

room stood black stone jars filled with water. In a third, the pieces of a broken jar were scattered around, which, when the little girl saw, she wept afresh.

"Tara," said the teacher, "is this your jar? Who has broken it?"

"I smashed it myself," sobbed the child.

"You did it yourself purposely, and yet you cry!" said the lady with wonder.

"Shantee touched it with her hand and made it unclean, so I did as our holy books tell us to do—I broke it. Oh, teacher, will you give me a penny to buy another?" and Tara looked up through her shining tears.

"Poor little girl," said the teacher, smoothing the long tangled hair; "obedience to such commands does not bring happiness. My child, does your 'book' tell who made the world and the people?"

"Yes," said Tara; "one god whose name is *Brahma* made the world and all the people in it. He made the people from his own body. From his head he made wise men, and from his arms and shoulders he made strong men, like soldiers and kings; merchants and others he made from his loins, but poor men and servants came from the feet of *Brahma*."

"And from which part were you, do you suppose, Tara?"

"My father is high up, he is a merchant; but *Shantee's* father is a servant, so when she touched my jar it was polluted—my nice new jar—and now it is broken—oh, dear!" Her little heart was aching with real sorrow, not that she had broken the jar, for that she thought right, but because it had been made "unclean," as she termed it.

"Sit down, Tara," said her teacher, "and when you are quiet we will talk."

In obedience she turned away, but, half blinded with tears, she fell over a rude bench that served as a table. It gave way, and she was thrown to the floor, when, striving to disentangle herself from the broken bench and torn frock, she incautiously caught hold of one of the remaining jars. Instantly a girl of twelve or fourteen years started up with words of abuse falling thick and fast from her lips, and before any one could prevent her had dashed the jar into a hundred fragments upon the ground. Slowly streamed the water over the coarse mud floor, which drank it up as parched earth drinks the rain, but quickly flowed the tears from the eyes of the excited girl.

"Tara, Tara," she screamed, "thou daughter of a merchant, why hast thou touched my jar?"

Many bitter words would have been spoken by the two girls, but the teacher bade them be silent. It was then explained that the oldest girl was of "high caste," and none of her inferiors might so much as lay hand upon, much less drink from, the jar she called *hers*. As the low-caste *Shantee* had broken this rule of caste in regard to Tara's jar, so in the same way had Tara offended the high-caste *Sahwe*.

It is too true that in India all the people are divided into separate classes or castes that never intermarry, never eat or drink together, nor may they even touch the vessels belonging to one another. Should a vessel be touched by a low-caste person, it must be purified by fire if it be of brass or copper; but if only cheap earthenware, like these penny jars, they must be broken in pieces.

Three different castes were represented in this mission school. They were all Hindoos, and strict in obeying the commands of their so-called "holy book." The missionary teacher could not forbid this, for they would have left school had their idolatry been interfered with. So easily are these little things brought to fear the breaking of caste, that Tara declared she "would rather die than drink from *Shantee's* jar," which, of course, would not have been true had death been really at hand.

A few days previous the girls had asked for a few pennies to buy water jars. Willingly the request was granted, for in that hot country the little ones wish often for a cup of cold water. There were no wells near. All the water was brought from a river that flowed by at a distance from the school, but too far for little feet to travel in the burning sun, so it was well that fresh water should be kept in the school-room. Accordingly these jars were purchased, and this was the first day of their use. Half an hour before three of the girls might have been seen coming from the river-side, the jars poised easily on their heads, while they sang the new hymn their teacher had taught them.

Now two of the jars were broken. That one belonging to the lowest caste alone remained. No fear of any one polluting their jars.

Here was the beginning of trouble to the new teacher. Caste, that fatal obstacle to all good, to all progress, in India, met her on the threshold. What should she do? Knowing the power of music, she said quietly to her troubled school, "Let us sing our new hymn."

Clearly, sweetly, and in unison rose the words, "Let us love one another." Then