

Women as they are in India.—But it must not be supposed that all Indian women are unhappy or are unkindly treated; circumstances may modify some features of the case in individual instances; but their condition as a whole is what has just been described.

The life of the poor is one of hard and degrading toil, without a hope, perhaps often without a desire, for anything higher than supplying the daily recurring wants of the body. Their constant drudgery is not lightened by a brighter prospect in future, and often when the attempt is made to kindle some better desire, or to gain their permission to have the little girls taught, they say, "What good will it be to me? I shall never be anything but a woman."

Those who occupy a higher social position are very little better off. It is true they are not compelled to work hard, but they are deprived of their liberty and spend life in the seclusion of the Zenanas. One of our visitors mentions some of her pupils who had not been outside their Zenanas for more than fifteen years. With minds untrained and empty, deprived of liberty, and without rational sources of interest, their lives are aimless indeed, and, except that the mistresses have more ease and luxury, there is little difference between their lot and that of the female servants with whom they enjoy the idle gossip which forms their chief link with the outside world.

What a contrast such a picture presents to even the humblest homes in this country which have been ennobled by the influence of Christianity, or the homes of native Christians in India, where parents and children are found serving God together, and going to His house in company. There, it is sad to say, miserable homes in England, but they are so in spite of Gospel privileges, not for lack of them, as it is in a heathen land.

The Way made Clear.—Formerly, the obstacles in the way of reaching Indian women were many and great, but now every year sees some of these removed, and matters have so far advanced that there is an increasing desire among the gentlemen to have their wives educated so that they may become suitable companions. Instead of our having now to ask how we are to gain admission to these dark homes, the difficulty is how to supply teachers to those who are willing to be taught. As soon as Indian ladies are trained and fitted to take their proper position in domestic and social life, we cannot doubt that a mighty change will take place—the doors of the prison-houses will be opened, not by force, but as a natural consequence of the change already effected within. It is a great comfort to know that even before that happy time there are many scattered about in heathen families who have learned to read and love the Word of God. The light shines with varying degrees of clearness, and no doubt they do not all understand the truth in its fullness, but yet they cling to what they do know with love and hope. "Do you know that these books are all about the Christian *not* {or religion}?" asked an old Hindoo of the ladies of his household, angrily that they were so anxious to learn to read. "We do not mind what *not* they belong to," they answered; "they are good words. They bring light and comfort to us, and we like to hear them."

The Work of the Missionary.—Some of the scenes met with in every day visiting amongst these poor women are very touching, and produce a deep effect on the mind. Picture to yourself a long, low room at the back of the house, looking out upon a dull, paved courtyard surrounded by a high wall. It is occupied by, perhaps, a dozen

women and girls, of various ages, and seven or eight little children. The servants are busy at one end preparing rice or other things for daily use; some of the little ones are crying, others playing, others sleeping. In the quietest part of the room you would see several women and girls seated on the ground near the missionary lady, who is busy superintending their lessons and work. When this part is over she opens her own book, and, at the request of one or the other, sings a hymn, having first read the verses and explained their meaning. By this time the group has been increased by other women and girls, who come round to listen, and then she proceeds to read some story or parable to them, explaining and applying the truth as she goes on, meeting their objections, and endeavouring to press it home to their hearts. If you glance round, you can see the images and pictures of frightful idols, the little cups and plates containing the daily offerings, the flowers which have been already presented before the household gods, and sometimes the foreheads and arms of the listeners are daubed with clay from some sacred place, showing they have performed their morning devotions. Here, in the very citadel of Hindooism, the glad news of the Saviour, who came to put away sin for ever, is being proclaimed. In this abode of dark superstition and ignorance the true light is being presented, and in this hard and strong ground the "good seed" is being patiently and lovingly sown. *This is the work of the Zenana Mission.*

OUR INDIAN STATIONS.

Samulcotta Seminary.

We are very busy these days, but I wish the readers of the *Link* to know that the Seminary is open, and the work in full progress.

We began classifying students on the 3rd of October, and in a few days we had a school of twenty pupils. *Chi acole, Bimlipatam, Cocanada and Akidu* sent each its detachment. Some of them are well advanced, while others are very near the Alpha of education. All study the Bible two hours a day—that is, they recite and listen to an exegesis for that time. One hour in the morning on the Old Testament, and one in the afternoon on the New Testament. The lesson is prepared beforehand. The rest of the time is taken up with other studies. Saturdays we have essays, declamations, exegesis of passages of scripture, sermon plans, &c. Sunday morning we have a Sabbath School in connection with the few Christians in the village, and also a preaching service. In the afternoon the students go out to the surrounding villages, in groups of two or three to preach. In each group we try to have one who has had some experience in preaching; also a singer. In the evening we meet for prayer and preaching in the town.

For the first ten days we were all alone. Then our Christian teacher, India Philip, from the Ongole field, came to our help. I think he will be a great help to us. Some will be interested in knowing that he is one of the boys I sent to the Ramapatam Seminary in 1872, and who studied under Bro. Limpany for nearly two years. He is a present to us from our American brethren. And nothing could be more generous or Christianlike than the response of these brethren to my request for a teacher. May God bless the old mother Mission. Brother Clough and Boggs deserve special mention.

Taking them altogether, I am exceedingly well pleased