

to worship custom and be its slaves, and allow our moral sentiments to remain dead, and our unjust and cruel practices to flourish. If an education does not lead us to protest against them, that education must be considered to be merely superficial."

There is great opposition to social and religious changes in countries where Mohammedanism prevails; but so far as other non-Christian religions are concerned, Hinduism probably presents the greatest obstacles to such changes. Hinduism not only offers all sorts of philosophic and popular beliefs for what we would call the religion of the people, it also lays down rules to guide the social life of its disciples from the day of their birth to that of their death. Child-marriage for females of high caste may be cited as an illustration. A writer in speaking of this as the greatest of woman's wrongs, mentions caste and the joint-family system as the things that make it a very Gibraltar. All these things together certainly make Hinduism a Gibraltar.

And yet no one can deny that there are some signs of progress in India. One of the saddest things in Hinduism is that it sanctions and encourages practices that are immoral. Among these is the custom of dedicating little girls to a life of sin, or marrying them to the god Khondoba, as it is called in western India. Lately a memorial has been presented to the Governor of Bombay calling attention to this great evil, and asking that it be put down by the strong hand of the law. The memorialists suggest that it be pointed out to the temple authorities that in permitting the ceremony within the temple precincts they are accessory to the crime and punishable as such. The memorial closes with these words: "In taking action to put an end to what constitutes an open sore in the life of the people, your Excellency's Government will be warmly supported by all the enlightened and intelligent sections of the Hindu community."

About seven years ago Mrs. Fuller, a missionary at Bombay, in writing on "The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood," alluded to this evil, and said: "Will it be left to a few missionaries to oppose it, or will the educated classes co-operate?" Now it seems that the educated classes are co-operating.

The caste system in India is sometimes called the devil's masterpiece. It is generally said that there are four castes, and after them the out-castes, now sometimes called in Government reports, the Panchamas, or people of the fifth caste. But there are scores of sub-castes,

and even Brahmans are separated from one another by divisions and sub-divisions, members of which cannot intermarry or even eat together. Enlightened men have long bewailed these divisions. Recently a reform has taken place in Calcutta by which the four sub-castes of the *Kayestha community have agreed to drop their differences and become one. A leading man among them, who is a judge, gave a dinner, at which members of the four sub-castes sat down indiscriminately, and they have also sanctioned inter-marriages among themselves. The significance of this movement consists in the fact that what has taken place in one community is likely to take place in others.

There are other things that indicate a relaxing of the bonds of caste. Some time ago a public reading-room was opened at Peddapuram in a lot adjoining the mission compound. A native gentleman in giving an account of the opening ceremonies wrote: "Tea and sweets were served and most of the educated gentry and students partook of them, showing thereby that educated Indians have been gradually giving up gross superstitions and ridiculous sectarian differences."

But the most evident signs of progress are seen in the Christian community. The last census, taken in 1901, showed a remarkable growth in numbers, much larger among Protestants than among Roman Catholics. And while the progress made in education among the males is noteworthy, that made among the females is more so. This is sure to give to the Christian community in time an intellectual supremacy, and an influence that their numbers alone could not secure them. I was quite struck with the progress made in our own mission, when I attended the women's session at the last meeting of the Godavari Association. It was a joy to see and hear our Telugu sisters, as the officers conducted the business, and the delegates read the reports from the various circles, and discussed matters that were brought up for settlement.

These are signs that anyone can see and appreciate. The deeper spiritual life manifested by many of our Telugu pastors and others of late may be mentioned as the best of all the signs of promise.

JOHN CRAIG.

*Kayestha means writer or accountant. In the Telugu country these are called Karnams and belong to the Brahmans. Josiah, the old pastor at Cocanada, came from the extreme north of the Telugu country. He was a Karnam, but not a Brahman; probably he belonged to the Kayestha caste.