

KISSED HIS MOTHER.

She sat on the porch in the sunshine
 As I went down the street—
 A woman whose hair was silver,
 But whose face was blossom sweet,
 Making me think of a garden,
 When, in spite of the frost and snow
 Of bleak November weather,
 Late, fragrant lilies blow.

I heard a footstep behind me,
 And the sound of a merry laugh,
 And I knew the heart it came from
 Would be like a comforting staff
 In the time and the hour of trouble,—
 Hopeful and brave and strong,
 One of the hearts to lean on,
 When we think all things go wrong.

I turned at the click of the gate-latch,
 And met his manly look;
 A face like his gives me pleasure,
 Like the page of a pleasant book.
 It told of a steadfast purpose,
 Of a brave and daring will;
 A face with a promise in it,
 That, God grant, the years fulfil.

He went up the pathway singing,
 I saw the woman's eyes
 Grow bright with a wordless welcome,
 As the sunshine warms the skies.
 "Back again, sweetheart mother,"
 He cried, and bent to kiss
 The loving face that was lifted
 For what some mothers miss.

That boy will do to depend on;
 I hold that this is true—
 From lads in love with their mothers
 Our bravest heroes grew
 Earth's grandest hearts have been loving hearts,
 Since time the earth began;
 And the boy who kisses his mother
 Is every inch a man!

—*Christian Intelligencer.*

INDIA.

We are indebted for our facts to Mrs J. T. Gracey.

“HE position assigned to woman among the people of any nation is a test of the civilization to which that nation has attained.” Therefore India is very low down in the scale. There are over forty millions of high-caste women in the Zenanas of India. They are victims of a social system which excludes from all that is going on in the great world around them. They have no liberty of thought or action and feel most keenly of all the heathenism—Many of these women are naturally bright, and this is how they employ their time—Preparing the food, eating, drinking, dressing, smoking, comparing jewels; nowhere to go, nothing to see; no books, papers or magazines, no music, no pictures; only hatred and jealousy in their minds because of

the presence of other wives—this we are told, is the life of the high-caste woman of India. They are very superstitious, and worship daily their household gods, teaching their children to do the same. Perhaps it will surprise you, as it surprised me, to learn that the women of India were not always kept in this state of ignorance and degradation. In their early history such education as men had, was not denied them and some were highly cultured. Child marriage was unknown, girls even had a voice in the selection of their husbands; women were not burned alive with their dead husbands and child widows were not doomed to perpetual degradation. All these terrible things are the result of greater priestly authority and the Mohammedan conquest of India. Now, India is ruled by our own good Queen, and while there is still much to deplore, the way is opened for the Light and Truth to enter in, and the outlook is encouraging.

The first women missionaries sent to India were to the Zenanas. At first the prejudice was strong against them, but gradually it wore away and now none are received so joyfully. The medical Missionary is especially welcome to these poor women, not allowed hitherto to see the face of a physician. They bring healing of the soul and body. The Bible is also a power for good in these homes and the Bible woman most welcome. “The Bible must have been written by a woman” said one in a Zenana to a Missionary, “there are so many beautiful things in it about women” “Read over the story, for I never weary of it” said another. It is now 54 years since the first high-caste school was opened in Madras. We all know how nine years ago Pundita Ramabai opened a school for child widows in India and what a success it has been. Her own history is a wonderfully interesting one. Sunday schools have great influence there—this work is carried on in twenty five languages, with about three hundred thousand pupils, and yet there are twenty millions of young girls in India who have no such chance for education! The low-caste women in India are the ones who profit most by the labor of the Missionaries. They are really out-casts and some of them have been hungry all their lives. Think, of it, children, who have enough and to spare! We will tell you more of these low-caste women another time.

It is only a few years ago that Pundita Ramabai said: “Among my countrymen the *man* is divine, and the *woman's* only hope of heaven is through her husband. Some few women are allowed to obtain sufficient education to make poetry in praise of their husbands, so that the *man* may get the full benefit thereof.”