

"They are Worth Saving!"—The cry from India.

BY REV. EARNEST O. WESLEY.

"They are worth saving!" But workers so few.
Millions are dying. Your efforts renew!
Hark to the cry which now comes o'er the sea,
Hark to the heart cry, from INDIA to thee!
Sore pressed by the foe, yet "holding the field!"
Sore pressed by the foe—but think not to yield!
How strong is their faith. How brave is their stand,
"Three millions for Jesus! His is the land!"

"They are worth saving,—these millions of unblest:
Toilers are leaving, for toilers must rest!"
Loud is the summons, O Christian, to thee,
Clear is the message Christ sendeth for thee:
Give of thy wealth to the cause of thy Lord—
Even thyself to thy Master adore.
Hasten to help them—the ranks must be filled:
Enter His vineyard—the soil must be tilled.

"They are worth saving,"—these millions so dear:
Moments are flying; night draweth so near!
Loved ones so weary your burden now bear—
Heartfelt their anguish, their pleading, their prayer!
"INDIA FOR JESUS." How great is her need!
"INDIA FOR JESUS." Go bearing His seed!
Heed now her heart cry, for daylight is dawning;
Heed now thy Master, O speed thou for Him!

—Missionary Helper.

Hinduism and Its Effect on Woman.

I once heard a dear missionary lady describe a heathen wedding. She said that after the usual preliminary ceremonies of rice-eating had been completed, the door was opened into an inner room, where in the farthest corner crouched the little frightened bride of seven years. Around the door just opened, crowded the men, holding lights above their heads to enable them to see the face of the tiny bride, and pouring out as they looked upon her, words too vile and low even to be thought of. It was part of the bridal ceremony that the poor child should be thus insulted, and as the missionary sat a silent, agonized witness of the scene, with her hands clenched in anger and with tears streaming down her cheeks, one of the household, looking at her curiously said, "Why do you cry, teacher? Do they not do so in your country?"

What does not that simple question, "Do they not do so in your country?" tell of the condition of heathen women? What corruption and degradation are shown in the fact that at a ceremony which ought to be one of purity and love, women not only endure but expect insult, not only expect it, but find in the absence of it, only cause for wonderment.

Woman holds in every country the position which is granted her by the religion of her people. If then, we would know the causes of the degradation of heathen women, we must seek to know the principles of religion which govern them. A nation's creed is in a measure the outgrowth of the character of its people, but on the other hand, religion is a great agent in moulding and forming the opinions and customs of any nation. If a country's gods are pure and lofty, there will be found in its men and women pure minds and high ideals of character, and if we find a corrupt, degraded people, we need

not look far to discover that their religion is lacking in virtuous principles. For if the gods to whom they look for help, to whom they pray, and who, they believe, look down upon them in wrath as well as pleasure, are partial and unjust in their decisions, regardless of the welfare of man; if these are the beings whom a nation reverences, what wonder if immorality is stamped upon that people, and purity is a word of which they have never heard.

Hinduism, one of the great religions of the world, and one which holds away over the spiritual destiny of nearly the whole of India, numbers its followers by many millions. You will ask me, "What is Hinduism? What are its guiding principles and what its influence?" In the first place, Hinduism as it exists to-day is very far removed from the Hinduism of three thousand years ago. There was much in the older forms of Hinduism, as believed in by the first of the Aryan race who settled in India, there was much in that earlier religion, the effect of which was not altogether lowering. But Hinduism infinitely capable as it was of receiving and assimilating ideas from all sources, gradually became changed; corruptions crept in, until modern Hinduism is far from being an uplifting belief.

In this religion as it stands to-day, besides innumerable lesser divinities, there are three chief gods: Brahma the creating principle; whose worship has been almost abandoned at present; Vishnu, the preserving or redeeming principle; and Siva, the destroying. Of these three, the last is most worshipped, feared and adored. Each god has his feminine side, and as Siva, the cruel one, is worshipped most, so Kali, his abominable consort, is the one to be appeased. Represented with disheveled hair, with a necklace of human skulls, with tongue protruding and girdle stained with blood, it is no wonder that she is an object of worship. We may judge of the power of her spiritual rule, when we know that the best and most acceptable offering which can be made to her is the blood of innocent children. Sacrifice, indeed, has always had its high place in Hinduism. By sacrifice sins could be forgiven and assurance of future good obtained. Sacrifice and suffering are willingly endured for the sake of religion. "The heathen devotees will lie on pointed nails, expose himself naked to the fearful heat of the sun, bury himself to the neck in the earth, throw himself on pointed knives, torture his body by incisions and mutilations, and bind himself in every possible position of agony." Originally sacrifice was the foundation of their religion, but by degrees another standard has been established, namely that of faith in some special divinity. Modern Hinduism declares that "no attention to the forms of religion or to the rules of morality are of the slightest avail, without the all-important sentiment of faith." And thus depending on faith, the Hindu makes his faith a covering, and atonement for any wickedness.

Transmigration too is a feature of this belief, every good Hindu thinking that he must be born 8,400,000 times. There are supposed to be centuries of woe between these births, and remembering this, it is no wonder that every faithful follower of Hinduism works and lives and hopes for the great boon of being absorbed into the self-existent God.

These are but a few of the chief beliefs of Hinduism, yet enough for us to ask ourselves, what is the effect of this faith upon the Indian people and especially upon the women?

The first thing which we notice is, that there is no right thing known to a heathen woman as a home. How could there be, when the very first requisite of a home—purity and love—are entirely omitted in the Hindu creed? The