

One of the greatest difficulties with which the missionaries have had to cope is caste. The castes are of four kinds: the highest is that of the Brahmins; the next that of the chiefs and warriors; the third that of the merchants and farmers; the fourth and lowest, that of servants of the other castes. Besides these there are the out-castes, who have forfeited the rights and privileges of their caste.

Hinduism teaches that caste is a divine institution: a gift bestowed from on high. It teaches that the distinction between the castes is quite as decided as between the beast, the bird and the reptile. The greatest solicitude of any Hindoo, is to keep his caste undefiled. A Brahmin may commit theft, adultery, or murder, and not lose caste here, or suffer hereafter, but to violate any caste rules will involve the guilty in degradation to endless ages. The Sanscrit professor at Oxford, says, "It is difficult for Europeans to understand how the pride of caste, as a divine ordinance interpenetrates the whole being of a Hindoo. He looks upon his caste as his veritable good; and those caste rules which we believe to be a hindrance to his adoption of the true religion, are to him the very essence of all religion, for they influence his whole life and conduct."

For a Hindoo to become a Christian, is to break caste, and that means exclusion from all family ties and association, separation from friends and neighbors.

Missionaries have met with repeated instances in which this barrier alone has stood in the way of a profession of Christianity. The condition of the women is another great hindrance to the success of missionary work in India.

According to the teachings of their sacred books, women have no minds, and the Brahmins teach that their present condition is the result of an in a previous state of existence. The birth of a daughter is received with bitter wailings, and the little unwelcome stranger is either ill-treated or murdered. Formerly infants, both girls and boys, were thrown by their mothers into the river (Ganges), to appease the anger of their gods. But apart from this, thousands perished simply because they were girls. Their sacred books also teach "The husband gives bliss to his wife here below, and will give her happiness in the next world."

Of the 122 million women, not more than one in a hundred are receiving education. The condition of the widows is pitiable in the extreme, they sometimes express regret that government took from them the power to die with their husbands, as they are spared only to live lives of suffering. Well may these women exclaim, "Oh, American women, who hath made us to differ!"

The degradation of women marks all systems of heathenism, and if it were not for the gospel of Christ, the women of our favored land would occupy no higher position than the down-trodden women of the East.

Oh, may the story of our sisters' woes rouse us to greater earnestness and activity,

"Sister! Soorn 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?"

"Sister! Yea, and they lie, not by the side of the road, But hidden in the loathsome caves, in crushed and quivering throngs, Down-trodden, degraded, and dark, beneath the invisible load Of centuries, echoing groans, black with inherited wrongs,

"Made like our own strange selves with memory, mind, and will;
Made with a heart to love, and a soul to live forever!
Sister! Is there not chord vibrating in musical thrill,
At the fall of that gentle word to issue in bright endeavor?"

"Sister! 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?"

Although Protestant missionaries have been in India 175 years, for half of that period their labors did not extend over one-tenth of India. The Protestant missionaries of all denominations were, during last century, in the proportion of one to eighteen million, and during the present century have not averaged more than one to each million.

There are numerous districts in which no Christian laborer has ever lived. There are thousands of villages in which the gospel has never been preached. More than half the population of the whole of India, have never had the great message of Christianity presented to them.

When we are brought face to face with these great facts, and realize in some measure how much work there remains to be done; we are led to say, "Who is sufficient?" But He who said, "Go, teach all nations," also said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth, and I am with you all the days."

The revealed word is rich in promises to the Gentile world. "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles." "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon thee and His glory shall be seen upon thee." "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." "Lift up thine eyes round about and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side." "Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee."

We have reason to be greatly encouraged, for an immense amount of pioneer work has been accomplished. The most suitable localities for mission stations have been discovered. The whole Bible has been translated into fourteen Indian languages and dialects. The New Testament has been translated into twenty-nine others. Christian books and tracts in great numbers have been printed in all the principal languages. The increase of native preachers and ministers has been very marked.

Some great crimes and cruel customs have been suppressed such as suttee or widow burning, and thuggism. Infanticide has openly ceased in British India, but it still prevails in secret, particularly among the high castes.

Religious murder has now ceased. Female education is slowly spreading; perpetual widowhood, with all its attendant sadness, is still common, except among some of the lowest castes, but public opinion is growing strongly against it.

Not only are Hindoo customs and ideas changing, but Christian ones are becoming more and more prevalent. No statistics can give a fair idea of all missionaries have done towards evangelizing India.

Some time ago a Hindoo expressed himself thus in a public lecture delivered in Calcutta. "Mighty revolu-