

inter-marriage within the caste—secret disciples they are, who, for their children's sake, remain within their caste, and are not counted among the members of our churches.

Not only must a Hindu seek a wife for his son, or a husband for his daughter, within the particular division of the caste to which he belongs, and the family relationship prescribed by his caste, but under no circumstances may he inter-dine with those of a caste below his own. And further, he must be very careful about the food he eats—he must know who handled it, and especially, who cooked it. Some articles of food, such as fruit with outer skins that can be removed—oranges, bananas, etc.—are not considered polluted, while others, and especially water, are to be very carefully guarded against the polluting touch of the lower castes. Many a time has the writer seen a Brahmin woman empty the water she was carrying home from the village well, for her household, into the street, because the shadow of a passing lower caste person had rested upon the pot in which she carried it.

It had been truly said that that monster of cruelty, Nana Sahib of Cawnpore, was able, without any violation of caste rules, to massacre many innocent English women and children at the time of the mutiny; but to drink a cup of water out of the hand of one of those tender victims of his treachery and rage, would have been a mortal sin against caste, such as could be atoned for only in future births, and by the fiery tortures of hell.

Caste observances decree that the Brahmin is polluted by the touch of the Sudra; that the outcaste must leave the road when he sees a Brahmin approaching; that in turn, the Sudra is contaminated by coming into personal contact with a Pariah, but owing to the great inconvenience and trouble caused by this idea of ceremonial pollution, it has in later years been considerably

modified. The railways, of which there are now more than 30,000 miles, have done much to break down this particular caste tenet. In the days when the palanquin and the ox-cart were the only conveyances, it was easy to be arrogantly exclusive, and to effectively carry out the "I am holier than thou" idea, but to-day the Brahmin, in order to avail himself of the wonderful conveniences of the modern railway carriage, must sit an-hour at a time cheek by jowl a low caste—it may be a Pariah—fellow-passenger. Truly the railroad gnaws at the vitals of caste life and conditions.

The laws of caste determine a man's occupation for him,—he is tied to the trade of his ancestors; yea more, he must confine himself to the ancestral tools and methods of work, and in India to-day, one sees ploughs resembling those pictured as in use in Abraham's day; one sees the Old Testament threshing-floor and the oxen treading out the grain; one sees the potter working with the most primitive of wheels and the weaver with the loom of the long, long ago.

Many and severe are the penalties inflicted by caste for the violation of its rules. Such a person is boycotted absolutely. No member of his caste would dare to offer him food or invite him to their houses, or accept his hospitality. And this caste tyranny is commonly brought to bear upon those who have abandoned caste by becoming Christians. Of the converts from any of the four castes, or their numberless divisions and sub-divisions, it may truly be said, that they have left house and lands, father, mother, sisters, brethren, wife and children, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's.

A caste penalty, which has received a good deal of prominence of late, is called "Prayashchitta," which means atonement. It is usually the punishment