

which they are engaged, these Christian women write, "We have not minded being alone as much as we expected to."—*Missionary Herald*.

### CONTRASTS IN INDIA.

BY DR. PAULINE ROOT.

Can you see it—the tiny mud hut, the ragged thatched roof, the narrow low doorway, and beyond it, darkness? Can you see the soft mire and filth about this hut, and the gaunt, ugly, black pigs and starved pariah dogs rooting about in it? Can you picture the dirty, unkempt babies, with their nakedness clothed only in the same filth that coats the dogs and pigs? Can you see the larger boy of eight or ten, with perhaps not even a rag about his body, and already in his mind all that is vile and coarse? Can you see here the little pile of stones, the only fireplace, and over it the brass or earthen pot with the evening meal smoking in it? and can you now see the husband and father sitting by himself or with his little son, and waited upon by his tired, sad, and degraded wife?

I can see it all just as plainly now as I can see the faces of those dear to me. For to houses like these have I gone when the broken-spirited mother had needed me to help into the world one who seemed to me as to her—poor thing!—to be little needed. I have seen (for the poor woman could not be secluded) her rise and go about her daily cares, and have known cruel blows to fall because she faltered.

This is but a feeble picture of what I see as I look off into an outcast home among those who might be called heathen in Southern India. And heathen they are—if knowing no true God, and bowing before stone images for help "in times of hopeless trouble," make them heathen. The question to me is, How far would you rise if this was *your* lot?

But another picture—I can see it; can you? Another mud house, a little larger—say twelve feet square, and out of that a tiny room; the roof thatched—yes, but higher. The doorway you can see is so high that one need not go in bent double—and there is a door! See the windows, too,—not plate glass, and large,—no; but though tiny and wooden-shuttered, they do let in light and fresh air. Come inside—the light comes with you. The happy-faced, smiling housewife will meet you, and clean, bright-faced babies in gay calico jackets will come up to nestle against your knee as you sit down in perhaps the only chair the house affords. I can see that the walls are whitened, and that there are bright pictures; Bible pictures, photographs of missionary, or of native Christian friends, the Christian Calendar, and text cards are pinned upon the walls. There will be, also, a little writing table, with pencil, papers, pens and ink, and perhaps a cheap kerosene lamp instead of the open, smoking native lamps. Look again and you will notice a cheap hanging bookshelf, and on it good books in English and Tamil—and a cheap American nickel-plated clock or a Waterbury watch. You see the dear home mother ill, and you see her lovingly, though not demonstratively, cared for by her husband, and while she is ill he does not think it beneath him to cook, and to keep his children clean and neat. The tiny new baby is not in this "outcast" home laid by itself to die or live, as it happens, on the foul mud floor, and with no covering for its poor, shivering little body. No; this baby is snuggled and warmed, and is given a little calico jacket (think of your new baby in a calico

jacket!), and is put in a tiny patchwork quilt (our girls at home help them there); and when the tired mother is all nice and ready to rest, she gathers to her the wee baby—glad, even though it is a girl, quite contented if a "man child is born into the world."

Once more we look on the other picture, and we see the poor outcast or low-caste woman, with the grains crushed and made into food. She goes out with her baby into the fields or to the builder, and the little baby is swung in its cloth hammock, and the mother works all day long carrying bricks or pounding mortar. Weary at night, having earned five cents by the hard day's labor, she goes home, and in all probability is beaten by her "master" as she prepares his evening meal. And now see our Christian girl of the same social status. She too must work, and sometimes in the field, but she goes about her work with songs on her lips. She makes her home neat, and she finds time to read and pray with her children. If she has but her own housework to do, she gets her little children and those from heathen homes together and she teaches them to read, and sing, and sew. And always she tells them something of Jesus. When the mealtime comes we see a home, the mother and children eating with the master,—still the master, but also a dearly loved father and husband. I look back to-night, and a strange picture is very plain to me,—a loved father going with me on a three weeks tour, bidding good-bye to his family. He did not (before me) kiss his wife, but tenderly as any American father he kissed each one of his grown children as we said good-bye. You could see, you could not help seeing, in Southern India to-day hundreds of such homes as these we have just looked into; and to the glory of God be it said, that the Christian homes of this sort are now so many that there is probably not a place of any size where one such home does not exist, a testimony known and read of all men. And what is true of this class is equally true of our middle, good-caste people. These people still are clannish; they marry not into the class below them, nor do they eat with those of other ranks. But they are growing Christians, and taking the bread and wine together they are coming to be more like Jesus,—more catholic in their love through him for his little ones.

And their young women come to our schools, and they learn not only to read and write, so that many hold English Government certificates as teachers,—they learn self-reliance; they learn how to preside at meetings; and there is no difficulty in finding those who will "lead in prayer." These girls, erect, beautiful, and graceful, sometimes grow away from the drudgery of home; but they are taught to work, and we find that though they have in a mild degree the independence of American women, they need but to go into their own new homes, and to have responsibility thrust upon them, to show of what fine stuff they are made. As leaders, as teachers, as wives and mothers of heathen communities, we are proud of them.

And for our high caste and our Brahmin women what has been wrought? Many shut in crowded zenanas are sincere worshippers of Jesus. They read His word, they do not bow to idols, and they teach their children of Him. Ridicule and abuse many endure for His Name's sake; some are locked up, others starved; but through it all God is glorified, and his followers increase till they stand a multitude, known only in the Lamb's Book.

Both pictures are true to-day, but once the dark picture had no rays of light,—all was somber; to-day,