

# THE Canadian Missionary Link.

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In the Interests of the Baptist Foreign Mission Societies of Canada.

INDIA.

VOL. IV., No. 9.] "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."—[1. 1. 2.] MAY, 1882.

## Sisters.

BY FRANCIS RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

Oh! for a fiery scroll, and a trumpet of thunder might,  
To startle the silken dreams of English women at ease,  
Circled with peace and joy, and dwelling where truth and light  
Are shining fair as the stars, and free as the western breeze.

Oh! for a clarion voice to reach and stir their ne-  
With the story of sisters' woes gathering day by day  
Over the Indian homes (sepulchres rather than rest).  
Till they rouse in the strength of the Lord, and roll the stone  
away.

Sisters! Scorn not the name, for ye cannot alter the fact  
Deem ye the darker tint of the glowing south shall be  
Valid excuse above for the Priest's and Levite's act,  
If ye pass on the other side, and say that ye did not see.

Sisters! yea, and they be, not by the side of the road,  
But hidden in loathsome caves, in crushed and quivering  
throngs,

Down-trodden, degraded, and dark, beneath the invisible road  
Of centuries, echoing groans, black with inherited wrongs.

Made like our own strange selves, with memory mad and will,  
Made with a heart to love, and a soul to live for ever.

Sisters! Is there no chord vibrating in musical thrill,  
At the fall of that gentle word, to issue in bright endeavour.

Sisters! Ye who have known the Elder Brother's love,  
Ye who have sat at His feet, and leant on His gracious breast,  
Whose hearts are glad with the hope of His own blest home  
above,

Will ye not seek them out, and lead them to Him for rest?

Is it too great a thing? Will not one rise and go,  
Laying her joys aside, as the Master laid them down?  
Seeking His lone and lost in the veiled abodes of woe,  
Winning His Indian gems to shine in His glorious crown.

## Some Hindu Ceremonies.

BY REV. G. F. CURRIE.

Supposing that the younger readers of the LINK might be interested in an account of the ordinary religious ceremonies observed by the Hindus, and not being allowed to visit their temples, I requested a native gentleman of this place, a few weeks ago, to furnish me with a description of their daily worship, which he kindly did. The following, with some verbal changes and omissions is a transcript of what he handed me.

"Each village or town where Brahmins live will generally have two temples—one for Siva, and the other for Vishnu. The followers of Siva are distinguished by having white ashes and a round mark made of saffron on their foreheads, and the others have three upright

marks—the first and last made of chalk, and the middle one with saffron. The temples are generally built of brick and chunam, with one arch and a crest upon it, and a compound wall around it. The Siva idol, made of stone, is placed upon an altar in the centre of the church. A priest is employed to worship twice a day, noon and evening. The priest bathes the idol at 12, m., offers some prayers, then rubs it with ashes, and places a mark upon its head. After bathing, he decorates it with flowers, then offerings of rice will be made, with the bell-ringing. He then closes the church and goes away. At 6 p.m. he again attends the temple, lights a lamp, and waits there, hoping to receive visitors, who seldom come on ordinary days. When any do come, they pray a moment, standing in the presence. The priest then brings Siva's feet, made of brass, puts them on the visitor's heads, and gives each a flower. There are certain fixed days on which festivities are held once a year in commemoration of Siva's marriage. The ceremonies resemble those of the usual Hindu marriage. During this festival, visitors at the temple will offer copper coins, flowers, coconuts, and camphor, and will receive in return a flower or a piece of a fruit. Siva's wife, made of stone, stands at his left side.

Vishnu is a well-made stone figure, dressed with clothes, and jewels. Two or three beautiful wives, made of stone, stand on either side. The worship, and offerings, and marriage ceremonies are all the same in each kind of temple. In large towns there are four or five temples of both kinds. Festivals, celebrating New Year's Day, and the birthdays, incarnations, nuptials and battles of the gods, are observed each year by the people. The conveyance of the former deity (Siva), is a metal or wooden painted ox. That of the latter (Vishnu), may be a pigeon, red kite, serpent, monkey, coach or palanquin, etc. These are generally carried by Cooly Sudra people. In advancing through the streets during the procession, the idol is placed in the door of any house, where half a seer of rice, a copper coin, and available fruits and flowers are given to the priest, who generally depends upon these offerings. In wealthy zemindary villages, lands will be given to these priests without tax. The priests are the lowest caste people among Brahmins.

"Each village has its own goddess, made of wood and painted. The figure is of gigantic form. Almost all the minor caste people worship this goddess, but they never go to the temple but once a year, when a grand feast occurs. The Sudras are chiefly interested in this worship. The temple is built at the end of the village. There is no daily worship at this temple, except during the prevalence of cholera or small-pox, when there will be much