before me. These quiet evenings in India are not at all the pleasant opportunities they are in England. In there is no fireside to turn to and the big house feels so intolerably empty, as the servants are all outside. Then there is no one to ask to come in. In the ladies all have husbands and cannot leave them. We had a mild dinner party last Tuesday. Mr & Mrs Simmet (Pioneer Editor) Captain & Mrs Sanderson, Captain Ramma and Dr Smith. Captain Dodd and his bride were asked, but could not come, so she and her sister have been here to lunch today instead. Our next entertainment will have to be for Mr Watkins, the Railway Chaplain, and his bride, and then I hope we shall have no more regular dinners. I do not mind gentlemen so much, as I get an interval of rest when I leave them, but with ladies one has to keep talking on all the time. It was a quarter past eleven when they left on Tuesday. They must have enjoyed themselves, or they would not have staid so long. On Wednesday afternoon I drove

with Miss Leonard to the house of a rich  
Bengali gentleman to see their goddes  
I think there is an account of the  
festival in "India" This image of the  
goddes is prepared once a year. It is a  
screen of silver work supporting a splendid  
beauty of what appears to be silver fil-  
lee work, though of course it is not real.  
In front of this is the goddes, magnificent  
dressed in silver and purple, seated on a  
lion, with a small goddes on each side  
of her. We entered a great hall decorated  
with flowers and numbers of coloured lamps.  
Some steps at the end led up to a dais, and  
here the goddes was put. There was a gallery  
supported on pillars, all round the hall  
protected by a stone work lattice, through which  
I saw a very pretty woman peeping at us. In  
the hall the gentleman receives his friends  
who come to pay their respects to the goddes  
who when this elaborate gamesome is finished  
is supposed to enter into it, and the lady  
has her friends in her own private rooms  
bringing them into the latticed gallery to see  
the worship. On the second day a grand ban-  
quet is given to the friends, and five hundred  
poor people are feasted. On the third day, the  
goddes is supposed to create her temporary  
residence; it is then taken with great pomp  
and ceremony, to the fairs, and tumbled  
into the water. Next year the whole thing is  
done through again. Miss Leonard asked  
the gentleman if he believed it all. He

shrugged his shoulders and said, "I don't  
believe so much as my father did, and  
I don't suppose my son will believe as  
much as I do." I suppose this is a fair  
opinion of the hold their religion has  
upon the educated Hindoos. Last night  
we saw the grand street festival in honour  
of this goddes. The whole road was just  
one lane of fireworks, and coloured lamps,  
and people dressed to represent the goddes,  
and her companions were carried up and  
down under canopies, with men carrying  
branches of torches on each side. It was  
very picturesque, but I don't think the people  
associate any sort of religious idea with it.

I did not expect you would care for "Indie"  
except as a picture of the life we live here.  
The lady also writes it is too good, and too fond  
of talking about herself, but her descriptions  
are very good. I shall ask Mr Balfour, the  
manager of the library to which we subscribe,  
to get Dickens's life, and the memoirs of Macaulay  
too. We have now finished Gertrude. I think  
Macaulay's was wonderful a piece of work as  
Eliot ever accomplished, but the book  
leaves an unpleasant impression on the  
mind. We get a great supply of books magazines  
and newspapers now.

It is very good of you to offer to make me  
some curtains, but I think I have what  
will serve me through my Indian career.  
They will be of no use however in England  
as I had to cut all I brought, in half.

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to make them the right length and I cannot  
join them again so I should be very thank-  
ful if when you have nothing else to do, you  
would make me some that will be suitable  
for an English home, whenever the happy time  
comes that we can have one. The four pairs  
that I brought out have cut into as many  
of the short ones we use here, as I want, with  
the over. we put them a yard from the top  
of the doorway, to allow a free current of air.  
It will be very pleasant if the Buttons come  
to Malvern, but I am sorry Miss Jamont  
has gone. It will be a real loss, for she was  
so genial and friendly. I had a very  
bright letter from Miss Roberts & this week  
he shall be very glad to pay all the attention  
he can to Mrs. Semard's friend. If we  
knew when he would be here, we would ask  
him to stay with us, but I hope at any rate  
he will find us out soon. Captain Ranner  
is very delightful, just the sort of man one  
would wish for a friend. He is cousin to the  
Dr. Ranner who wrote Dr. Chalmers's life. He  
distinguished himself very much in the  
War, though at that time he was almost a  
boy. He is lame from a wound he received  
then. I want to ask him to come to us on  
Sunday evenings. He is very regular at church.  
John sends his love to you and Mr. He keeps  
very well, and I am all right again now. I tell  
him sometimes that I have to work much harder  
for a living now than I did before I was married.  
If you can the list of people who have called, and  
I want calling upon, or inviting to dinner,  
you would say so too. But I all enlarges etc.