

up. When your object is a good one, set about it; it is an excellent thing to make a beginning.

My old box maker disappointed me; but then, have I never disappointed any one, either by promising hastily or unadvisedly, when a little consideration would have shown me that I could not perform my promise? Or did I never neglect a promise or a pressing duty, allowing hour after hour, and day after day to pass, without so much as even beginning what I promised to perform? I have! I have! And if you are in the same situation, let us both try once more, looking for heavenly aid, to avoid the error into which we have fallen.

#### The Hindu Widow.

THE widows of India are a peculiar class, well deserving our sympathy. The following extracts from "Arthur's Mission to the Mysore," are descriptive of their state:—

"At the door of some wealthy merchant you would occasionally see his wife or daughter in full dress of costly silk, her glossy black hair graced with a round ornament of gold on the crown; long pendants from the ears, the perforation of which had been artificially increased to the diameter of half an inch; the edges of the ears crowded with a succession of rings up to the very tip; a ring, large enough for a bunch of keys, inserted into the nose, resting on the cheek, and strung with pearls; a heart-shaped piece of gold suspended from the centre membrane of the nose, and resting on the upper lip; several chains of gold on the neck, sometimes a richly-gemmed collar; the arms thronged with bracelets from above the elbow; a ring, or more, on every finger; massive silver ankles loading the feet, and tinkling with every motion, while each toe rejoiced in a broad ring.

"I have seen a little girl not more than five or six years of age, with all the finery just described, standing in her father's door to display it. But I have also seen a little girl of not more

than that age, in one of those same houses, with every ornament gone, her hair shaved off, and other signs of widowhood. A girl of three, or five, or seven, may be given by her father to a husband of thirty, or fifty, or seventy. She may never have set her eyes on him except on the wedding day; she is still living at her father's house; but if the man who calls her wife die, she is his widow, and his widow for life. The *tahli* \* is removed from her neck; then one by one, her articles of jewellery; her dress changed for a widow's robe, and her rich black hair shaved, to be allowed to grow no more. From that day she commences a life of shame. She is charged with her husband's death; he has been taken from her to punish her sin in a former birth; the younger she is, the greater sinner she must have been, to be overtaken so soon, and her accusations are proportionally malignant; her presence is a curse—it must never blight social festivity nor sacred ritual; the house is cursed for her sake; no accident or misfortune occurs but it is her fault; she is the drudge, the butt, the sorrow, the reproach of her family. If she has the honor to be a Brahman's widow, in addition to all other inflictions, she is permitted but one meal a day. She may not marry again: it would be more disgraceful than any immorality. With us the word 'widow' sounds tenderly, even on harsh tongues. In the families of India it is a term of execration. And spite can find no name so bitter as the son 'of a widow.' No human being is more to be pitied than a young Hindu widow. Then it is to be remembered, that this class is far more numerous in India than amongst us: for, first, every man, without ex-

\* "A small golden ornament, with the image of a god engraved upon it, and having attached a cord composed of a hundred and eight extremely fine threads. To this ornament incense is offered, and each person of those present touches it, invoking blessings upon it. The bride then turns to the east, and the bridegroom, taking the ornaments thus consecrated, places it in front of her neck, and ties the cord behind. This is called the *tahli*: it is their wedding ring."