

Obituary.

KENNEDY.—At Benares, from Bronchitis, on the 1st November, painlessly and peacefully, in her 97th year, ANNA, widow of the late General JAMES KENNEDY, C.B., (old) 5th Bengal Cavalry.

From THE PIONEER MAIL, 5th November, 1884.

In Mrs. Kennedy of Benares, a notice of whose death is announced in another column, Indian society loses a strangely unique life. Born in the last century—in 1788—she lived to see no less than 176 lineal descendants, of whom 128 are still living. She had 18 children, 80 grandchildren, 73 great-grandchildren, and 14 great-great-grandchildren. A quarter of a century ago her husband died at the ripe age of 82, after 55 years of married life, so that she lived for more than 80 years after her marriage. Her family has been always a military one. Her father, husband, two sons, two sons-in-law, and four grandsons, have been Generals in the army. Besides this her descendants have included six Colonels, and many other military officers. Her life has set at defiance all well-established medical theories. She was married at the age of 16—had 18 children—was never out of India for a single day—never visited the Hills (except for a month, when she fell ill and had to return to the plains), and yet notwithstanding all this she lived to see her 97th year. If an answer is sought for this strange fact it will partly be found in her wonderful activity both of body and mind to the very last. Up to a fortnight of the time of her death she insisted upon personally managing her household affairs, and her mind to the end was almost unimpaired. On the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Benares in 1876 she was presented to His Royal Highness at his own request. For the last 40 years she has been the centre of Benares society, loved and respected by Europeans and natives alike. With the Maharajah of Benares she has always been on terms of the greatest friendship; and whenever he called to visit her, she never failed to offer him on his departure the assistance of her arm, though he was some 30 years her junior. The “Burra Mem” of Benares, as she was familiarly called, has been taken away, and with her we have lost one other link with the past. “The old order changeth, yielding place to new.” In many respects the Government of the country have profited from the varied changes which have occurred during the century; but in one direction at least we have suffered beyond hope of recovery—we may regret, but cannot recall, the close and friendly ties which bound together the European and native communities in the good old days which Mrs. Kennedy delighted to describe.