PLAIN TALES FROM THE HILLS. [LONDON-1893]

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Plain Tales From the Hills. [London-1893] by Rudyard Kipling

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RUDYARD KIPLING

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FROM

THE HILLS

BY

RUDYARD KIPLING

London

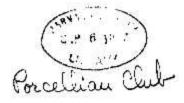
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AND NEW YORK

1893

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TO

THE WITTIEST WOMAN IN INDIA

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

PREFACE

EIGHT-AND-TWENTY of these tales appeared originally in the Civil and Military Gazette. I am indebted to the kindness of the Proprietors of that paper for permission to reprint them. The remaining tales are, more or less, new.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

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LISPETH

Look, you have cast out Love! What Gods are these You bid me please? The Three in One, the One in Three ? Not so ! To my own Gods I go. It may be they shall give me greater case Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities. The Convert.

SHE was the daughter of Sonoo, a Hill-man of the Himalayas, and Jadéh his wife. One year their maize failed, and two bears spent the night in their only opium poppy-field just above the Sutlej Valley on the Kotgarh side; so, next season, they turned Christian, and brought their baby to the Mission to be baptized. The Kotgarh Chaplain christened her Elizabeth, and 'Lispeth' is the Hill or pahari pronunciation.

Later, cholera came into the Kotgarh Valley and carried off Sonoo and Jadéh, and Lispeth became half servant, half companion, to the wife of the then Chap-This was after the reign of the lain of Kotgarh. Moravian missionaries in that place, but before Kotgarh had quite forgotten her title of 'Mistress of the Northern Hills.'

Whether Christianity improved Lispeth, or whether the gods of her own people would have done as much for her under any circumstances, I do not know; but S