

THE CHAMARS.

WHAT are they, fishes, beasts, or birds? They are a low caste people in India. Listen to Miss Jamieson, one of our missionaries in Ncemuch, India, telling of her work among them. For the most part I use her own words:

WHERE THEY LIVE.

"At the entrance of the town quite apart from any other caste, there is a big hollow square with two deep wells in it, and some large trees, and their wretched little houses are built around the sides of this square.

WHAT THEY DO.

Many of the men tan leather after a very poor fashion, and the smells about the place are very bad. The women, and boys and girls help to put gaudy little bits of trimming on the shoes made from the native leather.

During the cold weather they go in parties to the jungle to cut hay which they bring home for sale. This hinders our school work very much, for the boys and girls go with their parents on these tours and remain for weeks at a time.

WHAT THEY EAT.

When I tell you that these Chamars eat the flesh of any dead animal they can lay their hands upon, you will understand that they are not cleanly in their habits.

An Englishman here had a horse which died from snake bite and the Chamars wanted to carry it off for food, and would have been glad to get it, but he would not allow them to have it, and ordered it to be buried.

OUR SCHOOL.

Some of them are bright and clever, while others have diseased or weak bodies, the latter, however, are the exception.

For over two years we taught the children who came to us, under the trees in the ill-smelling court above mentioned. But the heat of the sun was most trying, and it was impossible to keep up the work in the rainy season.

About six months ago, therefore, the best house in the place was rented for forty cents a month. The walls are mud and are six feet high. The room is twenty-two feet long and ten feet wide. There is no window, and the only way that light and air can get in is by the door which is so low that we must stoop on entering.

The only furniture is a blackboard and two stools. The children seated around the walls nearly fill the room. The air, with the steam arising from their dirty clothes in wet weather, and no ventilation, is simply poisonous. But in spite of all this, many of the pupils are doing wonderfully well. Some are still at their letters, while some can read.

Some of the larger boys work at road making four miles away. We give them their lesson first, they take their books with them and go to their work, and employ their hours of rest in getting their lessons for early school next morning.

The Bible is taught daily. Many verses are learned by heart, and the older scholars know pretty well the life of Christ.

THE DEFORMED BOY.

There is a deformed boy whose spine was injured by a fall, so that he cannot sit upright. He lives only about one hundred yards from the school, and yet he requires nearly an hour to travel that distance, for he cannot walk, but crawls slowly and painfully along the ground.

When the boys, a few days ago, repeated the verse, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even to them," I asked them to practice that beautiful lesson by helping this poor boy to reach the school. But they have not yet done so.

The weak and suffering receive little help or pity among the heathen. It is only our gracious Saviour who teaches "Bear ye one another's burdens."

THE GIRLS.

The girls in this school take little interest in learning to read. It is difficult to get them to come at all, for their parents think it waste time to send them.