

For a whole year after the death of her husband she is only to get one meal a day, and that of the coarsest food served out on green leaves, with a pot of cold water. All day long, rude and insulting remarks are made by all in the house about her; and though they think it too great a disgrace to speak to her, they speak of her. One will say, "The horrid viper!" She has stung her poor husband to death." Another will say, "Miserable wretch! I can't bear her. Why was she born?" A third will say, "How well it would have been if she had died, cursed creature; why was she sent to kill her husband?"

On the eleventh day, the holy priest or Brahman, pays the widow a visit, not to comfort her, but to demand his fee. However great her riches, she is to have no enjoyment whatever. From all the social or national or religious festivities she is strictly excluded. She is to wear but one piece of coarse cloth, night and day the same, and her bed is a piece of straw mat on the bare ground. She is never to laugh, never to sing, never to appear happy, and by all to be treated with shame and contempt all the days of her life.

And what does all this lead to? Generally speaking, to one of two sad, sad results. Either the poor degraded creature, driven to desperation, life becoming a burden too heavy to bear, takes a dose of poison, or a plunge into a deep well, to end all misery on earth; or else (as is more often the case), as re-marriage is impossible, and she has but the dark prospect of the life of a slave at home, she plunges into a course of licentiousness and sensuality, from which she can never have the least chance of recovery or reformation! And now, in the face of all this misery—which the *twenty-one millions* of the widows in India are all more or less subjected to—will not the tender hearts of our Christian ladies in England more than ever feel for the humiliation, the disgrace, and the horrid misery to which so many of their sisters are exposed in this dark land of cruelty, and the abomination of idolatrous customs, which can only be swept away by the glorious light of the Gospel of the grace of God?

What wonder that an intelligent Hindoo widow, who could commit her thoughts to paper, wrote at the end of her account of the misery of a widowed life—

"The only difference for us since *Suttee* was abolished, is that we then died *quickly*, if cruelly, while now we die miserably all our lives long, in lingering pain and deadly despair."

May the voice of a Hindoo widow, from a far-off heathen land, arouse the heart-felt sympathy of thousands in Christian lands to their oppressed sisters, and lead them to the more abundant support of all branches of Zenana missions, is the hope of the writer.—THOMAS EVANS, Monghyr.—*The Baptist Missionary Herald*.

OUR INDIAN STATIONS.

Cocanada.

FROM OUR ZENANA WORKER.

DEAR LINK,—I feel that I must write and tell you about my class of Brahman boys. Perhaps I should not call them boys as they are all above fifteen years of age, and some of them twenty-five. Most of them are married. Poor fellows, we feel like saying, to be married so young. But their parents have this ceremony performed when they are too young to know what it means. Just now I hear the noise of a wedding procession on the street; a noise they consider very fine music, which probably costs

them a good many rupees, but not very entertaining to us, particularly when kept up all night.

There are in Cocanada a great many young men who speak English very nicely. Some have passed high examinations in the English language. Among these I felt God had given me a work to do which would be the means of much good in more ways than one, and would not in any way interfere with my progress in learning the language. First, I thought that by having a class for these caste young men, who can read and speak English, every Sunday morning, I might help to scatter the precious seed of the Kingdom, which would, in time, no doubt, yield fruit in spite of the many hindrances; and oh I can assure you the hindrances are many, particularly with the Brahmans, for they are so proud and pharisaical; but God has the power to break the proud heart and in Him we hope and look for this result." A second motive was a view to my future work as a Zenana missionary. I had been wondering ever since I landed in India what plan to adopt to become acquainted with the men so that I might gain their good will and get their permission to visit their wives and families. We all felt this was very important, and believe now that God has opened up one way, which is the class already mentioned. A month ago I asked my *munshi*, who is a Brahman, if he thought any would be willing to attend a class on Sunday morning if I opened one. He seemed much pleased with the idea, which was quite encouraging to me, and kindly offered his services, in the way of making it known, even offered to write a notice and put it up in the public school, but I preferred a quieter way to begin with, as I did not feel very brave. The next Sunday morning, March 25th, eight young men, *munshi* with the rest, sat down in our mission house parlor, and after the singing of two hymns, lead by Miss Cowling who also played on the organ, and prayer, I read the 1st of Matthew and talked to them of Him who was born in Bethlehem, the Saviour and Redeemer of sinners. The next Sunday eleven came, the third Sunday thirty-two, and last Sunday, which was the fourth time for the class to meet, thirty-seven were present. The class reads now, which I did not ask them to do the first two Sundays. Some bring Bibles which look as if they had been used at home, and a number of Bibles have been purchased for the use of the class.

Two weeks ago *munshi* asked permission for two of the young men to be allowed to sit on chairs apart from the rest of the class. I consented, but asked why they should sit away from the rest. He said there had been a death in their family and they were considered unclean. At the closing of the class they had to stand back so that not even a thread of their garments could touch the others. I was glad they came to the class in spite of their uncleanness, and let us hope, dear sisters, that they may all be convinced of the unclean state of their hearts, and will go and wash in the fountain that flowed from Calvary.

Last Sunday some were absent attending a funeral or our class would probably have numbered forty.

To-morrow morning we expect Mr. Timpany home. He has been visiting a village about 18 miles from Cocanada for a few days. We expect Mr. and Mrs. McLaurin also, and wish the other missionaries were going to be present at the opening of the long looked for home boxes which arrived on Tuesday. Some of us feel like children in anticipation of what is coming on the morrow. Now, may God's rich and abundant blessing be given to you all, and may the interest both in Home and Foreign work deepen and widen still more and more, until many shall be seen flocking to the Lord.

Cocanada, April, 19th, 1883.

M. J. FRITH.