

the aboriginal, Aryan and Scythian elements of Indian society. The Brahmans realized the value of such a bond and caused modern Hinduism to take its place as a unifying power. They adopted much from Buddhism. Thus modern Hinduism is a sort of compromise. Its triumph over a decaying Buddhism is due largely to the fact that "Hinduism is a social league and a religious alliance. As a social league, it rests upon caste. As a religious alliance, it represents the union of the Vedic faith of the Brahmans with Buddhism on the one hand, and with the earlier rites of the non-Aryan peoples on the other."

After a few centuries of Mohammedan rule, filled with wars, invasions and fanaticism, there came the period of European contact and supremacy. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the French successively attempted to establish themselves in the land, but failed. The East India Company, which was to win India for England, received its original charter from Elizabeth on the last day of the year 1600. Its factories were soon found in various parts of India, and in 1689 the company determined upon territorial conquest. There followed many years of strife and rebellion, until, on the first day of 1877, Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India.

The life of India is so varied that minute description is impossible. Even what might be called the common life of the majority of the people is not wholly uniform in all sections. Only most general features can be noticed here.

The homes of the poor are usually about twelve feet square and of one storey. They are constructed upon a raised floor of earth with walls of matting, wattles or moistened earth. Windows may be altogether lacking or else are very small and never glazed. The low, narrow door gives light to the household. The furnishings are very simple. The floor is of hardened earth. Three or four low fireplaces without pipe or chimney allow of cooking in a sedentary position. In the angles of the wall, or suspended from the rafters, are various cooking and other domestic utensils. The interior of these one, or perhaps two, roomed houses is abundantly supplied with confined air and smoke, and is redolent with various odors.

The dress varies largely. The poor man's garments are "in two pieces, called 'upper' and 'lower' cloths. The lower cloth is about three yards long, is tied about the waist and falls over the knees. The upper cloth is about the same length, and is thrown loosely across the shoulders and drawn around the waist." Many do not commonly wear the upper cloth. The turban, made of ten yards of cloth, is wound about the head. Woman's dress requires no sewing, nor even a button, hook or pin to keep it in place. The skin of the face, arms and feet is tinged with the yellow of saffron water, while the finger tips and nails are dyed red. The women also paint the outer edge of the eyelids with a solution of oil and lampblack. Both sexes are fond of jewellery, though the woman makes the most lavish use of it. The dress of poor children is conspicuous by its absence. Until about eight years of age boys and girls are usually without anything save "a necklace, a charm and a string about the waist with a few bells attached."

As marriage is considered a necessary religious ceremony, the rite is universal among those capable of it. The ceremonies of the two marriages—one occurring in childhood, and the other when the parties are old enough to live together—are elaborate and costly. The Hindu wedding, like the Chinese funeral, often impoverishes a family for years; and even for generations.

The ideal relation between husband and wife, as described in the Vedas, no longer exists. A woman has no other god on earth but her husband. The wives of the poor, who constitute the bulk of Hindu womanhood, are freed from the evils of zenana life, and are also not subjected to the heart-burnings due to polygamy, since poverty prevents the husband from having more than one wife. Child marriage is, however, common to rich and poor alike. Widowhood is not so great a burden to the poor, as widows in such families are allowed to re-marry.

Female infanticide is not now very common; yet a girl is necessarily a burden during childhood, and as soon as useful she marries and leaves home. Boys are welcome, and are their parents' greatest delight.

"Home life" is lacking among the masses. The house is a shelter and a place for eating and sleeping. The occupations of the people are quite varied, but farming is the leading pursuit. It is done with decidedly patriarchal implements. Woman's work is more varied than one would suppose. Besides the care of the household she helps about the farm, and contributes her labor to road making and other public works.

Wages are low among all classes. Bishop Thoburn places the average earnings for a man and his family at five cents a day. But it should be remembered that food, clothing and fuel are cheap; yet poverty is almost universal and sometimes extreme. Millions "never sleep under any other covering than the open sky," and forty millions go through life with too little food, many of them never knowing what it is to have their hunger satisfied.

Caste is the Hindu's environment, and the greatest obstacle encountered by the Christian missionary. It is popularly considered as a religious institution dating from the Vedic period (1000 B.C.). The original system recognized but four castes, but now caste divisions are extremely numerous and complicated. Caste regulations are very rigid. The one who breaks caste is regarded as dead. Caste can be regained in most cases by certain humiliating rites. Christians, who necessarily break caste by partaking of the Lord's Supper with those of other castes, suffer much from their families and caste-members, but the Government has relieved them of some annoyances, such as being forbidden the use of the village well.

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THE Governments of Great Britain and the United States are joining in a protest to the Government of Peru against the treatment to which Protestant missionaries have been subjected. The Lima authorities recently issued an order for the expulsion of Messrs. Peters and Jarret, two missionaries who had been peaceful citizens and were becoming very popular and successful missionaries.

THERE has been an encouraging increase in the circulation of the Bible in Brazil. Mr. Olsson, a colporteur, reports that he has sold more than 2,500 Scriptures during the year in Spanish, English, French, German, Italian and Portuguese languages, and that they have been offered for sale in hotels, railway stations, business and private houses, hospitals and mines.

HENRY M. STANLEY has given some evidence as to the progress of missions in Africa. He says, "When I was at Lake Victoria Nyanza eighteen years ago, there was not a missionary there. Now there are forty thousand Christian natives and two hundred churches. The natives are enthusiastic Christians, and are eager to secure Bibles."