

resolved to be a Christian. His clan, 8,000 strong, were enraged. There was a riot in the streets—in the house the poison cup was ready. Better death than loss of caste.

In another town a boy took his stand and was baptized, thus breaking caste. His caste men got hold of him, and next time he was seen he was a raving lunatic.

In another part of the field a low-caste man and his wife partly believed. The village soothsayer warned them, "their 'father's god would be angry.' They didn't heed, but went on, and suddenly their baby died. This was too much for their faith, and both went back to idolatry. A few years after their eldest child began to learn, and the mother's faith revived. The soothsayer and her husband reminded her of the babe, but she was brave, and let the child learn. Then her cow died suddenly. "Did we not tell you," so they said. She was staggered at first, but then became more earnest in faith. So the soothsayer threatened worse. A caste meeting was called to determine what could be done with this woman. The husband attended this meeting, and was treated to some rice and curry. He became violently ill on his way home, and died. The relatives said the woman was the cause of her husband's death, and took her only son from her. They gave her two weeks to mourn and return to her god. Then, finding her mind fixed on Christ, sent her to Burmah. This surely shows the power of caste, of the cruelty that would hound a poor woman down, and send her bereft of all she loved into exile. And when you remember the caste was "low," which they took such infinite pains to guard, you can imagine what the scorn and hate would be if the caste were higher or high.

Look at caste in another way—its power in the common things of life.

For example, take a kitchen and the operations of cooking. The kitchen in every Indian household is a kind of sanctuary or holy ground. The mere glance of a man of inferior caste makes the greatest delicacies uneatable. If such a glance happens to fall on the family supplies, during the cooking operations, when the ceremonial purity of the water used is a matter of almost life or death to every member of the household, the whole repast has to be thrown away, as if poisoned. Food thus polluted would taint the souls as well as the bodies of the eaters. If one were to break the caste by Baptism, she could take no part in the cooking,—her presence, her shadow, above all, her touch, would be simply pollution.

If a merchant becomes a Christian, no one will buy his goods. If a weaver, no one will buy his cloth. If a dyer, no one will buy his thread. If a jeweler, no one will employ him.

Every particular occupation in life represents a particular caste. Thus it can be understood how matters are complicated. A man wants to become a Christian, say from the blacksmith or carpenter caste. As a Christian he loses his trade, and has been trained to no other. A lad of the brassworker caste, once came to the conclusion that Christianity is the true religion. His father was not strong, he had to support his mother, little brothers and sisters. If he became a Christian, no one would buy his vessels, no one would sell him brass, and he knew only inherited trade. This makes work in India difficult. One little lad where the missionary visited had suffered for months, had hardly slept. The missionary begged them to take him to the hospital, but they said to go to the hospital was against their caste. Then she pleaded to let her take him and try to ease the pain, but they said if he died away from home, it would dis-