

## SEED-SOWING.

I walked one day on the prairie  
 And saw how the autumn sod  
 Was sprinkled, white as ashes,  
 With the seeds of the golden-rod;  
 And I thought what a countless number  
 Of seeds Dame Nature sows  
 That never fulfil their purposes,  
 For everyone that grows.

In the springtime I stood in the orchard  
 And looked at the apple trees,  
 Crowned with their wealth of blossoms,  
 And noisy with humming bees;  
 And I thought, of all this promise  
 How much must fall to the ground,  
 And of ripened fruit, at the harvest,  
 How small a proportion is found.

I stood beside an oak tree,  
 The acorns lay on the moss,  
 I looked at the scattered thousands  
 And reckoned the waste and loss;  
 And I thought with a growing wonder,  
 Of the lavish bounty that gives  
 So many acorns to perish  
 For everyone that lives.

I sat in a church one evening  
 While an eloquent preacher told,  
 With tenderest power and pathos,  
 The story that never grows old;  
 That story of infinite interest  
 To the souls for whom Christ died;  
 And I looked at the empty benches  
 And thought of the crowds outside.

I thought of the throngs of people  
 Who listened while Jesus taught,  
 Who knew His gracious presence  
 And the cures His mercy wrought;  
 Who witnessed His cross and passion,  
 And saw the risen Lord;  
 Yet only one hundred and twenty  
 Received and kept His word.

Dear friends, whom love of humanity,  
 True, unselfish and warm,  
 Has called from your happy firesides  
 To sow the seeds of reform;  
 When the task seems all too heavy,  
 And faith is drifting away,  
 When night after night brings the  
 record:

Nothing accomplished to-day!  
 Take to yourselves the lesson  
 Of infinite labor and pain,  
 Giving your lives and your fortunes,  
 Hoping for nothing again;  
 Count not the fruitless efforts  
 That only our Father knows,  
 Nor think of the loss with grudging  
 If only one seed grows.

MARY A. CUSHMAN.—Sel.

## THE CASTE SYSTEM IN INDIA.

(Continued.)

Mrs. A. A. McLeod.

The results of the caste system in India are many and manifest. It has sown its seed for centuries and to-day reaps a rich harvest in life and conduct.

A Brahman gentleman describes it as a "vast hollow sham," and such it is, for all that it asks is outward conformity. There are in India to-day thousands of university-trained young men, who make no secret of their hatred of caste bondage and caste tyranny, and talk openly of its many evils and its cruelty, but they still conform to its rules and edicts, and caste demands nothing further. A man may openly ridicule all the gods of the Hindu Pantheon and still remain an acceptable Hindu, but if in the agony of a burning fever, he should drink a spoonful of water from the hands of a Christian or an outcaste, no protest on earth could save him from the dreadful punishment that would follow.

In direct opposition to this system, which cultivates in the people of India hollowness of life and lack of conscience, the Christian religion emphasizes nobility of character and ethical integrity; also it advocates the right of the individual to find out for himself or herself what he considers to be right and best, and to act according to the dictates of conscience.

To abandon the ancestral religion, especially when the newly-accepted faith repudiates openly, caste and all that belongs to it, inevitably leads to expulsion from caste. Indeed, at the very beginning of his Christian life, the convert to Christianity deals a crushing blow to the most carefully observed of caste rules, when he "drinks of the same cup and eats of the same bread" with his fellow-Christians, regardless of the fact that they are men and women who may have belonged to different