

GITANJALI AND FRUIT-GATHERING. By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.
The Macmillan Co.

KNOWING that whatever is good in Rabindranath Tagore is due to the style of W. B. Yeats, I expected the introduction to be by that individual, who might have been romantic if he had been willing to wash his face and put on a clean collar every month or so. The introduction begins, "A few days ago I said to a distinguished Bengali doctor of medicine, 'I know no German.' Apart from the question as to whether Silly Willy counts his fortune in marks or not, I was much distracted by his reference.

I found myself back again in Teng-Yueh. We were sitting at dinner in the Consul's house, when the messenger broke in to tell us that the Consul—who was away among some unruly tribes—was ill, perhaps dying. We jumped up, George Forrest, the botanist, and I, and made ready. We were delayed two hours in starting by the "distinguished Bengali doctor of medicine," who needed to finish his rice. It was nine o'clock before we got off. It was a wild, windy night, the moon treacherously gleaming through a blown wrack of clouds. I found it impossible to ride my pony, for his hoofs slipped on the wet flags in the darkness. Walking was almost as bad, for my ironshod mountain boots were as slippery as the shoes of the tatu. But we pushed on, gasping, up hill, down dale, all through the night. Dawn broke, chill and grey, on the crest of a great mountain. Far in the distance I saw specks. I left my pony, and ran headlong down the slopes. I had got almost to the bottom of the hill when I saw the Consul's litter. Forrest ran forward. I turned sadly back, for I saw that the Consul's legs were tied. I knew that he was dead. In that country where a thousand plagues hunt down mankind, it was most urgent that a medical man should certify the cause of death. How lucky that we had with us a distinguished Bengali doctor of medicine! There was only one slight

hitch in the programme. The moment that I told him that the Consul was dead, he turned his donkey and bolted for safety. Holy Kali, it might be an infectious disease! There was no point in chasing the creature at the moment. The matter could wait our return. We brought the Consul to his house and Forrest asked me to bring the doctor round. It was necessary to make an official report of the death, and the cause of the death. I went round to the house of the "distinguished Bengali doctor of medicine." He was seated before a pyramid of rice. I attracted his attention by burying a whalebone cutting whip in the rolls of his fat. Between fifty and sixty applications of this instrument secured his presence in the room where we had the corpse. But not even the fear of the whip would induce him to touch it.

Rabindranath Tagore is the biggest bluff ever put over the unsuspecting American public. His mysticism makes even Maeterlinck's wishy-washy twaddle seem virile. I have never read such slop. The illustrations match it. The whole production of *Young India* is babu in the Anglo-Indian sense of the word. The spirit of India is utterly absent. Drawings and writing alike resemble the senseless flourishes of some callow student. And all this while the babu, while accepting what he imagines to be honours, such as knighthood, from England, is plotting sneakishly in the Bengali manner against her. I would to God that the British would withdraw from India for six months, so that the men of India might exterminate these fatherless fish-eaters, this spawn of female dogs that, without caste even in its own slime of bastardy, asserts itself in America as a 'young nation.'

KWAW LI YA.