

Bishop Oluwole being with him. Bishop Phillips and Rev. H. Tugwell, one of the English missionaries in West Equatorial Africa, had already sailed on the eleventh of November. On December the sixth Bishop Hill and his party reached Sierra Leone, Bishop Phillips and Mr. Tugwell having arrived there several days before. The next intelligence received was a brief telegraphic announcement received in England on the festival of the Epiphany (Jan. 6th), 1804, "*Bishop Hill and Mrs. Hill at rest.*"

Subsequent intelligence showed that the bishop held a confirmation service on Christmas Eve, and preached on Sunday, December the 31st, but on January the 1st he was taken ill with the African fever. A few hours afterwards, Mrs. Hill was also prostrated by it. They lingered for a few days, suffering great pain. At length, on the 5th of January, in the afternoon, the energetic bishop, full of hopes for his new work, was called away. His wife, who lay unconscious in an adjoining room, breathed heavily till midnight, and then, in the first hour of the Epiphany, joined her husband in the ranks of those whose work on earth is ended.

To tell of the havoc made in the life of English people by the deadly climate of Africa would be a gloomy tale. It is being repeated every day, yet men and women are found to fill the breach, for the work of Christ must not languish, even though death is busy. Already it is said, the Rev. H. Tugwell is to be consecrated to take the place of the good bishop so suddenly and unexpectedly called away.

RAMABAI.

PROFESSOR F. MAX MULLER, in *The (London) Times* of Monday, August 22nd, 1887, says of Ramabai work in India: There were, according to the census of 1881, no less than 20,930,626 widows in India. Out of that number 78,976 were under nine years of age, 207,388 were under fourteen years of age, and 382,736 were under nineteen years of age.

We can hardly realize the idea of a widow under nine years of age; still less can we realize the life of misery that is implied in that name. That poor creature, the child-widow, is the combined result of native superstition and Mahomedan licentiousness. In ancient times it was considered the duty of the father to see his daughter married as soon as she was marriageable. To make quite sure of a husband, a father would often marry his daughter when she was a mere child. He had then done his duty. The child was brought up at home, or in her future husband's house, and, when the time came, the betrothed children became hus-

band and wife. This system acted fairly well so long as women knew of no other. Parents were careful in the selection of husbands for their daughters and of wives for their sons, and women were taught to accept a husband as they accepted a father.

But when, during the present generation, European education found an entrance into some of the better families in India, it could not be otherwise but that some of the young women who had read Shakespeare, Scott, and Tennyson should revolt against being treated as mere articles of barter. They would become the wives of their betrothed husbands if they could respect and love them; if not, they would choose for themselves, or rather remain unmarried.

Unfortunately, it was not always easy for fathers to find boys as proper husbands for their daughters. The daughter of a Brahman could be married to a Brahman only, and there were numerous restrictions as to consanguinity. Hence, if no proper husband could be found, any husband, was taken as long as he was of the right caste. Mere girls were affianced to husbands old enough to be their fathers and grandfathers. At last it became a regular trade for certain Brahmans to marry as many as fifty or even a hundred little girls, some of whom they would never see again, but all of whom would become child-widows as soon as their reputed husband died.

This may help to explain the appalling number of widows and child-widows in India. But now let us hear what is the life of a widow in India. It is true they can no longer be burnt, but it is equally true that many of them would gladly prefer the funeral pile to the hell on earth to which they now find themselves consigned. I quote the words of Ramabai, herself a widow, a lady who has tasted well-nigh every bitterness that human life can present to a woman's lips, but who is as courageous as ever, and determined, so long as her frail body can hold her strong soul, to fight the battle of her sisters against native intolerance and English indifference. She says:

"Throughout India, widowhood is regarded as the punishment for horrible crimes committed by the woman in her former existence. . . . If the widow be a mother of sons she is not usually a pitiable object, although she is certainly looked upon as a sinner. The widow-mother of girls is treated indifferently, and sometimes with special hatred. But it is the child-widow upon whom, in an especial manner, falls the abuse and hatred of the community, as the greatest criminal, upon whom heaven's judgment has been pronounced. A Hindoo woman thinks it worse than death to lose her beautiful hair. Among the Brahmans of the Deccan the heads of all widows must be shaved regularly every fortnight. Girls of four-

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