

PRINCESS KALYANI

A Play in Three Acts

SVARNAKUMARI DEVI

(Mrs. S. GHOSAL)



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From an old Portrait

PRINCESS KALYANI

(A PLAY IN THREE ACTS)

BY

MRS. GHOSAL

(SRIMATI SVARNAKUMARI DEVI)

PUBLISHED BY

GANESH & CO., MADRAS

1930

TO
HERR THEODOR RIEBELING
IN TOKEN OF
MY SINCERE FRIENDSHIP

SVARNAKUMARI DEVI GHOSAL

PREFACE

THE very kind reception which my former books have met with from the Press and public has emboldened me to launch forth into still another attempt, though in quite a different direction. I hope that this little Eastern drama will be accorded a welcome by the Western stage and help to portray the spiritualistic ideas of our country.

I offer my sincere thanks to my niece Mrs. P. Chaudhuri and my friend Mr. K. C. Sen, I.C.S., for the great help they have rendered me in this connection, and to Miss Agnes Platt for re-arranging some of the scenes. I am also indebted to my English friend "A Buddhist Bhikkhu" for his appreciative Introduction, and to Herr Theodor Riebeling for translating the play into German.

THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

THIS delightful little drama from the pen of the gifted authoress of the *Unfinished Song* and the *Fatal Garland* should perhaps have appeared without any introduction, which is an attempt to provide some kind of bridge or approach between forms of art almost entirely alien to each other. This is unnecessary for a play so self-contained and complete in itself, with its strange and subtle atmosphere. The foreword-writer in such a case can but play the part of mediator or interpreter, and this has been done wonderfully well by the author herself in the prologue.

Man is undeveloped until he is thoroughly humane, and is in reality soulless till he can feel the Universal Soul throbbing in unison with his own. The self-centred man has lost his real self, and this is true not only for an individual, but also for a nation or kingdom. In an objective world, this seems to be a

paradox, but it is a fundamental truth. The great creed of love underlying every religion has been brought to perfection in Buddhism, and where bigotry has been followed by blood-shed in most other religions, Buddhism is perhaps the only religion which draws into its fold by the magnetic-force of Love alone.

As in the physical evolution of the animal world man is the outcome of perfection, so in the evolution of the soul it may not be futile to hope that man will in course of time become god-like in nature. This the author has portrayed most convincingly and realistically.

This play is an illustration of the eternal truths in the guise of a story of the demoralised ancient India. With all its Mid-summer Night's dream-like allegory the play in no wise lacks a human interest, with which the author's consummate skill has succeeded in investing it. Whether taken as an allegory or as plain drama, it will yield the reader equal pleasure and profit.

A BUDDHIST BHIKKHU (AN ENGLISHMAN)
