

the time she is five, and I fear what her father would do with her. Do you know of any nice boy, who has a good bit of fortune? We can give her a pretty dowry."

Then the barber's wife put on her thinking cap, and said: "I know a fine Brahmin gentleman who wants a young wife. He has only two wives now, and he is very rich. He is twenty-five years old, and such a handsome man."

Well, after many words, it was settled by this go-between that the little innocent Piyari should marry this man who was more than twenty years older than she, and had two wives already.

When the wedding day came, the baby bride was dressed in rich silks, with many jewels, and told she was to be married. It was all like a beautiful play to her.

Did she go home with her husband then? No, there were still some happy years in her own mother's house, though the shadows of sorrowful days to come began to fall on her. Her mother talked often to her about the new home.

"You will live with your mother-in-law, as all brides do. She will beat you, maybe; she will make you work hard. You must hate her—hate her."

Strange counsel, was it not for a mother to give? If you could ask her why she gave it, she would say, "It is the custom." People in India are always anxious to do what is the custom.

When Piyari was twelve years old, she went to her husband; and sure enough, it was all as her mother had told her. If you could ask the mother-in-law why she was cruel to her new daughter, she, too, would reply, "it is the custom."

But the worst was to come. In less than a year after the child went to him, the husband sickened and died. His mother blamed the three widows for his death—that is "custom" too—but most of all, the little child widow, for "he was well until you came."

All Piyari's ornaments were taken from her—the bracelets and anklets and jewels which are the pride of a Hindu girl's heart. If the mother-in-law was unkind before, she was cruel now. She beat the child widow, sometimes she struck her with hot irons which burnt into the young flesh. This girl, only thirteen years old, could never again go to a feast or a merrymaking; she must have but one meal a day, and drink impure water like that of any street puddle. Other girls shrank from her shadow, lest it should cast a like fate upon them. Do you wonder that Piyari's eyes were unutterably sad, as she sits and cleans the cooking vessels of the kitchen?

Thus weary years passed. Many, many times the little widow wished she might do as they did in the old days before the English ruled—burn to death on a funeral pyre.

Perhaps her only pleasure was when two or three other widows brought their low spinning wheels, to spin cotton together in the same courtyard. As they twirled the wheels so deftly, you may be sure each told stories of her cruel mother-in-law.

Then—then there came a foreign teacher, a white woman who had never married, and yet was not disgraced. The wonder of it! She told them of a Saviour for helpless Hindu widows, and of a beautiful life hereafter for all who loved this Saviour. It would quite make up for all the sorrows here.

Who could help heeding such an astonishing story. Certainly not Piyari. Beloved once more, beloved of God, who revealed Himself thus, Piyari became a Christian.

And now a new life has opened to her, for she has been taken into a Christian school. She has not resumed her ornaments; she thinks little about them, and the "custom" of widowhood is not easily broken. Though a Christian, even to this day when she goes out she must put on a soiled mantle. Why? Because if she wears one which is white and clean, the people will say she is not spotless herself, but is a bad woman, so she must wear a soiled garment to show her own purity. Is it not a strange contradiction? But heathen minds are full of such absurd and cruel ideas as these.

This is the story of only one widow, and there are twenty millions of them in India—twenty millions to suffer as Piyari did, and so few Christian teachers to give them a message of hope. Who will send more teachers?—"The Morning Star."

A Grandmother's Rules.

Somebody's grandmother has bequeathed to her descendants these admirable rules of conduct:

Always look at the person to whom you speak. When you are addressed, look straight at the person who speaks to you. Do not forget this.

Speak your words plainly; do not mutter or mumble. If words are worth saying, they are worth pronouncing distinctly and clearly.

Do not say disagreeable things. If you have nothing pleasant to say, keep silent.

Think three times before you speak once.

Have you something to do that you find hard and would prefer not to do? Do the hard thing first and get it over with. If you have done wrong, go and confess it. If your lesson is tough, master it. If the garden is to be weeded, weed it first and play afterwards. Do first the thing you don't like to do, and then, with a clear conscience, try the rest.