

tisms together. I must here explain that the church at St. Thomé is used both for Tamil and English services. At half-past seven A. M. and at four P. M. the Tamil congregation meet for Divine Service, when Mr. Brotherton officiates: at eleven A. M. and half-past six P. M. the English congregation, of which I am the minister, assemble. Under ordinary circumstances, Mr. Brotherton's convert would have been baptized at the Tamil service, but in this case it appeared desirable to have the two baptized together at the evening English service. As a manifestation against caste, we felt the effect would be good, that the despised Pariah, and the once proud Brahmin, should kneel together, as alike sinners needing a SAVIOUR, to put on Christ by baptism.

On the appointed evening, a crowded congregation assembled, consisting of Europeans, East Indians, and Natives, both Christian and Heathen. A portion of the Tamil congregation had been invited to be present. The Rev. G. U. Pope, who had recently arrived from England, read the prayers, and Mr. Brotherton and myself officiated at the baptisms. As the Pariah convert did not understand English, a considerable portion of the baptismal service was read in Tamil, as well as in English. The questions were put first to Sreenavasa in English, which he thoroughly understands. After the first question, relating to the renunciation of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, I asked him whether he was prepared to renounce, as one of the sinful things of the world, heathen caste, and its accompaniments. He firmly replied, "Yes!" I then said, "If so, give me your Brahminical string."† He immediately took it off and laid it on the Font, there, severing himself irrecoverably from Brahminism and its pretensions. The names given to him at his Baptism, were Andrew Philip: I need scarcely say, the whole ceremony was deeply interesting. It was a strange, and yet a beautiful sight, to behold the two candidates, one a Pariah and the other a Brahmin, kneeling together, and before God and His congregation declaring their desire to enter the Church of CHRIST, and so in Him, their Head, becoming members one of the other. After the prayers, I preached a short sermon from the words, "What think ye of CHRIST?" Matt. xxii. 42; directing my remarks rather to the Congregation than to Sreenavasa, partly because I wished to avoid making him more an object of public notice than could be helped, and partly because it seemed a proper opportunity to appeal to the consciences of the professing Christians assembled, as to *their* thoughts and feelings towards CHRIST, and whether *they* were prepared to deny themselves, and to take up their cross and follow Him. Sreenavasa has, since his baptism, been making steady progress in Christian knowledge,

† This string is a very sacred thing with a Brahmin, and much importance is attached to it. I suppose a more significant act, in renunciation of Brahminism, could scarcely be demanded of a convert. I send you one of these strings belonging to Sreenavasa, which, perhaps, will be regarded with some curiosity. The following account also, written by Sreenavasa, will, I doubt not, interest you:—

"Yagnapaneeta" is the sacrificial cord, originally worn by the three principal castes of Hindoos; viz. Brahmins, Kahatriyas, and Vaisyas. But the two latter races being extinct in the present age, various classes of the fourth, or Shudra caste, use it, assuming the title and privileges of those races.

A Brahmin is invested with it be even and nine, and others generally at their marriages. This ceremony is called "Upanayanum."

A Brahmin, when a bachelor, wears only one thread folded into three, the ends of which are tied up into a knot in a peculiar way. And when he is married he adds another to it, as a token of his being a "Grabasta" or family man. But some wear three, and the reason is this. A Brahmin should never be without an upper garment, but as there are various occasions when he cannot help being so, the third thread is intended as a substitute for it. A Brahmin should bathe and be free from all pollutions, when twisting this thread and making it into "yagnapaneeta," and repeat certain passages of Vedas. The thread is generally worn so as to pass over the left shoulder and under the right arm, but when a Brahmin is tying his cloth or doing any other thing that he considers impure, he turns it up over his right ear.

The thread is renewed, after shaving, when he comes in contact with any object that he is prohibited from touching, such as a Pariah, māt, &c. And also after the pollution occasioned by the death of a relative is over.

The mode of wearing it is this:—It is held up by the four fingers of the right hand, and the thumb of the same hand keeps the knot in the middle of the middle finger, while the four fingers of the left hand hold it down tight. Then some passages of Vedas are uttered to sanctify it, and then it is put on. Thus one, two, or three of these threads are put on at a time, stating the reason why it is renewed, and what it is intended for.

and I trust, in Christian graces. With the help of my students, he is studying Paley's Evidences, and other theological works, and Greek. Eventually he wishes to become a student in the seminary under my care, with a view to be employed in preaching the Gospel to his countrymen. For the present, however, I have advised him to pursue his secular calling, as the effect is likely to be better. There is a general impression among the Hindoos, that directly a high caste man becomes a convert, he must become a protégé of some clergyman, and a dependant on some Society. It seemed desirable, therefore, that Sreenavasa should show that a man may be a Christian, and yet carry on his former occupation with the same independence and respectability. In a year's time, perhaps, he will enter the seminary, and your readers will, I doubt not, unite with me in praying that he may be made a burning and shining light to his brethren in this land.

What remains to be told, is connected rather with Sreenavasa's wife than himself, the account of which, as before intimated, I shall send you in a publication by itself. It may perhaps be not without interest and importance to mention, as shewing what a caste Hindoo has to encounter in embracing Christianity, that shortly after his coming to my house, Sreenavasa's father-in-law seized on the house belonging to him in Black Town, on the pretence that he (Sreenavasa) was legally and socially dead, and that his daughter, as the widow, was entitled to the property. Previous to the passing of the recent law, the *Lex Loci* Act, Sreenavasa would have forfeited his property by becoming a Christian, and his wife, if she had remained a Brahminee, would have become entitled to it. But as it is, the house is recoverable, and I have accordingly instituted actions in the Court for the purpose. Both with reference to the wife and the property, I felt it to be my duty not to allow a single social right to be wrested from Sreenavasa, especially as his is the first case of the kind that has occurred in Madras since the passing of the law. For the sake of future converts, I have considered it due to the cause of Christianity, to take measures for the vindication of Sreenavasa's rights to the utmost.

May it please God to dispose the hearts of many young men among the caste Hindoos, to renounce a system which in secret they despise; and to embrace boldly that Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation!

Madras, Sept. 1851.

A. R. S.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

October and November, 1851.

A letter was read from the Lord Bishop of Cape Town, dated Cape Town, June 28, 1851, thanking the Society for grants towards churches at Cradock, Somerset, and George, and enclosing a letter from the Rev. E. A. Steabler, whom his Lordship had placed at Bloem-Fontein, the most distant of all the outposts, and the only place in the Orange River Sovereignty to which he had been able to send a clergyman. The Bishop said—

"Amidst the din and confusion of the surrounding war, which has extended itself over the Sovereignty, the house of God is gradually rising to its completion; and I trust that, together with it, the spiritual temple is growing up. One act of generosity I must mention. The British Resident has lately purchased a house in the village, in which he allows the clergyman to reside, rent free. I am sure the Society will make a grant of books for a lending library for the troops and civilians. There are about 250 soldiers there, who are wholly dependent upon Mr. Steabler's voluntary ministrations. Government has made no provision for them. I grieve to say, that in consequence of the war, one or two of our churches are left in an incomplete state; and I fear that the ruin and desolation which have spread over so vast a portion of the country will throw back our work for several years. The war does not appear to be any nearer to its termination than when I last wrote to you, and the rebellion is spreading amongst the coloured classes within the colony. It is impossible, indeed, to say to what extent the disaffection may proceed. During the last month, the Hottentots, at another of the London Society's institutions, have broken out into open rebellion, and there is much reason to