

BREAKING CASTE.

It is not easy for those who live in this land where all are equal before the law, to understand the fearful bondage in which the people of India are held by their theories of caste. The following story which is taken from an account sent by Rev. Dr. Scudder of the Arcot mission to the *Saver and Mission Monthly*, gives a good illustration of the power of this caste system:

"One day last year there came to a Christian school in Madana-palle, India, a boy about seventeen years old. He was a 'high-caste' boy; that is, he belonged to a class of people who think themselves better than some other classes. He wanted to get an education and asked the teachers to take him into their school. The teachers said to each other, 'This boy does not know what he will have to give up if he comes to live with Christians. We must tell him all the risk he takes, and give him time to think about it before we say yes.' So they gave him some work to do and found a house for him to stay in, with a man of his own caste. This caste is called *Bulgee*. Then they told him that if he should come to live at the school he would have to eat with the other scholars and that would 'break his caste' and cut him off from all his family. No greater shame or grief could come to him, in the view of his people, than this. Only a few days had passed, when the teacher heard with surprise that the boy had already taken a meal with their scholars. His caste was already broken.

"The school-boys said that when he sat down to eat with them his courage almost failed. He sat a long time over the food before he dared try to taste it. At length, he lifted it, but his hand trembled so that he could not guide it to his mouth. His hand fell powerless to his plate. Again and again he tried but again his hand fell. Finally he made a desperate effort and forced the food into his mouth. Since he had thus taken the step of his own choice, the teacher let him enter their school. He proved to be a pleasant boy, and it is

hoped he will now become a true believer in Jesus.

"Some time after he had begun his studies, his father came in search of him. He said that he had been going from village to village trying to find his son. He is a travelling priest, having temples under his care in different places. He gets a good income by leading in the worship of the idols, and has, besides, a good property in lands and cattle. He meant to have his son take his office and his property when he should die. So he was much distressed by his choosing to be a Christian. He came three times to persuade the boy to go home with him, and even pretended that his mother was very sick and wanted to see him. But he did not succeed in getting him away."

What great sacrifices this child of an idolater is willing to make! The children of Christian parents have no such trial. They cannot give their friends a greater joy than by choosing to learn the way of life and to walk in it. — *Mission Dayspring*.

A CHINESE SCHOOL.

BY MISS ELLA J. NEWTON.

I have twenty-four Chinese schoolgirls now, with bright, sparkling eyes and heavy black hair, which they keep nice and smooth, and often adorned with flowers. Now, you must not think these girls are stupid and dull, for they are very full of life and fun, and they enjoy laughing and playing as well as American children. Just now there is a perfect fever for playing jack-straws, and their nimble fingers perform astonishing feats of skill.

Then they are very fond of playing ball, striking it with the hand as it bounds up from the floor, and not failing once for perhaps seventy or eighty times. But it is not all play, for they work very hard over their books, and are ashamed to have poor lessons.

Not long ago I found some of them were carrying their books to bed with them, that they might study with the first light in the morning. Do you know what kind of beds they sleep in? They are