

no one take any notice or seem to think it a liberty. But on one occasion, when a man did so, I saw at once that it was looked upon as an intrusion. He was in attendance on a Brahmin widow lady of some rank, who had come by her own desire to pay the visit with us, and she, though a stranger, was received very politely—but after a little this man, who was a sort of manager or confidential adviser to the lady, followed us up-stairs and seated himself on a couch. I noticed that our hostess immediately became very reserved and taciturn, and that my two native assistants looked grave. Nothing was said at the time, nor was any offence taken at us, but I was told afterwards that it was a thing he ought not to have done—and I felt annoyed that it should have occurred in connection with our visit. I fancy it was a bit of Brahmin presumption. The people belonged to the fourth caste—the artisan; but they were people of good standing—the men were well educated, employed in a Government office, and, fortunately, of liberal opinions, otherwise it might have led to unpleasant results; but I daresay the Brahmin thought he rather conferred an honour by entering the house of one whose caste came from the feet, while his came from the head of Brahma.

Even male visitors, if well known to the family, sometimes call in the absence of the husband. I knew a young man, a friend of the husband's, but no relative, who came various times to a house when I was expected, in order to have some talk on religious subjects. Frequently I found a native doctor sitting with a woman whose health was delicate, and who was a high-caste woman, and rather exclusive; and I have seen a young student, from one of the educational institutions, giving lessons to boys in the same room where the mother was engaged in household tasks.

Within their own circle, therefore, it is evident that women of their class in

Western India have a greater amount of freedom than many in this country suppose; but it varies much, as we have said, in individual cases.

Some of the women are very hard-working, and are very *hard wrought*. I have many a time been sorry for them, toiling in the midst of such a muddle as most of their houses are. One case occurs to me of a very small-sized, weakly woman, with an infant in her arms, and another boy, hardly two years old, hanging on the other arm, roaring lustily because he could not also be taken up. I begged him to let his mother alone, and she excused him by saying he was unwell—"all night he had fever," she said, "and I could get no rest with him." Knowing that her husband had a good salary in the office where he was head-clerk, I said to her one day, "You are not fit to do all this work alone; why do you not get a servant?" "Ah," she said, "that is not so easy; the women of our caste do not go out to service, and my daughter-in-law is too young yet to come to me and help in the work, so I must just go on as I can—but," she continued, "do you know what the neighbours are doing? they are telling my husband that I am sickly and not able for the work of the house, and that he must take another wife."

Surprised and shocked, I exclaimed, indignantly, "Another wife!" and then looked round at the little brown boys and girls who were tumbling about the room. "Oh he will never do it," I said, "and you the mother of so many children." "Yes," she said, with a half sob that nearly choked her; "but I don't think he will, only that is what they tell him." I knew the man well, and, to do him justice, I did not think him capable of such conduct to so good a wife as I knew she was; and my confidence in him seemed to inspire her with the same. The event proved that we were right, for he did not follow the advice of his