

tion of caste women in India, and deals with the general subject of legislation. This is followed by a letter from a Mr. Malabari of Bombay, an Indian reformer and a Parsee, who has for many years been indefatigable in his efforts in India to stir up the natives to the physical, social, and moral evils of these customs. He has been recently in England, using vigorously both pen and voice in the hope of arousing public opinion, where legislation ought to begin. He says: "The system of infant marriages in India has spread under the ægis of British-made laws." He has written a pamphlet entitled, "An Appeal from the Daughters of India." He urges English women to use their influence, and the Government its authority, to help banish these terrible evils.

Rukhmabai, the young and accomplished Hindu lady, whose sentence of six months' imprisonment for refusing to marry the husband to whom she had been betrothed in infancy, awakened such sympathy a few years ago, comes out in a very excellent article on the subject in the September number of the *New Review*.

And now *Punch* takes up the subject, having for its text the following extracts from the *Times* editorial:

"It is our national boast that odious and cruel institutions cannot long breathe the atmosphere in which the Queen rules. But in India we have long connived at cruelties—cruelties none the less odious because practised in the name of religion, and upon victims that mutely acquiesce in their fate—which need only to be understood to excite profound repugnance and compassion. The time has arrived for the rulers of India to ask themselves whether they can any longer throw the shield of British law over the tortures perpetrated upon the Hindu child-wife and the Hindu child-widow."

Again: "Before the 'silent millions' who make up the rank and file of Hindus, discard the cruelties of their marriage system, their opinions, prejudices, and habit of thought must change. Nothing is more certain than that they will change slowly; but we hold to the belief that judicious legislation will hasten the process more powerfully than anything else."

A full-page cartoon is given to the subject under a legend, "The Shield and the Shadow": "At the feet and clasping the skirts of the armed Island Queen—the Shield, kneels in agony the child-wife or child-widow, behind whom, closely pursuing, is a dark menacing shadow, 'Caste,'" and in a dozen or more ringing stanzas *Punch* states some very plain truths, and closes with these lines:

"Poor child! the dark shadow that closely pursues her
Means menacing Terror, she sues for a shield,
And how shall the strong Ægis-bearer refuse her?
The bondage of caste to calm justice must yield.

"We dare not be deaf to the voice of the pleader
For freedom and purity, nature and right,
Let Wisdom, high-throned as controller and leader,
Meet cruelty's steel with the shield of calm might!"