

his property passes to his heir, or according to his bequest; and in the event of his recovery, the poor man becomes an outcast. Not one even of his own children, will eat with him, or afford him the least accommodation; and if by chance they come in contact with him, ablution must follow. The wretched survivor from that time is held in abhorrence, and has no other resource than to associate himself with outcasts under similar circumstances.

The following details of this murderous custom are from the testimony, and in the words of eye-witnesses.

The Rev. H. Townley.—I have conversed with a dying Hindu on the banks of the Ganges, and the substance of his confession was, "I have no hope of heaven from the circumstance that I am dying near the sacred Ganges; nor do I expect future happiness from the worship of the gods. I know of no mode whereby I can be saved; and I believe that after death I must be cast into hell for the punishment of my many sins." To the same effect is the following affecting passage from the Rev. W. Ward: "Look at the heathen by the side of the Ganges, calling upon their relatives to repeat the names of Narayun, of Gunga, of Ram; and a host of other idols; pouring the waters of the river down the throats of the dying, exposing them in the agonies of death to the chilling damps by night and the scorching beams of the sun by day; and listen to the cries of the dying: 'Tell me not of works of merit; I have been committing nothing but sin. And now, where am I going? What is there beyond this wretched existence? Am I going into some reptile or animal body, or shall I at once plunge into some dreadful place of torment? I see the messengers of Yuma coming to seize me. O! save me—save me! How dark and heavy the cloud which envelopes me! Is there no certainty, no ray of light, to guide and comfort me in my departure? Must I take this plunge to be seen no more?'"

Rev. W. Yates.—At the Ghaut were great numbers of persons bathing, and performing their morning ceremonies; and among them a poor woman, laid on a low bed, raised only a few inches above the ground, in dying circumstances, left exposed to the blazing sun totally unheeded by all around her, waiting, to appearance destitute of all anxiety, to see her breathe her last.

Rev. W. Ward.—At nine o'clock in the morning a sick man was brought by his relatives to the river side, and was lain on the wet sand, in expectation of soon expiring. In this situation he remained, exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, till four o'clock in the afternoon, when he was immersed up to the breast in the river, and in this position one of his relatives vociferated in his ears, "Hurree! Ram! Krishna! Ram!" After some time, finding that death was not so near as had been anticipated, he was again replaced on the wet sand. The next morning the same ceremony was commenced, of immersing and repeating the names of their deities, until 5 o'clock P. M., when the man expired, having been literally murdered by his own relations.

Rev. S. Sutton.—I lived on the banks of the Ganges for six years. During the whole of that period scarcely a day passed without some circumstance occurring which strikingly reminded me of the language of the psalmist, "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." I have seen some held up in the water by two persons, while a third has incessantly kept pouring water down the throat until life has become extinct. I have seen others laid on the wet sand, with their feet in the water when in the act of dying; and I have seen others who have been suffered to lie upon mats at a little distance from the water for several days before they have expired; but during that time no means had been employed for their recovery. In short, it is a rare occurrence for any sick person to be brought

back to his home after he has once been carried from it to die.

"One evening," says the wife of a missionary, "as I was walking with my husband by the river side, we saw two respectable looking natives carrying a woman in their arms. We asked them what they were going to do with her. They very coolly answered, 'We are going to put her in the water, that her soul may go to heaven, for she is our mother!' I asked them if she was ill. They said 'She is not very ill; but she is old, and has no teeth, and what is the use of her living?' I felt a great deal on hearing this, and said, 'What! have you no compassion on your mother? Will you drown her because she is old?' They said, 'Never mind,' and proceeded towards the river. Mr. R. then ran down the bank, and taking hold of the woman, insisted on their taking her home. They did so; but brought her again the next evening, and Mr. T. Cary saw them throw her into the water, without performing the usual ceremony of giving her water in the name of their gods."

Some years afterwards the same lady wrote as follows: "While I am writing I feel all the horrors I formerly felt respecting the sick in India. I once witnessed one of the scenes in all its aggravations. The sick person was a young woman, who was not willing to go to the river.—As they approached the Ghaut her screams were intolerable; crying 'Am, morey, jay, nay'—I am not dying. But the men who had taken her were firm to their purpose, and would not hear any thing that was said to them. They laughed at my entreaties; turned a deaf ear to my threats; and rushed forward into the water with their victim. The poor creature had often said, 'I am not dying,' but now she found herself in dying circumstances: a few cups of water poured down her throat, in the name of their gods, soon stopped her breath. I inquired whether it was common to take them to the river against their will. They said, 'Yes, or else a great many would disgrace their families by dying in their houses.' Sometimes they leave them to perish by the river. I found a poor old man one morning by the river side, who had been there all night. Those who had taken him had rubbed his body with mud, and had left him quite naked, exposed to the ants, so that he was completely covered with these insects! When I saw him move his head I went to him but was thrilled with horror to see a fellow-creature, in his dying moments, in such circumstances of misery. I ran for assistance, but the natives refused to do any thing for him, unless I would allow them to put him a little nearer the water, saying he was too far off for the tide to reach him. I said, 'Perhaps he may get better if taken care of.' They shook their heads, and said he was put there to die, and die he must. My husband soon came with some wine; we put a little into his mouth, which he swallowed, and said, 'It is very good.' I then thought he would revive; but he had lain all night on the damp ground, and it was now eleven o'clock, and the sun shining on him very hot. When we endeavoured to move him he said he was very faint, and wished to remain where he was for a few minutes. Alas! it was but a few minutes indeed, for he soon expired."

THE SURE FOUNDATION.—Mr. Briart, a Christian minister, when on his death-bed, being asked how he was, replied, "I have no fear of death." Being asked what was his hope, he said, "The finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only ground of hope. I wish not to retract one sentiment I have held in reference to the truths of God. I have preached—I have ransacked the word of God, and find nothing equal to this,—'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'"

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