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"WITHIN SIGHT OF THE ETERNAL SNOW," KASHMIR.

BEHIND THE PARDAH

THE STORY OF C.E.Z.M.S. WORK IN INDIA

By IRENE H. BARNES

AUTHOR OF "BEHIND THE GREAT WALL," ETC.

WITH PREFACE BY REV. T. A. GURNEY, M.A.

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NEW YORK: 46 EAST 14TH STREET

THOMAS Y. CROWELL & COMPANY

BOSTON: 100 PURCHASE STREET

PREFACE

THIS little book comes to us at the right time. India has filled a large space in England's thoughts this year. Her sufferings through plague and famine have called forth our sympathies; her representatives in the Great Jubilee procession have appealed to our imagination, and her frontier troubles have aroused our sense of patriotism and quickened the resolve to keep this jewel of England's crown safe and intact at any cost. This book will serve as a complete and satisfying answer, from the Christian point of view, to the question so often asked, Why do we retain India? However strongly our presence there may be urged on the score of the Pax Brittannica and all its untold blessings, and our British administration of the country, with its western integrity and western methods, yet to the Christian mind these replies will be unsatisfying. The only really adequate final cause for the retention of India lies in our determination to win her to the feet of Christ, as one of the brightest jewels in His crown. This book is a living witness to the contribution made by England's educated daughters towards the solution of the great Indian problem, and we believe that, strange as it may seem, the last

solution of it lies with them. We have many books already upon the political, social, and economic problems which India presents. Such books view the land from without, and from the standpoint of the Anglo-Indian administrator. This book views India from within, and gives us a real picture of the character and habits of the people themselves. It gives glimpses of the inner life of Indian women which, for picturesqueness of detail, vividness of description, and dramatic power, would be hard to surpass. And, throughout, the style is so easy and conversational that the mind never feels wearied. It may, therefore, be cordially commended not only to missionary circles, where it will be invaluable, but also to general readers who desire to know something of Indian life and folk-lore. To such the "Glance at the Land," with which the book opens, will be a stimulus to peer "behind the Pardah"—the screen or veil which hides the lady of the Zenána from the outer world—and to explore the sad life-secrets within it, which are told with such power and pathos by Miss Barnes. Too little, far too little, is even yet known by Englishwomen of their many-millioned Indian sisters. I believe this little book will be a long step towards the great aim which Christian lovers of the Indian people set ever before them here at home—of interesting *every* Englishwoman in Zenána missionary work. The glimpses of that work which it gives must arouse the desire to know more, for they are so naïve and human. Now it is the crowded Dispensary, with its throng of sad but eager faces; now the Women's Industrial

Class, a first solution towards the great problem of the future of the widows of India; now the Girls' Mission School, or the work of training the Native Bible Women; now the itineration through the endless villages in rough Tonga or Bandy or Gari; or, again, we pass from the encampment beneath the ancient village trees to the crowded heathen Melá or festival, or find ourselves behind the Pardah of Moslem or Hindu Zenánas, or among the free haunts of the wild hill tribes. But always there is the same picture of open doors of opportunity on every hand; of hearts burdened, often consciously, with the sense of sin and misery; of sufferings or sorrows alleviated by personal contact, and fears and prejudices removed; whilst, crowning all these, we have the personal narratives of hearts yielded fully to the Lord Jesus Christ. Such stories, from the lips or pens of the lady missionaries themselves, are among the most beautiful features of the work.

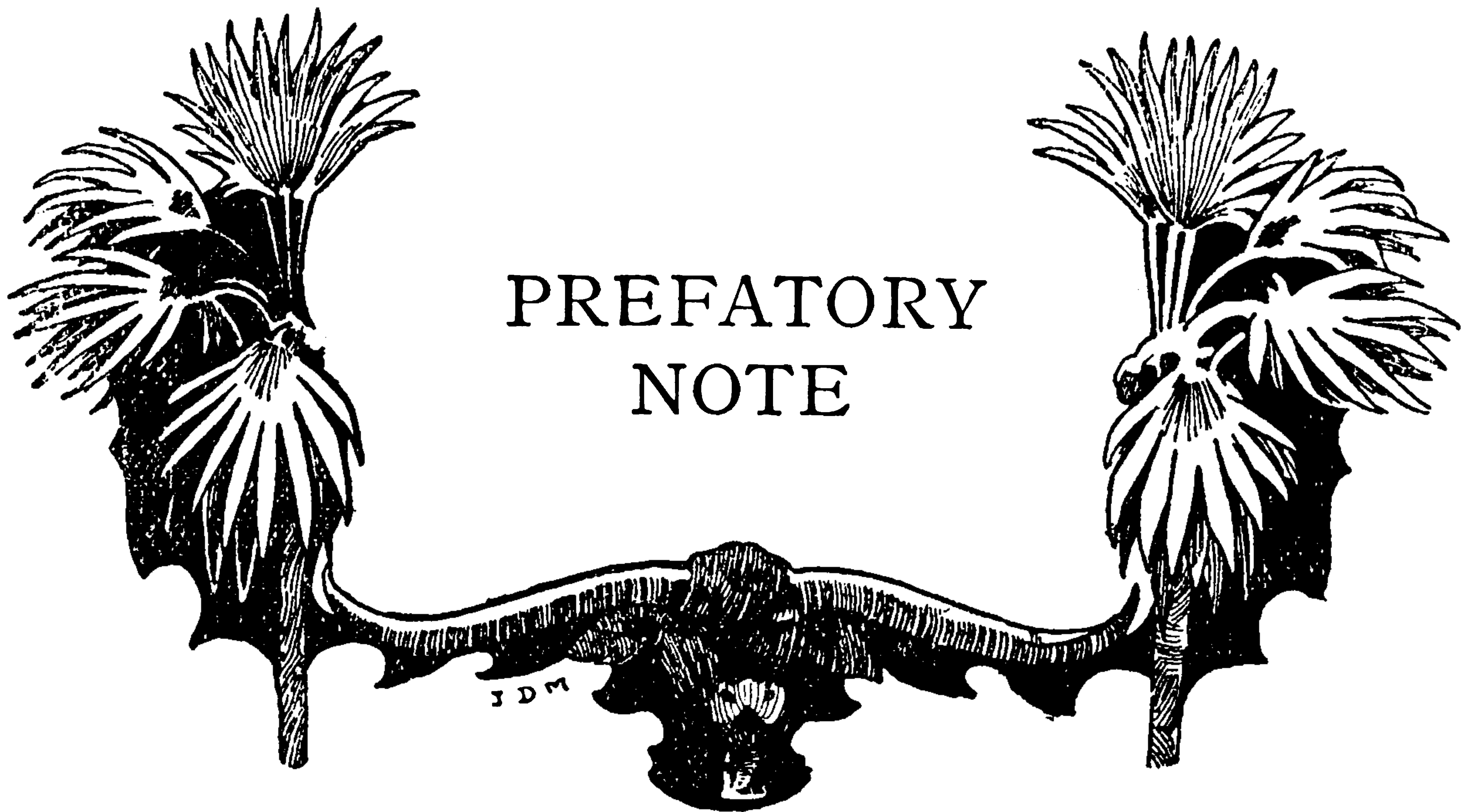
The veil or pardah has been lifted in this book, and it reveals behind all the noble efforts of English administrators in India a work which is nobler still—the mission of the daughters of a ruling race in using the national hold we possess as an opportunity to bring the new cruse of the Gospel to bear, by the power of personal contact and personal sympathy, upon India's woes, and thus silently but surely, by a grace given from above, to transform from within, to conquer at its centre, the secret of all India's future—its degraded home life—uplifting it to new ideals and bright and holy

realities. Such a result is adequate as a return for our imperial responsibilities and burdens in the possession of India. The story of the manifold activity of Christian womanhood in this great field is told here with simplicity and power, in the one desire that the return may be God's increased glory; and it deserves and will receive I am sure, like its predecessor, a cordial and widespread welcome.

T. A. GURNEY.

SWANAGE RECTORY,

October, 1897.



PREFATORY NOTE

THE Authoress is indebted for information not only to those Missionaries and others who have ably assisted in the production of BEHIND THE PARDAH by MSS., photographs, and revision, but also to the following well-known works on India: DR. HUNTER'S *Brief History of the Indian Peoples* and *The Indian Empire*; DR. THOBURN'S *India and Malaysia*; W. J. WILKIN'S *Daily Life and Work in India*; and *Modern Hinduism*, etc., etc.

All the illustrations and decorative designs, including initials of the chapters, in BEHIND THE PARDAH, have been drawn from Indian photographs, curios and fabrics, and are the valuable work and generous gift of the Artists whose names appear on the title-page. The offering is "unto the LORD," and to further the work of the Society by increasing the interest of this story of C.E.Z.M.S. labours. If this simple record of what GOD has wrought through some of His handmaidens attract others to devote themselves and their substance to their suffering Indian sisters, whose only panacea will be the Gospel of Christ, the prayerful desire of Artists and Authoress will be abundantly fulfilled.

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AIDS TO PRONUNCIATION

a without an accent, has the sound of *u* in *fun*, or *o* in *come*. Hence, *pardah* should be pronounced "purdah," *Amritsar*, "Umritsur," *chaddar*, "chud-dar," *pandit*, "pundit," *Sati*, "Suttee."

á with an accent, has the sound of *a* in *far* or *ah!*

i without an accent, has the sound of short *e*, as *i* in *police*. Hence, *Bibi* should be pronounced "be-be," *Lachmi*, "Lutch-mee."

í with an accent, has the sound of long *e*, as *i* in *pier*. Hence, *ghí* should be pronounced "ghee," *fakír*, "fakeer."

u without an accent has the sound of *oo*; thus, *pujà* is pronounced "poojah," and *sudra*, "soodra."

e has the sound of *e* in *grey*. Hence, *melá* should be pronounced "mey-lar," *Behar*, "bey-har."

o has the sound of *o* in *bone*.

ai has the sound of *y* in *lyre*. Hence, *dáie* should be pronounced "dye."

GLOSSARY

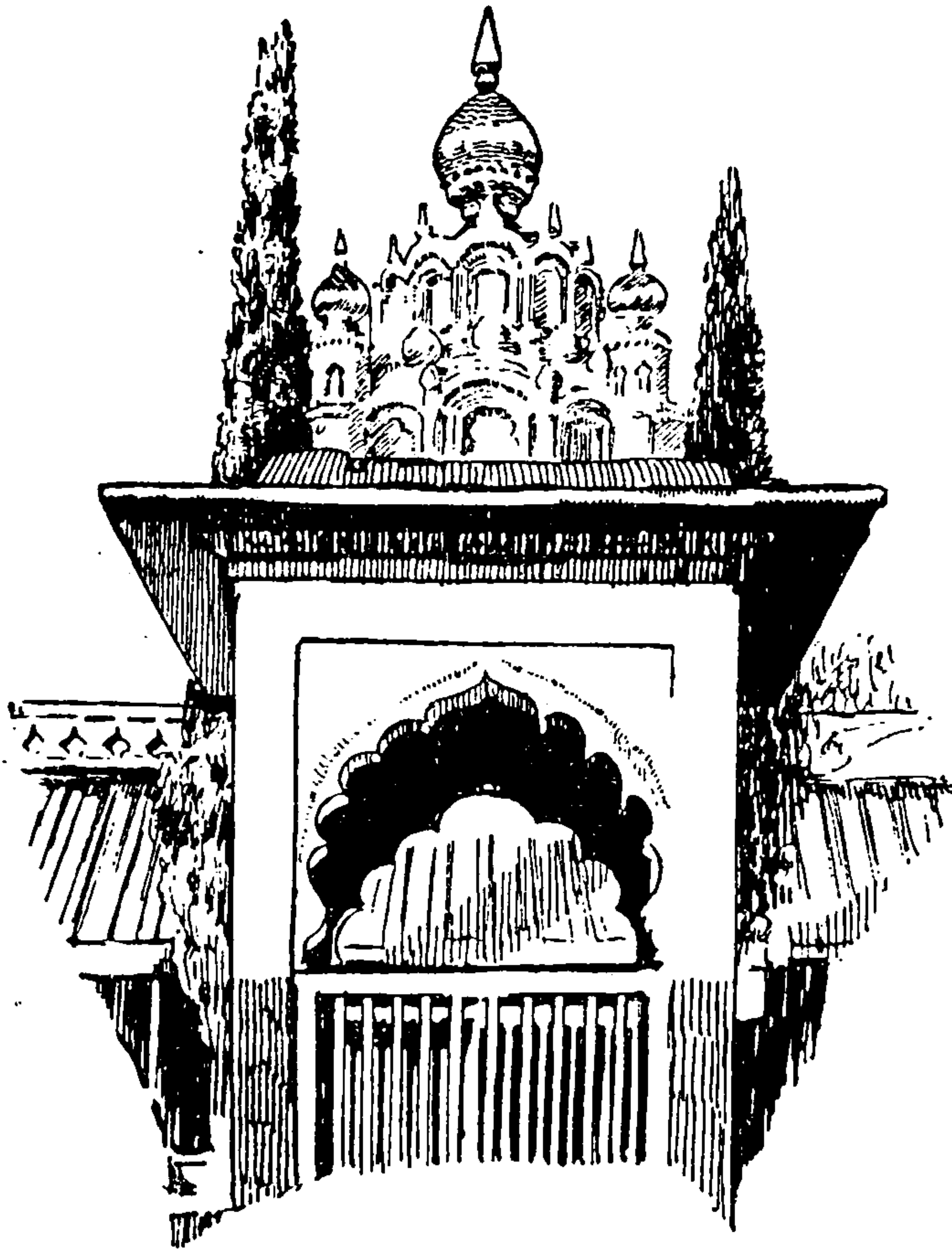
N.B.—The Code of Spelling adopted in "BEHIND THE PARDAH," is that known as the "Hunterian System," after Sir William Wilson Hunter, and used by the Indian Government.

Allah.	Name for GOD, generally used by Muhammadans.
Bázár.	Street in which there are shops.
Cháddar.	Veil worn by women.
Chárpáie.	A bedstead, literally, a four-legged thing.
Chupátti.	The unleavened bread commonly eaten by natives of India.
Chuprassi.	A messenger; from the name chuprás, which is the badge of service worn by messengers.
Dáie.	A name used for a midwife and for a foster-mother.
Duli.	A sort of sedan chair.
Ekka.	A native conveyance on two wheels.
Fákir.	A beggar.
Galli.	A narrow lane in a city.
Gári.	A carriage.
Ghát.	A place by a river for burning or bathing.
Hai! Hai!	Expression of grief.
Kurtá.	A part of the dress, answering to jacket.
Mantrá.	A short prayer like a collect.
Mela.	Fair, or any large gathering.
Pancháyat.	A gathering in a family or caste to settle any question. Five being a quorum, the name pancháyat is used, as panch means five.
Pandit.	Learned man.
Pardah.	Seclusion of women.
Pardah nishín.	A lady kept in pardah or behind a curtain.
Pice.	Small copper coin.
Pilau.	Cooked rice with meat or sweets.
Pípal.	A large spreading tree—sacred.
Pujà.	Worship (Hindu).
Ramazán.	The long fast of the Muhammadans.
Salám.	Salutation—meaning peace.
Tamásha.	A sight.
Tauba!	"Repentance!"—a pious (?) exclamation of the Moslems.

Introductory

"Ye have tasted the Living Water,
And your feverish thirst is gone.
Ye are dwelling by the Fountain:
Will ye quaff those draughts alone?
Go and lift the sparkling chalice
To the lips of grief and sin,
Open channels in the desert,
Let the tide of blessing in!"

—*C. Pennefather.*



"IN the beginning, GOD." This is the Divine starting-point of every enterprise. Visibly and clearly it is so with every scheme which has for its aim the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. Over the portals of each Missionary organisation its founders have ever rejoiced to inscribe, "In the beginning, GOD." For "OF HIM and THROUGH HIM and TO HIM are all things, to Whom be glory!"

It is always fascinating to trace the growth of a plant from its seedling stage. An acorn in our hand as we stand beneath

an oak reminds us of the truth, "Small and unlikely means shall avail, when God intends an effect."

The story of the well-known, well-loved

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ZENÁNA MISSIONARY SOCIETY

in its infancy has an interest peculiarly its own. In the world of Nature some fruit contains a double kernel. Two distinct germs of life lie hidden in one shell. Sooner or later two separate organisms appear; each has its own perfect form, growth, position, and possibilities. Issuing from one source, nurtured by the same soil and sunshine, two perfect plants are seen flourishing, full of vigour. The seed in the redundancy of its life has bestowed a twofold gift upon the sower. The blessing is doubled.

Thus it has been sometimes in the kingdom of grace. It is to the same source—an earnest desire on the part of consecrated women to carry out the Saviour's last command by telling heathen women of Christ's redeeming love—that two noble organisations owe their existence to-day. The one original Indian Female Normal School and Instruction Society which came into being in the year 1852, has become, like Jacob's household, two bands, and now, in 1897, the Church of England Zenána Missionary Society and the Zenána Bible and Medical Mission, alike in aim, and both receiving tokens of Divine approval, stand side by side. Two distinct organisations, denominational and inter-denominational, each works on the principles to which it conscientiously adheres; each exercises its own special influence; each wishes and prays for the other's prosperity, thankful to know it is enjoyed, and helping to promote it as opportunity may permit. The division which some feared would be a source of weakness to the work, GOD has over-ruled to increase its expansion and strength. More, doubtless, is being accomplished for the eternal well-being of India's needy women than could have been wrought had not the "seed" produced a "double

kernel." In the sending forth annually by two Societies of two prayerfully chosen bands of godly women to minister in Christ's name to their suffering sisters, India's daughters are twice blessed.

In November, 1821, Miss Cooke of the British and Foreign School Society arrived in Calcutta for the purpose of establishing Girls' Schools, twenty-two of which were at work as early as 1823. In March, 1824, a Ladies' Society for Native Female Education in Calcutta and its vicinity was formed to control the affairs of these schools, and was greatly aided both in agents and in grants by the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, which had been formed in England in 1834, and which has been and is doing most excellent work for the evangelisation of women, not only in India, but also in China, Egypt, and the Straits Settlements. In 1826 the foundation-stone of the Central School was laid in Cornwallis Square, 20,000 rupees (about £2,000) having been given by the Rájá Boidonath Roy towards its erection. Two years later, Miss Cooke, who was now Mrs. Wilson, with her husband, a C.M.S. Missionary, took possession of it, and began with fifty girls.

The need of a separate school as a training institution was soon felt, and, in 1852, owing to the unwearied exertions of Mrs. J. J. Mackenzie, the Calcutta Normal School—the cradle of the C.E.Z.M.S.—was established.

Its first superintendent was Miss Suter, now widow of the late Rev. S. Hasell, C.M.S. Missionary, who for many years has been a devoted C.E.Z. worker and a member of committee. Though now in failing health, Mrs. Hasell has written expressly for our pages personal reminiscences of the earliest days of our work in India, which will be read with interest.

IT was in the pleasant summer of 1851, endeared to many of us by happy recollections of hours spent in that wonder-

ful creation, the first Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, that four sisters were sitting, working and chatting in a garden in the suburbs of London, enjoying that free and happy intercourse which true sisters know so well. While thus engaged, their dear mother came down the garden with two letters in her hand. One was from India, addressed to the Hon. Mr. (afterwards Lord) Kinnaird, written by Mr. Macleod Wylie, a judge in Calcutta, and a true friend of every good work for the evangelising of India. Some earnest Christian ladies, who by their exertions had raised a large sum of money to found a Normal Training School, had asked Mr. Wylie to write to England for a lady to become the first Principal of the new Institution. The other letter which the mother held was from a personal friend—Mrs. Clark—deeply interested in the work of missions, saying that Mr. Wylie's letter had been sent round to most of the Clergy Daughters' Schools and others, in England, and had met with no response; and then Mrs. Clark added, "Ought not some of your dear daughters to respond to this appeal?"

The question, we believe, found an echo in the hearts of all the sisters, but especially in that of the eldest daughter, who had long desired to devote herself to missionary work. She had had much experience in education, and though deeply feeling her own unworthiness, she was made willing to offer herself for the work, and, after due consideration by those competent to judge, she was accepted.

But the dear father, when he heard of the proposal, said that he could not allow one of his five daughters to go alone; but, if one of the others were willing to accompany her sister and help in the work, he would willingly give two of them to the blessed cause. His fourth daughter offered herself, and was accepted by the committee in Calcutta. How much this cost him may be judged by his remark when he returned from taking their passages on the P. & O. steamer, "that it was

almost like signing his own death warrant." The precious three months before they sailed were spent by the two sisters in qualifying themselves for their important task.

On Monday, November 4th, the day of departure, they started very early for Southampton, accompanied by father and eldest brother, and spent the rest of the day on board the *Indus* looking over the vessel and cabin which they were to share with Mrs. Weitbrecht and her baby (now the Rev. Dr. Weitbrecht), and after a touching commendatory prayer and blessing from their beloved father, he and their brother went on shore and the *Indus* steamed out of the harbour.

The voyage, a safe and pleasant one, was full of interest to the new travellers. The railway to Suez was not yet made, and the journey across the desert was memorable, performed in vans, each with four horses, which were changed every two hours. The jolting was tremendous, and sleep impossible!

From the day of arrival in Calcutta on December 18th until March 1st, 1852, when the Calcutta Normal School was opened, the large and suitable house which the committee had secured and rented of the Mysore princes at Tallygange, four miles from Calcutta, was being prepared and furnished. It was then solemnly dedicated to the service of GOD, by its friends and supporters. The building was quite in the country, with a large compound surrounded by a wall inclosing a garden, where the pupils could have plenty of air and exercise and flower-beds of their own to tend. Inside, the marble hall and rooms made cool and spacious schoolrooms and dormitories.

Eight pupils were received on the opening day and others soon followed. But the school had many vicissitudes to undergo before it became firmly established as a training institution for teachers of the native women and children, both in schools and Zenánas. Cloud and sunshine largely intermingled in its early history. Criticism came alike from friends

and foes. But through it all, the workers were enabled to hold on their way.

The number of pupils, both European and Eurasian, increased rapidly, and were divided into two classes. But whilst the elder ones formed an intelligent and interesting set of girls whom it was a pleasure to teach, the younger ones were indeed "raw material," calling into exercise all the patience and tact of their young teacher, and often disappointing her efforts to train them.

Among the many encouragements of these early days must be mentioned the kind, fatherly interest manifested in the work and workers by the then Bishop of Calcutta, the Rev. Daniel Wilson. He would often drive down to Tallygange in the evening, and after a little cheering intercourse with the wearied teachers, would give a helpful address to the pupils, with each of whom, afterwards, he would shake hands. He seldom came empty-handed, generally bringing some valuable book as a present to the Superintendent or to the school library.

In October, 1854, a resolution was passed by the committee that it was better to retain in the Institution only those who intended to become teachers. This reduced the number from twenty-nine to ten, and set the workers free to carry out the original design of the Normal School. A Practising School of Bengali village children was formed, and much assistance in this effort was given by the S.P.G. missionaries at work in the neighbourhood. Mr. and Mrs. James Stuart had, meanwhile, become secretary and treasurer of the Normal School, and rendered the most valuable help in carrying on the work. Their brother, the Rev. E. C. Stuart, C.M.S., afterwards Bishop of Waiapu, kindly became chaplain to the Institution.

In 1854 two of the elder pupils qualified as teachers, to the great joy of those who had trained them, and at once went to the assistance of missionaries. The Zenánas of Calcutta were just then opening, and one of the two, who had proved a valu-

able worker, found entrance among them, labouring zealously and faithfully.

But perhaps the most remarkable fruit of the Normal School was seen in the conversion and life-work of Louisa Gomez. Her history is too remarkable to be passed over in silence, for of her it was said by a C.M.S. missionary, that if the Normal School had trained only Miss Gomez it would not have been established in vain.

Louisa Gomez was born in Calcutta of Indo-Portuguese parents, strict Roman Catholics. Nevertheless she was allowed to attend a school founded by the Rev. R. Boswell, chaplain of St. James', Calcutta, and superintended by the devoted Miss Stark, the results of whose prayerful labours will be fully known only in eternity. Under her patient teaching, Louisa, who at first objected to coming to church, and whose temper was such that she could not bear the slightest rebuke, gradually became changed. The Spirit of God was secretly at work in her heart. After, however, years of mental conflict "in utter darkness and despair," she wrote to Miss Stark that she had "vowed a vow unto the Lord" that if He would take from her entirely her unbelieving heart, she would first of all give herself to Him, and would, "if it pleased Him to make her a new, sharp, threshing instrument in His hands, engage in bringing others to Him." This prayer was answered and the vow fulfilled. But first, Louisa spent three years diligently studying in the Normal School. She was nineteen when she entered the Institution and backward in her education; but her patience and perseverance, her thirst for knowledge and the deep interest she took in the daily Bible lessons, and above all her consistent, humble, Christian character, example and influence greatly commended her to the Superintendent. At length she passed an examination, and became a certificated teacher in English and Bengali in the Bengali Christian Girls' School then attached to the Calcutta Normal

School. Here she qualified for the higher task of Zenána teaching, the great extension of this work leading her to devote her whole time to it.

Much blessing attended her efforts. Her gentleness and loving tact won their way to the hearts of the native women whom she taught. For fifteen years she continued to work "in labours more abundant," with that happy faculty, which characterises a good worker, of finding new paths for her untiring energy. In writing to her former beloved teacher at the Normal School, she said, "Every Saturday I have a Bible Class for Christian women in the village. . . . There is so much to be done in spreading the Gospel of our blessed Saviour, that, had I ten thousand lives, I would gladly devote them all to His service." God gave her the desire of her heart in seeing so many brought to Him that I believe we may truly say, that no other Zenána missionary has ever been more successful in winning souls for Christ. Passing over the many years of sowing and reaping, the opening of 100 Zenánas in Calcutta and the establishment of permanent mission work by Miss Gomez at Barrackpore, we can but record the sorrowful fact that in 1872, reluctantly undertaking a journey up country for the absolute rest and change medically prescribed, it is believed that she was drowned in a river, a branch of the Ganges, which she was crossing on her way to Roy Bareilly. Mrs. Sandys, her kind and sympathising friend and adviser for many years, writes of her:

"The thought of dear Miss Gomez through my life will continue to be that of the most earnest and devoted missionary I have ever seen. . . . Literally, her meat and drink were to do the work of God. She often came to us to stay for a few hours when quite exhausted, and at such times her best restorative seemed to be if I could tell her of any more openings to make Christ known, and immediately fatigue was forgotten in her eagerness to be up and doing."

In 1856 the Normal School was removed from Tallygange to the Circular Road, Calcutta; and ultimately to the Central School, Cornwallis Square; and in 1857 its first Superintendent resigned the charge of the Institution to other and devoted hands. Of those who succeeded her, following pages tell.[1] The writer thinks she cannot more suitably close this account than by quoting from the present Principal's last Report. Miss Hunt says: "Miss Kent joined us last year, and with nine assistants—two of them, Miss Bose and Mrs. Dass, giving their services freely—four Bible-women, two Zenána teachers, and twenty school teachers, we carry on the Normal School and Bengali work. In the waking up of India's Christian daughters to the joy of service, we see the dawn of a glorious day for this bright land; and I should like to say how much the success and happiness of the work has depended on the band of faithful, earnest workers whom GOD has given us, five of whom were trained in our own dear old Normal School, and all of whom I count amongst my dear friends, made for eternity."

In 1880 the C.E.Z.M.S. was formed, having for its nucleus the entire charge of the Normal School, Calcutta, and that also of seventeen other stations, with a staff of thirty-one ladies, besides assistant missionaries and Bible-women.[2] As an entirely independent missionary organisation, working on its own constitution and basis, yet in co-operation with the Church Missionary Society, its primary object is to make known the Gospel of Christ to the women of India, in accordance with the Protestant and Evangelical teaching of the Articles and Formularies of the Church of England, by means

[1] For a description of the Normal School and its work in 1897, see chap. viii. INDIA'S GIRLS FOR CHRIST!

[2] *Three-fourths* of the English lady missionaries and their stations were thus accepted from the I.F.N.S.

of Normal Schools, Zenána Visitation, Medical Missions, Hindu and Muhammadan Female Schools, Bible-women, and other agencies.

It has been from the first a great desire of this Society that its work should be its one advertisement. Little is said of it in the newspapers. Quiet, unobtrusive, simple, and, to a large extent, what may be called underground labour, has characterised our mission from the first. The motto of C.E.Z. workers has been this: "Not as pleasing men, but God, Which trieth our hearts." Their conviction is that women's work for the Lord Jesus Christ should exhibit in a very special manner "the sweet, womanly graces of quietness, patience, carefulness, undistractedness and simplicity."

Our missionaries work, as far as practicable, at the same stations as those of the C.M.S.; and, as female converts are given to the labours of the Zenána ladies, they are instructed in the doctrines of the Church of England and become members of the Native Church which is being gathered together in connection with it. A chronological record of their work is reserved for the Appendix.

The spirit and tenor of the farewell injunctions given annually to our band of outgoing C.E.Z.M.S. missionaries is, thank God, so indicative of the principles and aspirations of the whole Society, that we venture to quote some recent utterances as the most fitting Introduction that can be given to a brief story of its labours:—

"The Committee's final word of exhortation to you in these 'perilous times,' so full of heresy and error, is, 'Stand ye in the ways and see, and *ask for the old paths*, where is the good way and walk therein.' False Christs and false prophets have, as our Master foretold, arisen in the last days. Sacerdotalism, Universalism, Perfectionism, Theosophism, are only samples of systems numberless, whereby unstable souls are led astray at home and abroad, in India and in England.

"This Society is based, as you all know, on the old lines of Church of England Protestant and Evangelical Truth. It is Protestant, as Paul's Epistles are Protestant, solemnly witnessing against error in general, and the errors of the great apostasy in particular. It is, therefore, in the truest sense, Catholic too, abating not one jot of the truth as it is in Jesus, and firmly maintaining that the first qualification for work in the vineyard is personal experience of the Gospel of Christ, as 'the power of GOD unto salvation to every one that believeth.' To these essential principles may GOD, in the future as in the past, keep all our workers loyal and devoted and true!

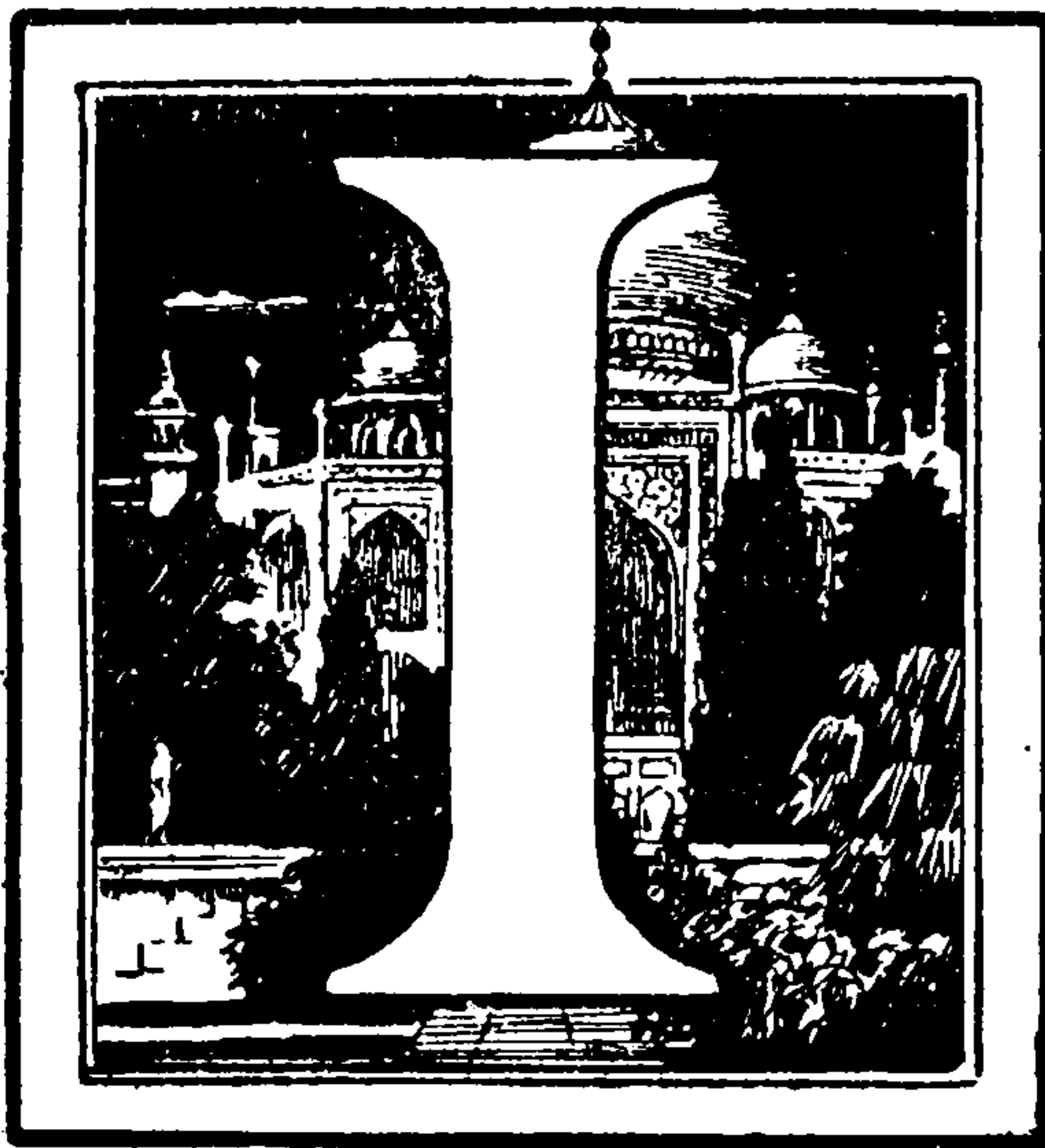
"Yet even here we would again remind you that mere orthodoxy cannot save souls. More is needed in a missionary of the Cross of Christ even than a 'past experience' of the power of a Saviour's love. A daily, hourly life by faith in the Son of GOD; a close, constant, and eternal union and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ; a living in the Spirit, a walking in the light, and (in respect of this glorious missionary work which we have in hand) a grasping of GOD'S purposes, a pleading of GOD'S promises, a laying hold of the exceeding greatness of GOD'S power, a close and searching study of GOD'S Word; a looking, watching, and waiting for Christ's glorious appearing—all this the Committee have in view when they bid you stand in the old paths, and fight on the old lines on which the noble band of martyrs, missionaries, and apostles have stood and fought before you."

CHAPTER I

A Glance at the Land

"Of every six infants in the world, one is born in India; of every six orphan girls, one is wandering in India; of every six widows, one is mourning in India; of every six men who die, one is passing into eternity from India. Think of it, and give India a place in your prayers."

"Will you 'consider the field'? Consider its condition, its millions of perishing souls, its immense opportunities and facilities for Christian women's effort, its promise, its wealth for the Saviour's glory! And then, when you have considered, will you '*buy the field*'?"



INDIA, vast, million-peopled Empire, brightest jewel in the British crown; few indeed are they who cannot be interested in that wide realm, laved by two oceans, girt with a coral strand! To describe its countries, its peoples, its customs, would be to fill volumes with facts full of surprise, interest, and pathos, outrivalling in weird and wonderful detail the strangest romance ever written. The eyes of statesmen, travellers, and merchants are turning towards this wonderland of the East with increasing eagerness day by day. In Hegel's phrase, "India is the Land of Desire to the world."

Let us give a glance at that mighty, distant peninsula, linked, in God's special providence, with our own tiny island as one Empire under one beneficent Royal Rule.

India, with its TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHT MILLIONS of inhabitants, may be said to be the home of one-sixth of the human race. A great three-cornered country, it stretches southward in mid-ocean, covering one and a half millions of square miles. Its area is almost equal to, and its population is actually larger than, all Europe, less Russia. Its length and its greatest breadth are both about 1,900 miles, but it tapers with a pear-shaped curve to a point at Cape Comorin, its southern extremity. Within this compact dominion, India boasts a variety of climate, from the hot region near the equator to far within the temperate zone The capital, Calcutta, lies in 88 degrees of E. longitude; so that when the sun sets at 6 o'clock there, it is just past mid-day in England.

The mountains and the ocean, Nature's glorious bulwarks, guard India's boundaries north, east, and west. But on its N.E. and N.W. frontiers two opposite sets of gateways connect it with the rest of Asia. From the wild hill regions between Burma and the Chinese Empire on the one side, and from the Muhammadan states of Afghánistán and Balúchistán on the other, two streams of widely different peoples have poured into the one great land.

"This noble Empire," says Dr. Hunter, "is rich in varieties of scenery, from the highest mountains in the world to vast river-deltas, raised only a few inches above the level of the sea. It teems with the products of nature, from the fierce beasts and tangled jungles of the tropics, to the stunted barley-crop which the hill man rears, and the small furred animal which he traps within sight of the eternal snow."

For a thousand miles parallel with the blue Himálayas runs the noble waterway of Northern India. No wonder that the people reverence the bountiful rivers Indus, Bráhmaputra, and Ganges, which fertilise their arid fields! Their sources in the mountains are held sacred. Allahábád, on the tongue of land where the two sister streams, Ganges and Jumna, unite, is

yearly visited by thousands of pilgrims, and a great religious gathering takes place each January on Ságar Island, where formerly the united rivers poured into the sea. To bathe in "Mother Ganga," as she is lovingly called, it is believed will purify from sin, and the devout Hindu dies in the hope that his ashes will be borne by her waters to the ocean.

Throughout the river-plain of Bengal, two, and in some provinces three, harvests are reaped each year. A network of streams forces its way slowly across the vast flat delta, dropping the burden of silt, brought down from Northern India by the parent river, unable any longer to carry it swiftly. High level canals are thus produced, which in the rainy season overflow their banks and leave the alluvial soil upon the low country on either side. Sufficient fertilising mud to fill enough fifty-ton freight cars to stretch two and a half times round the world is thus brought down free of cost by river currents from the distant Himálayas! A constant succession of rich crops is reared upon the plains below in consequence. Wheat and various grains, pease, pulses, seed-oils and green crops of many sorts are reaped in spring; the early rice crops in September; the great rice harvest of the year[1] and other grains in November or December. Before these last have been gathered in, it is time to prepare the ground again for the spring crops, and the Indian husbandman knows no rest except during the hot weeks of May, when he is anxiously waiting for the rains.

The year may be divided into three seasons—cold, hot, and rainy. The cold season in North India begins about the first of October; in Calcutta and Bombay in November. Rain seldom falls during this season. From October to March the sky is cloudless. The weather becomes warm before the

[1] It was the failure of this principal crop, owing to the long-continued drought of 1896, which brought about the awful famine raging in the North, North-west and Central Provinces of India, 1897.

middle of March, and a hot wind is blowing in April. Not a blade of grass is to be seen by the time that May, the most trying month, sets in. In June the heat is intense. That month the monsoon bursts, and until that relief comes, intense anxiety prevails all over India to hear of rain. Within three or four days after the rain has come, the whole landscape is clothed in richest green. Birds seem endued with new life. Multitudes of frogs, from no one knows where, leap in every pond and puddle. For the next three or four months India is a beautiful country. Yet it is less healthy, and when the rains abate early in September the most sickly season sets in. The air, still and steamy, is filled with malaria produced by the decaying vegetation.

Enriched with God's own royal bounty, the fertile plains, dotted with mud-built villages, are adorned with noble trees. Mango groves scent the air with their blossom in spring, and yield their abundant fruit in summer. The spreading banian with its colonnades of hanging roots, the stately pípal with its dense foliage, the leafless wild cotton-tree laden with its heavy red flowers, the tall feathery tamarind and the quick-growing babúl rear their heads above the crop-fields; while, as the rivers near the coast, palms begin to take possession of the scene.

South India, perhaps, lies rather low in the estimation of those who dwell amid these northern beauties. Some think of it only as a vast, hot, dreary, sandy plain, rising here and there into equally uninteresting hills or mountain heights. But those who know it well claim for it, when the rains have come, a loveliness all its own. With its many rivers in flood, and the refreshing green of the paddy fields stretching for many a mile, bordered and interspersed with groups of graceful date-palms or drooping banians, the plains of Southern India are sufficiently beautiful to gladden the eye of any artist.

There are very few large towns in India. Many of the so-called towns are mere groups of villages, in the midst of which cattle are driven in the field, and ploughing and reaping go on. Whether, therefore, the territory is a province under British rule or a state under a native chief, India is almost entirely a rural country.

Notwithstanding this fact, British India is thickly over-crowded. Each square mile has to feed, on an average, 229 persons; and many millions of the dense husbandman population are struggling to live on the produce of half an acre apiece. In such districts, if the rain fall short by a few inches, the people suffer great distress; if drought occur, thousands die of famine. In other parts, vast tracts of fertile land wait to be cultivated. The Indian, like most Orientals, is conservative to the highest degree. He clings to his fields and parcels them out among his children, even when his family has grown too numerous to live upon the crops.

Glancing next at the people themselves, we must keep in mind that in such a vast country, where life is many-sided, the inhabitants, so varied in countenance, stature, manners, customs, ways of living, food, dress, industries and religious ceremonies, we can but look at features common to the majority, and remember that even these are not wholly the same everywhere. To attempt a minute description is impossible. Every section of life in India has its own characteristics, and as great a diversity exists between the customs of one set of people and another, as the gradations of colour which are to be found, from the ebony complexion of the negro to the wheaten colour of the Kashmírí woman.

No fewer than 106 languages (including dialects) are spoken; the chief of which are Hindi, Bengáli, Telugu, Maráthí, Punjábi, Tamil, Gujrátí, Kánarese, Uriyá, Burmese, Sindhí, Kashmírí and Malayálam.[1] Hindustání or Urdu, *i.e.*

[1] The entire Bible has been translated into all these languages.

camp language, is a dialect of Hindí, comprising a large admixture of Persian words. It has become the *lingua franca* of India, and is "the official tongue under English rule except so far as English itself is used."

India has a civilisation at least as ancient as the time of Solomon. In some respects its people do not seem to have changed for the last 3,000 years.

In the towns, the purely native shops are open and work begins early in the morning. At 11 o'clock they are closed, and the work-people go away for their bath and morning meal. About 2 o'clock they re-open and remain so until 10 or 11 p.m. Walking along at mid-day you notice that each shop is carefully locked with two or three or even four large padlocks. In a little time a respectably-dressed Bengali comes to the shop, but he has the key of one lock only. He must wait until his partners' arrival, and when all are present the locks are removed and the door opened. This mutual distrust is very common among the natives.

The smallest copper coin in circulation is the 'pie' one-twelfth of a 'pice' the value of which is rather less than ½*d.* This is worth eighty 'kauris,' and with these shells a good deal of business is transacted. How would English trades-people like to have to do with shells of which about fifty go to the farthing?

When the people meet each other, or when a European meets with them, except they have become familiar with our customs, there is no handshaking as a sign of friendliness. When they meet as equals, each touches his forehead with the palm of his right hand; but if an inferior meet a superior, he stoops down as though he would touch the foot of the other, and then slowly raises his hand to his head. They mean by this exactly what we mean when we shake hands.

One has to be very careful in asking questions about the family. If we have heard that a gentleman's wife is ill, it

would be a great breach of etiquette to ask after her by name. Although we know that he has no children, we have to say, "How is your family?" This he at once understands, and will tell you that she is better or worse as the case may be. In terminating a visit to a Bengali, a strange form of etiquette must be observed. The visitor must not rise to go till his host politely tells him it is time for him to take his departure! Yet the Bengali exhibits true Western politeness in other ways. Respect is universally shown to the European who is stammering in the language and probably making a blunder in every sentence. Not a smile crosses his face, even though a table-servant may be told by the foreigner to pour *himself* instead of *water* into a tumbler! The water will be given and not the faintest shade of amusement be exhibited.

Few people perhaps are more cleanly than the Bengalis. As a rule, the Hindu peasant of Bengal bathes every day of the year. His ablutions over, he dons clean garments, washes the clothes he has worn during the last twenty-four hours, and leaves the suit of yesterday to dry and bleach in the sun ready for the morrow. If there is a river within a reasonable distance, the people prefer to bathe in it, because a bath in a river not only cleanses their bodies but, it is believed, washes away their sins. If there is no river, they bathe in a tank; or, if this cannot be had, they pour water over their bodies. They do not use soap, but in the cold season, immediately before their bath, anoint the body with cocoa-nut oil.

The homes of the poor are usually about twelve feet square and of one story only. They are built upon a raised floor of earth, with walls of matting, wattles, or mud. The roof, which in the Punjáb is an expanse of flat mud, in South India is of reeds, grass, or palm leaves fastened to bambus, or perhaps jungle-wood rafters. Windows are either conspicuous by their absence, or else they are very small and never

glazed. The only light comes in at the low narrow door. The Indian house of even the better class is cheerless enough to outward appearance—a four-walled prison—though occasionally, in some parts of the country, the exterior of the front is decorated with stripes of red and white, about a foot wide. But within, it always contains a courtyard open to the sky. The projecting roof forms the verandah upon which all the small dark rooms open, and which constitutes the family dwelling-place. They sleep in the little rooms in the coldest weather, and in the court in the warmest, or upon the flat roof, around which the outer wall extends high enough to form a screen. The dwelling-houses of respectable people are usually in narrow lanes, where the outstretched hands may almost touch opposite houses.

The courtyard generally contains a well or tank, and sometimes a tree, and in wealthy establishments it may expand even into a small garden, where the sacred tulsi-plant (an object of worship) is carefully tended. But more often broken crockery, household rubbish, and an evil-smelling drain are the chief items of interest visible. In large houses there is often an inner court for the women and the household work. But the average Indian dwelling contains a little ante-room, sometimes used for a stable, sometimes as a passage only, with a small apartment adjoining it where the men sit and receive their friends. Within, on one side of the court, are the kitchen and the store-room, and on the other two sides, the sitting-room and bedrooms. Inside the rooms there is practically no furniture beyond 'chárpaies,' *i.e.*, light bedsteads, the bedding of which is generally rolled up by day; boxes which contain the family clothing, a 'pán' or spice box, a few pictures of many-headed, many-armed gods and goddesses, a low desk, if the master of the house have literary tastes, and a few mats and perhaps cushions. In Muhammadan houses there is a wooden platform about a foot high, on

which a cotton mat is spread, and here the inmates recline much of their time. In fine houses a mat covers the floor, a white cloth is spread on this and bolsters or cushions are placed here and there to support head, back, or elbows as the sitter may wish.

The floor of the villager's house is of hardened earth which is cleansed and levelled from time to time with a solution of mud, cow-dung and water, spread by hand. A low fire-place, without pipe or chimney, pots of all sizes containing the household stores, a pestle and stone mortar, a hand mill, and a granite slab for grinding spices constitute the kitchen effects. A heap of rice may be in one corner, and suspended by string from the rafters are vessels holding clarified butter, sugar, and other things likely to excite the appetite of rats and ants. A lamp, some matting, possibly a rough chárpaie, a pole suspended from the ceiling by two ropes to serve as wardrobe, and some spinning wheels complete the household goods. The interior of these one- or two-roomed houses is filled with confined air and smoke, and redolent with the odour of cow-dung and stale curry materials!

In a Hindu kitchen, however, the cooking vessels and brass plates are kept scrupulously clean, and scoured until they shine like mirrors, although in a Muhammadan household the reverse of cleanliness obtains. The Hindus are mostly vegetarians. In Bengal, for instance, they live on rice and vegetables stewed with hot spice, known to English people as curry. The frequent use of condiments is called for by the nature of their food. They have to eat an immense quantity of rice in order to obtain sufficient nutriment. As rice forms their staple food every day in the year, hot spices are indulged in to stimulate appetite and assist digestion. Their contentment with this simple, changeless diet is astonishing.

The Indian home has no family table or family meal. The food is prepared, and a portion set before the master and male

relatives of the household, who sit around it on the floor; then, when they have eaten, the women take their plates to the hearth or (if Moslems) to the chárpaie, which is a seat by day and a bed by night, and begin their meal. In eating their food, though the right hand takes the place of knife, fork, and spoon, the people are very clean and careful. Before commencing a meal the hands are washed; and they consider our plan of using spoons, although cleansed, extremely objectionable! To a Hindu the saliva is impure, and everything it touches is defiled.

"HERE THE INMATES RECLINE."

A plate therefore, or spoon that has once touched the lips, could not be used again. The very ground where food has been partaken of has to be purified after each meal by having a handful of water or a little liquid cow-dung sprinkled over it.

The Hindu gentleman at meal-time lays aside his turban and jacket, and sits down cross-legged upon a mat on the floor before his plantain-leaf plate. The rice is heaped on a large brass tray, the curry is in smaller brass bowls, and water in brass vessels. At a feast the curry and rice may be supple-

mented by a boiled grain called 'dál,' 'ghí,' *i.e.*, clarified butter, and a little chutney. The meal usually proceeds in perfect silence, and not until the close does any one drink water. In drinking no one allows their drinking vessel to touch their lips. Throwing their heads back, opening their mouths wide, and raising their hands aloft, they pour the water in a stream down their throats.

The fast is broken in the early morning with fruit or milk, 'chhoté hárzari' or "little breakfast," as it is called; the breakfast, or first substantial meal, is taken at early noon, and dinner in the evening. Such is the wont of the well-to-do people. But with the poor, of course it is far otherwise. Multitudes have only one cooked meal a day, and make the other of a handful of parched grain.

After a meal it is most common for the people to chew 'pán.' This is a leaf, something like spinach, specially grown for the purpose, in which betel-nut, cardamom seeds, cocoa-nut, lime, cinnamon, catechu, and other spices are mixed, the appetising morsel being neatly folded over and pinned with a clove. The whole must be taken into the mouth at once! The bulkiness of this dainty bit, and the redness it imparts to lips and teeth while being chewed, in no way adds to the beauty of the face. It is slightly stimulating, perhaps equal to a mild cup of tea, and is always offered to a guest. In process of time it becomes such a habit that elderly people are seldom seen without a pán in their mouths. This is especially true of Muhammadan women, whose beautiful teeth in girlhood become quite spoilt by its use. For, after marriage, the women think it adds to their beauty to have black teeth, and therefore add lime to the usual ingredients of pán, which causes them not only to blacken, but to decay. The astringent property of the lime also produces in time such feverishness of the mouth and dryness of the tongue as to cause it to become so shrivelled, that its owner cannot articulate clearly.

It is not uncommon to find a woman who will chew as many as fifty packets of pán in a day!

Tobacco is almost universally "drunk" by the men of India. The curious waterpipe is employed, and the tobacco

is damp from the molasses with which it is mixed, so that burning charcoal needs to be put into the bowl with the weed.

What we in England know as *home*-life is lacking among the masses of India. The house is a shelter from the weather and a place for eating and sleeping. A species of reverence to-

wards the husband, and fear of parents on the children's part often takes the place of family affection. Social intercourse between husband, wife, and children is almost unknown outside the homes of Christian converts.

Wages are low amongst all classes. Labourers of the better class receive four annas a day, while those lower in the scale get only half that sum. However, sufficient food-grain for the day for a man and his family can be bought for coins the value of a penny! Clothing is scanty and cheap. Fuel costs nothing, and house rent is scarcely known. Yet poverty, sometimes, extreme, is almost universal. Millions are shelterless, sleeping beneath "God's blanket"—the sky—only. "Forty millions," says Sir W. Hunter, "go through life with too little food, many of them never knowing what it is to have their hunger satisfied!" Even in prosperous times and with good harvests, hundreds of the poor in towns can hope to eat *only* every other day.

Amongst the Indian peoples there is a distinct fourfold division. First come the non-Aryan tribes or Aborigines, a dark-skinned, flat-nosed, thick-lipped race, with short bodies and bullet heads, of whom there are about eighteen millions. Then the descendants of the Aryan or Sanscrit-speaking race, now called Bráhmans and Rájputs, a tall, slim people, with finely-modelled features, fair complexion, high forehead, and slightly oval skull, numbering about sixteen millions. Next comes the great, mixed population, generally known as the Hindus, a vast company of about 208 millions. And last, but by no means least in importance, the Muhammadans, who began to come to India about 1000 A.D., numbering some forty-five millions.

The people are divided into a great number of castes or classes, who, though they may speak and work together, will not visit each other, or eat and drink together.

This doctrine of caste originated hundreds, if not thousands,

of years ago, and a more complete system of gradation in society could hardly be conceived. The Bráhmans or priests claim the highest rank. The Bráhman, say they, proceeded from the mouth of Brahm the Creator, the Kshattriya (or warrior) from his arms, the Vaisya (or merchant class) from his thighs, and the Súdra (or servant class) from his feet. This legend is true so far that the Bráhmans represent the brain power of the Indian people, and the Súdras the down-trodden serfs. The three highest castes are said to be twice born, and are allowed to wear the 'poitra,' *i.e.* a little necklace of thread, of which all who wear it are exceedingly proud. But the main object in life of the Súdras—the once-born—is to serve the others, and they are taught it is an honour for them to be allowed to put the dust from a Bráhman's foot on their head, or to drink the water in which he has washed his feet! Even the best educated and richest Hindu Bábu will prostrate himself in the streets of Calcutta before some Bráhman beggar he may accidentally meet, and the "holy father" will deign no look of recognition at the devotee at his feet, but, with head erect, pass on sublimely unmoved. One section of the Bráhman community lives on public charity. "'What is your occupation?' I asked of one the other day," says a traveller. "Madam! I am a beggar!" was the reply, delivered with the air of a prince. At present, the original castes do not exist in their purity; the Bráhmans and Súdras remain most distinct, the latter class constituting more than four-fifths of the population.

Caste regulations are very rigid, and interweave themselves with the minutest details of daily life. A man or woman dreads doing anything which may be against the rules of caste. A man may be a liar, a thief, or even a worse sinner, and yet continue in his social circle; but the moment he breaks one of the least important laws of caste, he is expelled from the society to which he belongs, and treated as an outcast. He

must forsake all who are near and dear to him. His parents perform his funeral ceremonies, his wife puts on widow's weeds, and is looked upon as a widow by all her people.

Caste can generally, however, be regained by prostrations, drinking a mixture of the five products of the cow, paying a fine, and furnishing a feast.

It has been well said that in India, custom, caste, and creed present a triple and well-nigh impregnable fortress against Christianity. "Caste is the Hindu's environment, and the greatest obstacle encountered by the Christian missionary." Like an iron chain, it fetters in cruel bondage individual life. There are endless subdivisions of the four great castes; the Madras census returns for 1881 contained 19,044 caste names. But the same tyranny holds good through all, a tyranny so bitter that it has raised a protest from the Hindu himself. "Does a Bráhman wish to marry his daughter at a mature and properly marriageable age? Then comes the tyrant Caste and says, 'You shall not keep your daughter unmarried beyond the age of eight or ten, unless you choose to incur the penalty of excommunication.' Does a man wish to countenance the re-marriage of little girls plunged into lifelong misery by a nominal widowhood? Caste says, 'No, you will be excommunicated.' Does a man wish to dispense with any of the unmeaning, idolatrous ceremonies with which native society is hampered? Caste says, 'No, or you will be excommunicated.' If a Bráhman feel thirsty, and has no other water but such as is brought by a Súdra near him, he cannot drink it, for caste forbids it on pain of excommunication! . . . Such is our caste system, so unjustifiable in principle, so unfair in organisation, and so baneful in its consequences to the highest interests of the country."

The few benefits supposed by some to be conferred by caste, such as a certain amount of temperance, cleanliness, moral restraint, and contentment, are far outweighed by the evils of

the system. It encourages harmful customs, checks commerce, prevents the growth of national worth, and, above all, imposes upon the people the most abject spiritual slavery.

But the immense progress made under British rule, the introduction of telegraphy, railways, machinery, medicines, together with the rapid spread of education, are beginning to produce a marked change. Caste is being shaken to its very foundation, since Bráhman and Súdra attend the same schools, share the same mat, graduate at the same college, find themselves shoulder to shoulder in Government employ, side by side in public conveyances, and using alternately electrical appliances in commercial life. The people are being drawn together, not only by the force of English education common alike to all, but by common political interests. Dr. Thoburn, in his deeply interesting book "India and Malaysia," remarks: "India is destined to become a Christian empire. When that change takes place, an active, vigorous Christianity will do more in a century to weld all the diverse peoples of the peninsula into one great nation, than all other influences combined have done in the past 1,000 years."

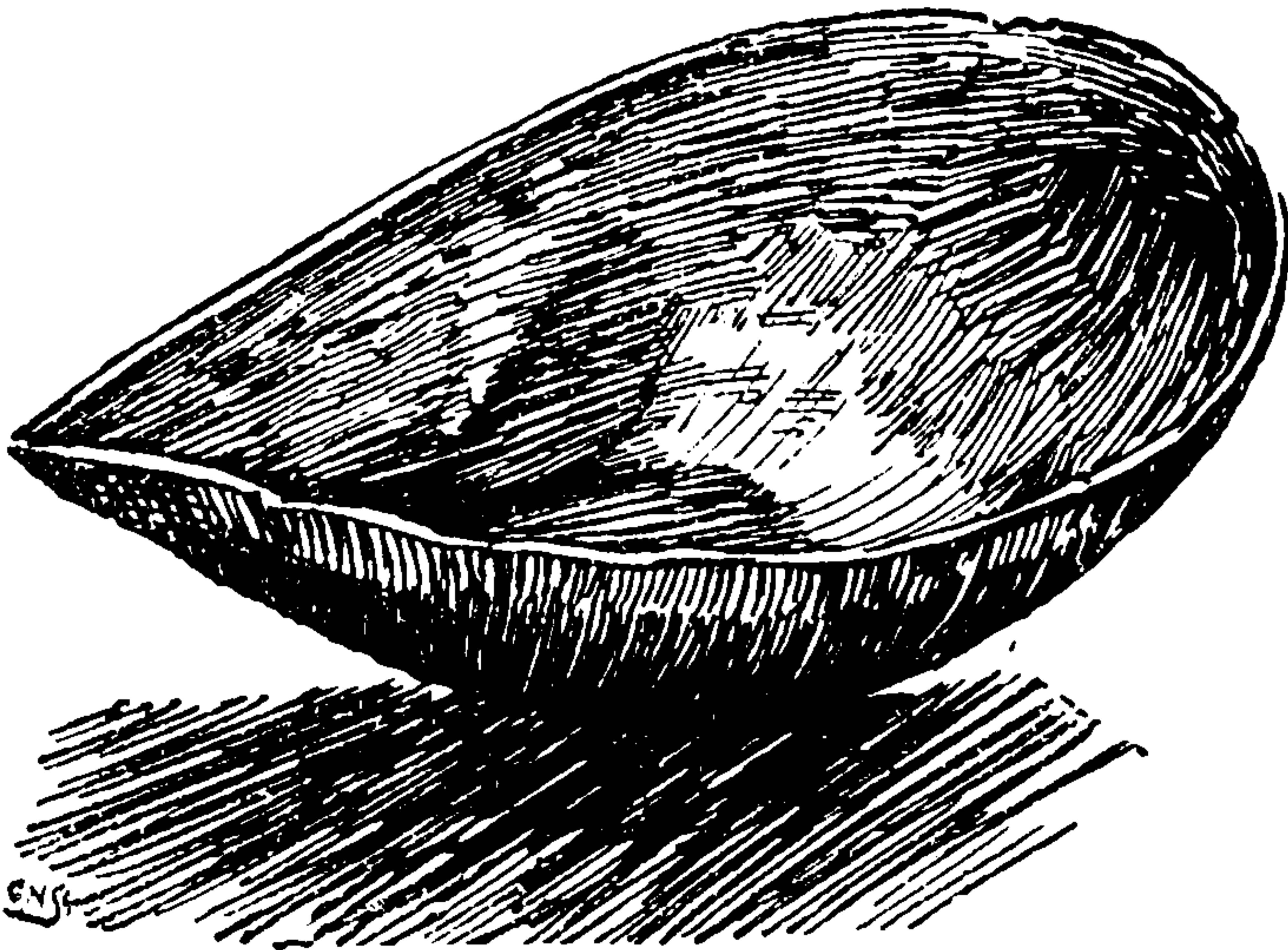
The Hindus as a race are very superstitious. If a cat run across the road when a man starts on an errand, he will consider it a very bad omen, and will not proceed any further. If a lizard chirps, conversation stops. If one sneezes when a subject is under discussion it is a bad omen; but if repeated it is a good one! Certain hours in every day are considered inauspicious.

It is but a step from superstition to religion with the native of Hindustán. Everywhere in India there are idols: on every high hill and under every green tree. By the roadsides and on the banks of rivers and tanks are little earthenware shrines and niches for saucer lamps, in which lights are kept burning before the gods. Of the Hindus it has been said, "They eat religiously, drink religiously, bathe religiously, dress religiously,

and sin religiously." The number of Hindu deities is stated at 330,000,000. This is a figure of speech, indicating that they are beyond computation. We can glance at a few of the chief ones only.

Brahm, the Creator, is generally regarded as the Supreme Deity. No temple or temple rites are prescribed ıor him. This is the god usually revered by the Bráhmo-Samájes.

In process of time, Brahm brooded for a year over a golden egg placed in the waters, and Bráhma was produced, the first person of the Hindu Triad. He is represented as a red man with four arms and four heads. His worship has ceased because of gross sin which he is said to have committed!



A SAUCER LAMP.

Vishnu, the Preserver, the second, and, we may add, the foulest, of the Triad is generally represented as a black man with four arms, and is most worshipped in Southern India. The common people render the greater part of their worship to his ten incarnations, one of which, Krishna, is perhaps the most popular. He is the most impressive and most influential of the loathsome three; the most powerful, because the only personal god in his incarnation of Krishna, in India.

Siva, the Destroyer, completes the Triad, and is most worshipped in Northern India. He is variously represented as an ascetic, as ornamented with a necklace of bones and skulls, as five-headed, etc. The character of the worship performed to him is unspeakably licentious.

One other god, Ganesa, the son of Siva, we may mention, who presides over Wisdom. He is always represented with an elephant's head, and has the appearance of a glutton. He is found in most places of business, and is invoked at the commencement of every important enterprise. All books begin with "Honour to Ganesa." Ambitious school-boys, desiring his aid in their lessons, praise him by telling him how much he can eat!

We cannot stain our pages with the detestable doings of these Hindu deities, or wade through the mire of Indian theology. But it may be asked, Are all these things known to the ordinary Hindu? Yes, well known. In their sacred books, from the mouth of the Bráhman 'guru,' *i.e.*, teacher, and by the dramas enacted in their temples, the stories of their gods are more familiar to Indian people than the history of Christ is to many Englishmen.

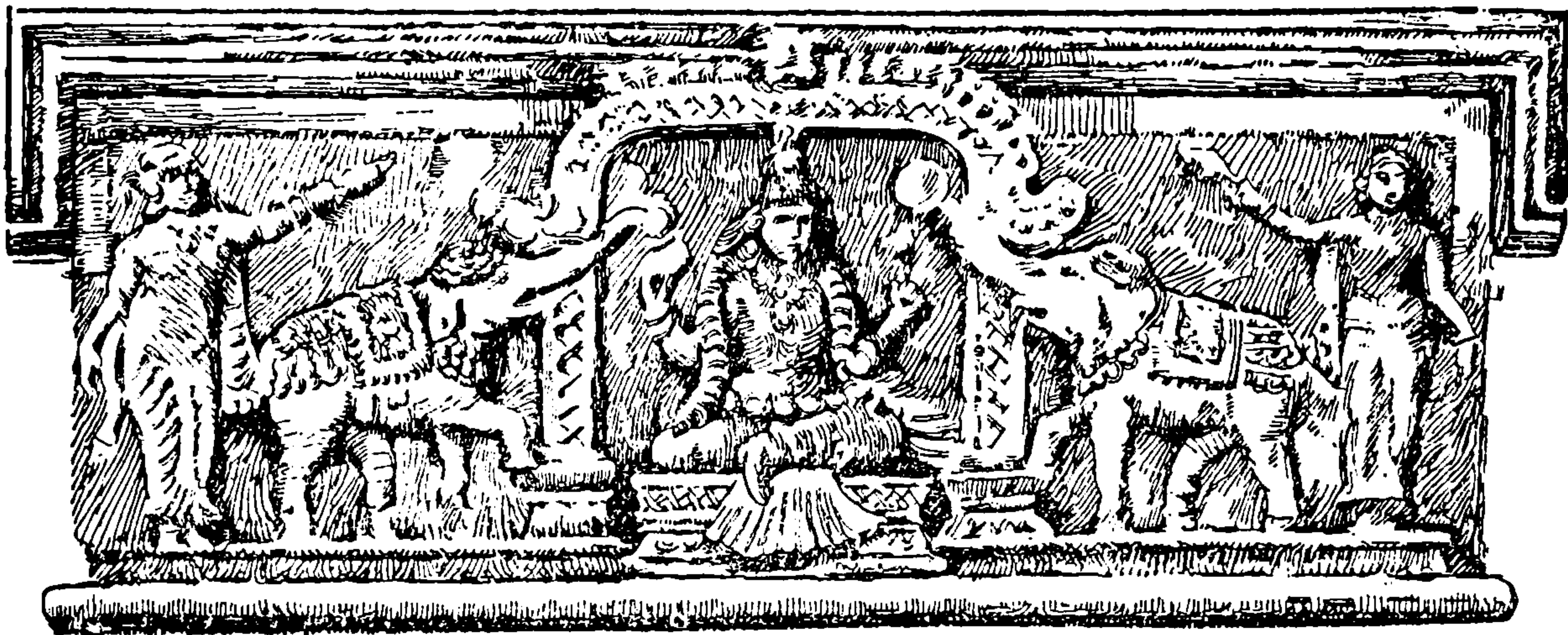
The worship of the goddesses is considered specially important. Lachmi, the goddess of prosperity, is more popular than Sarasvati, the goddess of wisdom; but Kálí, also worshipped as "Durgá" or "Parváti," is by far the favourite deity, *the* goddess of India. Calcutta derives its name from "Kálí Ghát," the bathing-place sacred to Kálí, where there is a noted temple in honour of her, and to this holy place people wend their way from all parts of India because of the great benefits a visit is supposed to give. This temple is an enormous source of profit to its owners, as they receive about $7\frac{1}{2}$*d.* as a fee for every goat that is sacrificed there. It stands

on the bank of a stream, and is almost hidden by numbers of small shops, from which pilgrims take home, for their friends, mementoes of their visit. On a roofed-in platform in front of the temple, Bráhmans are always to be seen, reading the sacred books or repeating the names of the gods as an act of merit. In front of this platform are frames fixed in the ground for holding the victims to be sacrificed. On the other side is the shrine containing the repulsive image of Kálí. The figure of this goddess is one of the most horrible in the Hindu pantheon. She is represented as a black woman with three glaring eyes, the third being in her forehead. Her huge tongue, made of bright gold, protrudes from her mouth, and reaches to her waist. For earrings she has two human heads, a garland of human skulls for a necklace, and a waist-band formed of human hands. All these decorations she is supposed to have taken from the enemies whom she slew during her visit to earth. She stands on the body of her husband, Siva. The explanation of her attitude is as follows. When she had completed the destruction of her enemies, she began to dance with joy. This dancing was so violent that the earth trembled, and was in danger of being shaken to pieces. The alarmed inhabitants cried to Siva for help until, finding himself powerless to interfere, he threw himself on the ground amongst the dead bodies of his wife's foes. Looking down and seeing her husband under her feet, Kálí was suddenly overcome with shame, and put out her tongue (which is the way in which Bengalis blush to this day!) and at once desisted from her violent dancing.

The reason assigned for offering the blood of goats and buffaloes to Kálí is one connected with her wars. On one occasion, when faint with her destructive work, she wanted some refreshment and quaffed the blood of her enemies. Formerly the people offered human sacrifices to her, but as this cannot now be done, animals are slain in the belief that, seeing the blood, the

deity will remember her pleasure in drinking the blood of her enemies; and, being pleased, will listen graciously to the prayer of the suppliant. At certain times the number of victims slain in front of the image is so many, that the courtyard literally streams with blood, and anything more repulsive can scarcely be imagined.

Vishnu and Siva's worship are often very formal, the idol being treated precisely as if it were a living person, being washed, clothed, fed, fanned, laid to rest, and so forth by the attendant priests. The people make much of repeating the



"EVERYWHERE IN INDIA THERE ARE IDOLS."

names of their gods; and a child is often given the name of a deity, that merit may be laid up every time it is mentioned.

Plants are worshipped, partly because it is believed that gods, demons, men and animals may transmigrate into them. The margosa, wood apple, pípal tree, sacred kusha grass and tulsi plant[1] are those most revered. We have already referred to the river worship of Northern India, and on the coast the sea is worshipped. Offerings are given to it for a safe voyage; if a child is born, something must be thrown into it as a thank-

[1] This latter is especially the Hindu *woman's* divinity. All the religion of many of the women consists in walking round the tulsi plant, in saying prayers to it, or in placing offerings before it.

offering, and on many other occasions 'pujà' is done to the ocean.

A very common form of worship is offered to tools or implements of trade. At the Tool Feast, soldiers place their guns, swords, bullets, etc., in a heap, employ a Bráhman priest to consecrate them, and then, burning incense and presenting offerings of flowers and fruits, they bow down before them, praying that these weapons may make them victorious in war. In the same way the carpenter worships his hammer and nails; the blacksmith his bellows and anvil; the bricklayer his trowel and spirit-level; the barber his scissors, razor and strop; the tailor his needle, thimble, scissors, and thread; the shopman his scales and weights, and school-boys their books, slate, pencil, pen and inkbottle.

Animals of various kinds are held sacred, mainly because of the Hindu doctrine of Transmigration. "Even a flea may enclose the soul of some person who was a sage or a saint." The tiger, the monkey, the cobra, the cow are all reverenced as deities.

In the villages, rocks or trees marked with red paint are divine, and worship is offered to them; but the most popular village deities are the "Mothers" who have specially to do with diseases. The nearly quarter of a million who die annually of smallpox, it is considered, owe their death chiefly to the Smallpox goddess, "Mother of Death," who is supposed to scatter the seeds of this terrible disease for her amusement, and would be enraged if persons were to be vaccinated.

Demon-worship is specially common in Southern India. "The great majority of the inhabitants of India from the cradle to the grave," says Sir Monier Williams, "are victims of a form of mental disease which is best expressed by the term demono-phobia. They are haunted and oppressed by a perpetual dread of demons on the watch to harm them."

Pilgrimages are a very important feature of Hinduism. India's great Mecca is the sacred Benares with its holy wells. Next in importance is the pilgrimage to Puri, where is the temple of the idol Jagannáth, "Lord of the World," to which multitudes resort.

The doctrine of Transmigration is a cardinal fact of Hinduism. It professes to explain the differing conditions of those born on the earth. One's lot is due to merit or demerit in previous stages of existence. For example, a Hindu woman, in order to comfort a missionary who was rather distressed at the rudeness of another woman, assured her that such an ungrateful sinner would not trouble her in the next world, for she would be sure to be born a worm, and of a very low kind too! It is only after passing through 8,400,000 births or existences on earth, that the Hindu may reach the happy moment when his soul is absorbed into the Deity. A Hindu poet thus writes,—

> "How many births are past I cannot tell;
> How many yet to come no man can say;
> But this alone I know, and know full well,
> That pain and grief embitter all the way."

Such are the popular beliefs which constitute the faith of the 208,000,000 entered as Hindus in the census of 1891. Other faiths than Hinduism are largely represented in India. Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsís, Jews, and other religious sects have thousands of adherents; and it is a notable fact that "the Empress of India reigns over upwards of 45,000,000 of Muhammadans, while in the Ottoman Empire the Sultan reigns over but a little more than 39,000,000—about two-thirds only of the number found in Victoria's Indian realm."

"If I were asked," says Dr. Thoburn, "to give an account in a few words of the prevailing religions of India, I should say that the Hindus take the lead, followed at a great distance by the Muhammadans, while the third class of religionists are

demon-worshippers, probably numbering less than forty or fifty millions of people."

The Muhammadans have received through their sacred volume, the Korán, a more definite idea of Satan as the prince of devils than the Hindus have ever acquired. Devil-worship is more openly avowed among them than among other sects. Another important Muhammadan dogma, and belief among the people of India, without regard to creed, is Fatalism. "Qismat" (fate) is the universal, sullen cry of hopeless submission to disaster that may befall man, woman or child. The pious believe that every child on the sixth night after its birth has its destiny for good or evil, which nothing can reverse, imprinted upon its forehead. If a man does something wicked and is sent to jail for ten years, they say, "Poor fellow, what could he do? It was his fate!" It is difficult to exaggerate the baneful effects of this universal, blighting error.

In her stirring book, *Daughters of the King*, Miss Hewlett has pictured in detail the ceremonies performed over the dying and dead Hindu. Here we can give but an outline of what occurs, quoted from that source.

As soon as any one among the Hindus is thought to be dying, the friends send for the Bráhmans and give them money, food, and clothes, and if they can afford it, a cow. This is called 'mansna,' and they hope thus to obtain pardon for the departing soul. If a Hindu be allowed by accident to die on a bedstead or in any upstairs room, it is believed he has committed so terrible a sin that he can never go to heaven unless his relatives spend very large sums of money to obtain forgiveness. A place on the ground, therefore, is prepared for the dying person, by spreading 'phalgu' *i e.*, sand brought from the bed of the Ganges, and over this 'kusha' grass. Upon this he is laid to breathe his last. Near his feet a little hole is dug and filled with Ganges water, so that he may die with his feet in that holy river! Close to

his head they place a heap of grain and fruit, while two little lamps made of flour and water paste, with wicks floating in mustard oil, are placed in the hands, so that to the last there may be light before the eyes for the soul. These and other ceremonies are performed by the nearest relative.

A class of Bráhmans called 'Acháraj' have only to do with the laying out of the dead, and they are never admitted into any house except for this purpose, neither would any Hindu have dealings with them at other times. In the case of a married woman whose husband is living, she is shrouded entirely in red after death, and must wear three jewels. If she is a widow, or unmarried, she is dressed in white and has no jewels.

The bier, in the case of the very young and unmarried, is made of several short pieces of wood put together like a ladder, the use of small pieces of wood signifying that the life has been prematurely cut off. Four separate offerings to the god are made by the 'Acháraj' at the time of the funeral procession towards the 'ghát' or place of burning. On arrival there, the friends tear open the winding-sheet over the face, and turn the corpse so that the face is towards the sun. A large quantity of wood is then arranged, and the body placed upon it. Much 'ghi' is poured over the wood to cause it to burn more quickly, while the mourners throw sandal-wood, etc., on the pile to show their love and respect. The corpse is then covered with the remainder of the wood, and it is set on fire by the nearest male relative.

For many days afterwards a strict fast is enjoined upon the surviving relatives, and various intricate ceremonies known as 'shraddha' have to be performed by the chief mourner. It is believed that it takes 360 days (a Hindu year) for the spirit to reach God; and so important a part of a son's duty is it to see that the departed parent is provided with an inter-mediate body and enabled to perform the terrible journey to

Yama,' that the word for son is 'putra,' *i.e.*, one who saves from hell. Shraddha ceremonies are so costly as to completely impoverish the people.

The ashes of the devout Hindu are carefully gathered up, and within six months must be cast into the Ganges. Meanwhile the soul for whom all these troublesome rites are performed may pass, after a weary journey, into any of the lower animals—a horse, a cat, a rat, or even a snake! So hopeless, comfortless, cruel is the Hindu faith.

Miss G. Gollock has depicted a first glimpse of the funeral pyre at the river-side, and the awful reflection it must ever bring to the mind of a follower of Christ:—

"Presently we came to the Burning Ghát, whence a thin thread of blue smoke began to ascend. Fascinated, yet repelled, we lingered before it not a hundred yards away. A pile of wood, lit from beneath, was slowly igniting, and two feet covered in white protruded, showing *what* lay there. By the river side, lapped by the muddy wavelets, two more bodies lay, one covered in red and one in white. The thin drapery showed every inch of outline as they lay there, lashed with tightly drawn cord to a rough stretcher of wood, just two unbarked branches with laths laid across. As we watched, a fourth corpse was carried down the sloping Ghát and laid at the water's edge. . . . Here, day by day, the poor dead bodies are burned to ashes; and what of the immortal souls? GOD alone knows the destiny of those heathen who have not had the offer of salvation, but the absence of Divinely-given hope concerning them impels us intensely to redoubled efforts to reach them here and now. All round, the bathing and pujà went on uninterruptedly; men began to build another pile of wood; a barber came and began to shave the head of one of the corpses, moving it callously to and fro. . . . It seemed as if the world cared not that those four souls had left it; but the mystery of their souls hung as a cloud above the Ghát.

GOD grant that when we all stand before Him we may be free from blood-guiltiness concerning such as these!"

The Muhammadans have no brighter or less superstitious rites connected with death than their Hindu neighbours, although they differ in many respects, and notably in that the corpse is not burnt, but buried. The grave is dug with an excavation on one side within it, long enough for the body to lie in, and deep enough for it to sit up in. It is supposed that while the funeral service is being read the soul finally departs from the brain, and when the obsequies are over, it is believed that the angel Gabriel comes into the grave, tells the dead man to sit up, and questions him, "Whose servant art thou?" The Muhammadans say that in their graveyards screams and groans may be heard as Gabriel administers chastisement to refractory followers of the Prophet. Hence the custom, as soon as the lamps are lighted in the evening, for all devout Muhammadans to repeat some portion of the Korán and to pray. At length an ant that happens to be in the grave goes into the dead man's ear, and tells him to say, "I am the servant of GOD, and follower of Muhammad. GOD is the only Lord, and Muhammad is the true prophet of GOD." After this the angel leaves off beating, and goes away, saying, "Rest in peace until the judgment day."

* * * * *

We have glanced at India, her land and her people, and surely conviction is borne in upon us of the solemnity of our trust. Can any one conceive a responsibility more grave and more fully fraught with wondrous possibilities? For, to-day, India—the home of still greater multitudes in the future—in its vast reaches of territory, in its complex mass of nations and faiths, the prize of Asia, is ours. The great gate of the East has been flung widely open to us. Is it not in order that the "nation which keepeth the Truth" may enter in?

Through the portals of that eastern gate, incessant, myriad, pressing calls are reaching us. Western civilisation is flooding the country, bringing with it a wider knowledge of the world's ways, and, alas! a deeper familiarity with its vices, its scepticism, its sin. The new civilisation is crystallising into a godless, irreligious life. Millions are rushing on to Christless graves. Yet the yearning, deeply religious heart of India is restless, unsatisfied.

With a passionate love for all that is above Nature, with a longing desire to find some Nirvána of perfect and unbroken rest, with an intense earnestness about the salvation of the soul, India, though she knows it not, is crying out for God. Are we hastening towards her to quench this soul-thirst with a draught of that Living Water, of which if a man drink he shall never thirst again?

The Church of the West owes a great debt which she can never fully repay to the shining lands of the morning. From that very East arose upon her the Sun of Righteousness Who has brought "healing upon His wings," "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Through the gate of the East a flood of light has shone upon us; through that gate let us return the revelation of the Dayspring from on high.

No intellects appear to be more endowed with choice gifts, no characters seem to be more filled with capabilities for good, no hearts in the world appear to be more naturally tender, responsive, grateful for affection shown than those of these children of the East. Should not the heart of England be roused to holy, self-sacrificing effort till its mightiest conquest over India be won, and the noble heart of India lies at the feet of Jesus in loving, loyal surrender?

* * * * *

It is the heart of India that we seek. And the heart of India is the woman of India. For it is among the wonderful

openings of the hour, that from the inner shrines of Indian homes, women's voices of invitation are sounding, and the key of all India is offered to missionary handmaidens.

A little band of consecrated women is pledged to carry the Water of Life as swiftly as may be to 130,000,000 heathen women ere they die. With feeblest resource of numbers, with grievously straitened finance, but with superabounding faith, they have resolved to win the citadel of our Indian Empire for Christ

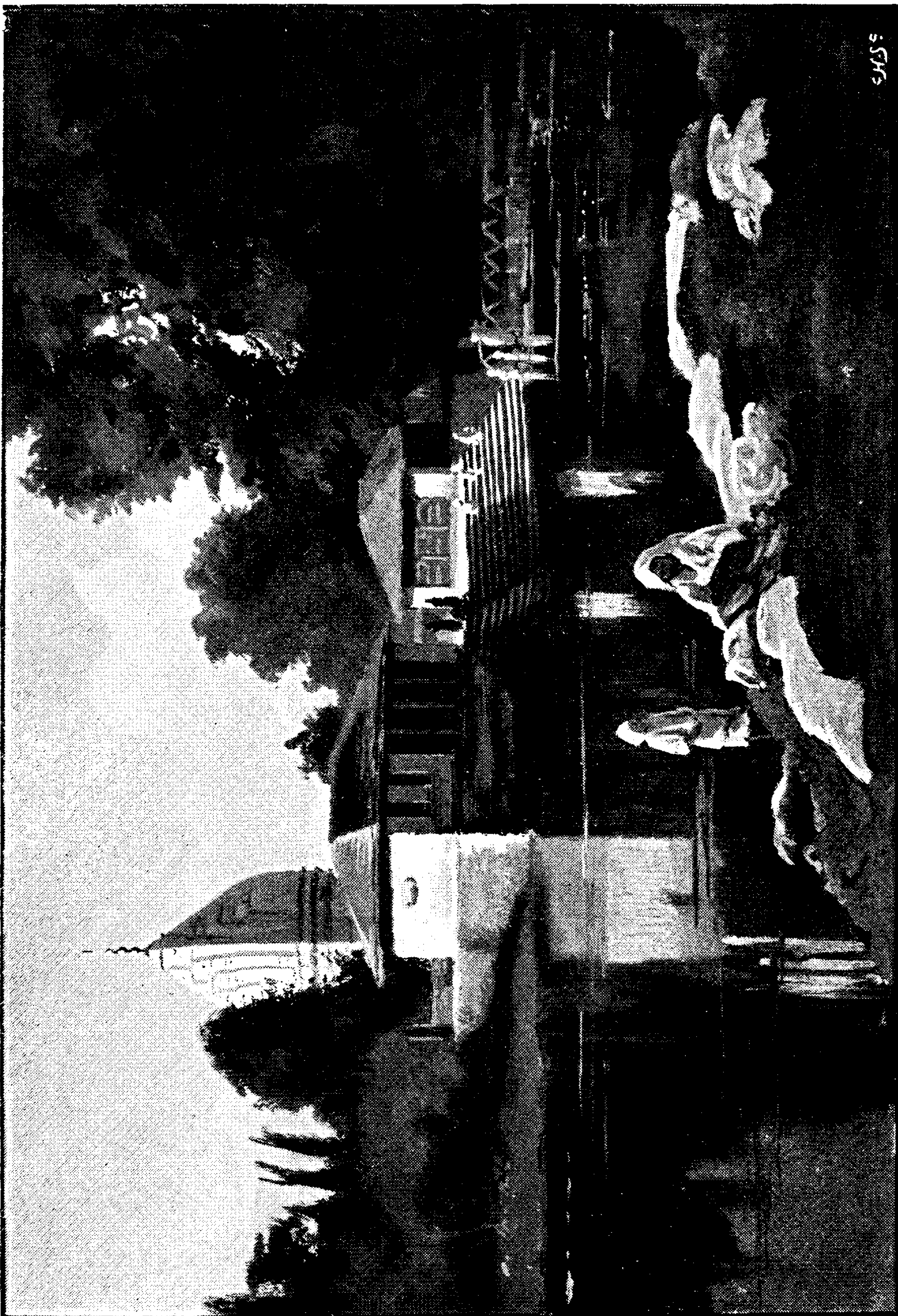
Lifting the Zenána curtain—fit emblem of the dark pall of ignorance, superstition, and misery, behind its folds—they are coming, going, to-day; succouring, yearning over and bringing thousands of their Indian sisters to the Saviour's feet. And, bending over them, "a great cloud of witnesses" in yonder glory watches the contest which they began long years ago; expectantly awaiting the glad hour when those who are now prisoners behind the pardah shall unite with them as freed spirits before the Throne.

CHAPTER II

Behind the Pardah

> A Kashmiri pandit has recently written: "The narrator of the present condition of women in India can a tale unfold which would harrow the soul and freeze the blood of every civilised man that marvellous tragedy of existence which is carried on in an Indian Zenána."

HOUGH glancing long at the Land, we have not yet obtained more than a glimpse of its Women. But the number of India's women—about a hundred and thirty millions—is in itself a startling fact. Women and girls are everywhere; they literally swarm. In the Punjáb, for instance, crowds of all ages and castes, protecting themselves more or less completely from the gaze of the passers-by, are met with in every street and lane. Like a flock of pigeons coming suddenly when grain is scattered, is the curious way in which a quiet house in a quiet alley is all at once filled with women. "But when the house is filled, it is by no means the end of the women," says a lady medical missionary; "for let one only do something for a sick person which looks as if it were giving relief, and often in a moment one will hear 'Shábásh!' which means 'Well done!' and looking up, will find that the commendation proceeds from crowds of admiring onlookers on the roof of the next house, or



perched, balanced on their heels, all round the wall of the court where one may be sitting."

Let us now lift the pardah, that veil which screens from gaze of outside world the inmates of the Zenána, and enter the women's apartments of an Indian home.

The word Zenána is of Persian origin—'zan'=a woman—and usually means the apartment or group of apartments where the women of the household live.

The house is divided into two distinct parts—the outer and the inner court. The women's court, or Zenána, is always situated at the back of the house, and is usually the darkest and most uncomfortable part of the whole establishment. Amongst the very poor, and especially the Muhammadans, a piece of coarse sacking or a worn-out sári does duty as pardah, or hanging curtain at the door. In better houses, barred windows, shutters and bambu 'chicks,' or sun blinds, keep out intruders from the women's quarters.

Only well-to-do people are confined to the Zenána, and only those of some nationalities. In South India, Hindu women may go out much more freely than in the North; yet Muhammadan ladies, on the other hand, are very strictly secluded. The Maráthí women have much freedom, and the Parsis walk where they will, and even drive out with their husbands. The pardah literally means "veil" or "screen," and is the common term used for the seclusion of women. The pardah or 'gasha' system is more generally observed where there is most Muhammadanism. The Moslem invaders of old time forcibly added Hindu women to their harems, and, to protect their wives and daughters, the Hindus kept them indoors, until gradually the Zenána system became their own custom, and seclusion the standard of respectability.

In time, women, aspiring to a higher social position, were not altogether unwilling captives as "Pardah Nishín." A high-born lady has been known to exclaim, "I would rather

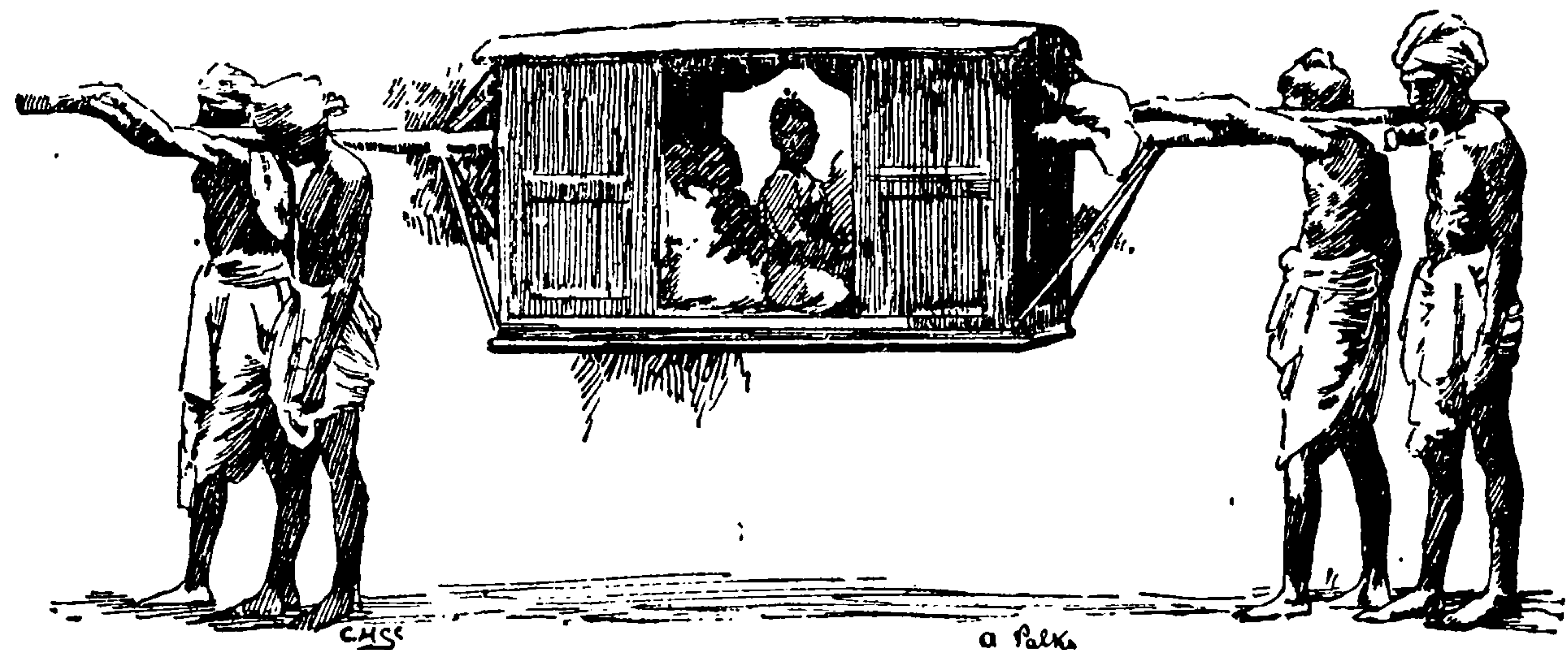
die than let my face be seen outside." When going on a railway journey, the lady must be borne to the station in a litter draped with heavy curtains all round, whatever the temperature may be. One wonders how she escapes fainting when thus carried along at only a few inches above the reeking earth, foul with effluvia, shrouded in dense clouds of dust, swarming with flies, and the thermometer running up to 120°. Arrived at the station, the husband first enters the carriage and closes every shutter, and when it is perfectly dark, the lady is allowed to take her seat.

If the pardah lady's evidence be required at a court of law, she is carried thither in her fast-closed 'palki.' Some woman acquainted with her is directed by the magistrate to look in and see whether the right woman is within those closed curtains, and the invisible one's testimony is then taken. "On one occasion in the writer's experience," says the Rev. H. E. Perkins (late I.C.S.), "the evidence of so many ladies was required that the court adjourned to the defendant's house, and a nurse of the plaintiff's family was sent into the female apartments to identify each witness, as she was called to the other side of the thick curtain to give evidence. This sort of thing went on for an hour or so, when suddenly the old nurse rushed out and desired the judge to stop his pen, as the wrong woman was speaking. Instantly there arose a score of angry voices in denial, and order was finally restored only by the helpless judge threatening to go behind the veil and see with his own eyes which lady it was who was speaking. This was too terrible to be borne, and silence reigned again."

Yet it is true that the majority of Zenána ladies would prefer to remain behind the pardah even did their people wish them to throw it off. "A sweet little Muhammadan lady-friend of mine," remarked Miss Sorabji lately, "said the other day that the most uncomfortable drive she had ever had was once when her husband induced her to go out with an English

lady in an open carriage. . . . It is sad," she continued, "to see these young lives sacrificed to old customs. I was once at a ladies' party in India where outdoor games were played, and, out of about fifty Indian ladies present, only one of them really knew how to run, and she, up to the age of ten, had attended an English school."

"During my residence of a quarter of a century in India," says Dr. Cust, "I had only twice the opportunity of conversing with an Indian lady, so jealously screened from notice are the wives and daughters of the well-to-do. Of the poorer classes there are numbers of women in the fields and streets



working like cattle; but as soon as a man gets a comfortable income, he shuts his wife within four walls as a token of his respectability, and calls it Pardah."

One little incident lately given us by a C.E.Z.M.S. missionary in Bengal illustrates the seclusion of pardah life. Miss Adams had obtained permission to visit the women of a certain household. As the eldest son was conducting her to the Zenána, he said, as they passed through the door leading from the public apartments of the large house to the women's quarters, "Our ladies *never* cross this doorstep." Of course he meant "never" unless carried in a palki or other covered

conveyance to visit their friends for a wedding or some other great family event.

In villages or remote towns, however, the women only keep in the background, and draw their 'chaddars' well over their faces when men are near. And we must not forget that, long before Hindu husbands began locking up their wives, Manu, the highest Hindu authority, wrote his laws, which, to this day, bind women with a chain of ignorance and inferiority, and make it even virtuous of her to confess, "Miss Sahiba, we are like the animals; we can eat and work and die, but we cannot think." They would never, under any circumstances, enter into conversation with a man. Among Hindus a woman is more careful to veil her face in the presence of her husband than of even remote male relatives; but a Muhammadan woman, except for a short time after her marriage, looks her husband in the face and talks to him freely.

A good Hindu wife cooks her husband's food with her own hands, although she may have servants in the house, and the cooking of meals, performed out in the verandah or in a little cook-house, takes up a large portion of a Hindu lady's time. She rises early, and sends her servant to buy the vegetables, fish, etc., from the 'bázár.' The lady herself prepares the vegetables, and rubs spices to a paste for the curry. Meanwhile, the servant has carried in water in a large earthenware jar and swept the room, then ground the pulse or corn between the mill stones.

After the lady has finished cooking, she goes to the tank to bathe. It may be asked: How can high-caste Hindu women who are secluded in Zenánas carry out the Hindu rule of ceremonial bathing? A C.E.Z. missionary, Mrs. Greaves, who has worked in the valley of the Ganges, where the rules of Hinduism are strictly observed, says: "Many high-caste ladies in India have jars of Ganges water, which is sprinkled over them, brought to their houses from long distances. In

order to bathe in the Húglí, one of our high-caste pupils in Calcutta used to be carried to the river shut up in a palki without cushions, so that beneath her there was nothing but the open cane-work. On reaching the river, the doors of the box being shut, and the curtain drawn over the outside, it was lowered into the water, which came bubbling up through the holes, so that my friend was able to have a bath without even seeing what the river was like, or being seen by one of the busy throng that usually crowd its banks in Calcutta." On all sacred days and full moons the elderly women of the family are permitted to go by "the women's walk" to the river to bathe. They put on a large outer 'chaddar,' much like a sheet, and draw it closely over the face, taking an offering with them, such as a handful of rice, fruit, sweetmeats, or it may be copper coins. They go into the water with one garment on, and on coming out a dry chaddar is dexterously put round the shoulders, while the wet one is dropped on the ground. The bath and change of garment are achieved with the utmost modesty and care. After coming up from the river, the offerings are given to the priest who sits conveniently near.

There is a daily 'pujà,' *i.e.* worship which the Hindu woman performs. In the courtyard stands the Tulsi plant, and, if procurable, near by it will be seen the ammonite, a circular shell found in the streams of Nepál. A corrupt and debasing story connected with the god Vishnu is the origin of the daily care and reverent tending given by the Hindu woman to the "sacred" plant and shell, the while she repeats the name of her god hundreds of times! For the prayers of Hindus often consist merely in the repetition of the names of their gods. "We have frequently met Hindu women with their prayer-bags," says Mrs. Chowdhury, a converted Bráhman lady, "even in railway trains, repeating, 'Hori, Krishna, Hori, Krishna, Ram, Ram, Hori, Hori,' and turning the beads in their rosary at the same time. Women are the chief

supporters of idolatry in India, and they are deceived and cheated by the wicked, crafty priests in every possible way."

After ablutions and worship comes breakfast; but, as we have already noticed, the wife never dreams of sitting down to eat with her husband and sons. As a rule, after serving them, she eats what they may please to leave! After this mid-day meal, the lady takes a long sleep, generally upon a mat on the floor, after which, braiding the hair, looking over the jewels, gossiping with any neighbour who may come in by a back lane, or over the roof of an adjoining house, passes the dreary hours of the hot afternoon, till it is time to prepare the evening meal.

If a missionary should come in, she would take a look round at the door of the courtyard, and should the ladies be engaged in any occupation connected with the meals of the household, she would go to another house, knowing her presence would be unwelcome, as the touch or shadow of a Christian would make the Hindu woman ceremonially unclean, and would necessitate a bath and washing of her 'sári' before she could take her food.

The garment that is characterristic of Indian womanhood from Cape Comorin to Quetta is the sári. Whether of brocade, silk, muslin or cotton it is the same in its various forms, and is always gracefully draped. "A full-sized sári should be about five and a half yards long and from thirty-six to forty-six inches wide. To put it on, a woman makes a few plaits at one end with her hand, which she tucks into the front part of the sári, already wound once round her waist. The length of the material is then carried completely round her

figure towards the left, and the end is taken over the shoulder and draped. This garment requires neither pin nor button. The right arm is left free. One sees tiny girls of three and four emulating the example of their mothers with pieces of calico about as large as a pocket-handkerchief; for the Indian girl is as keenly anxious to leave the shapeless *sacque*, which is the first garment of her baby years, and attain to the dignity of a sári, as her sister of the West is to acquire a long skirt and its attendant privileges!"

The Madras sári is differently arranged, and does not cover the head; the Maráthí puts hers on in still another way; while the Gujrátí has the prettiest style of all, and her garment is often a warm deep crimson edged with rich embroidery.

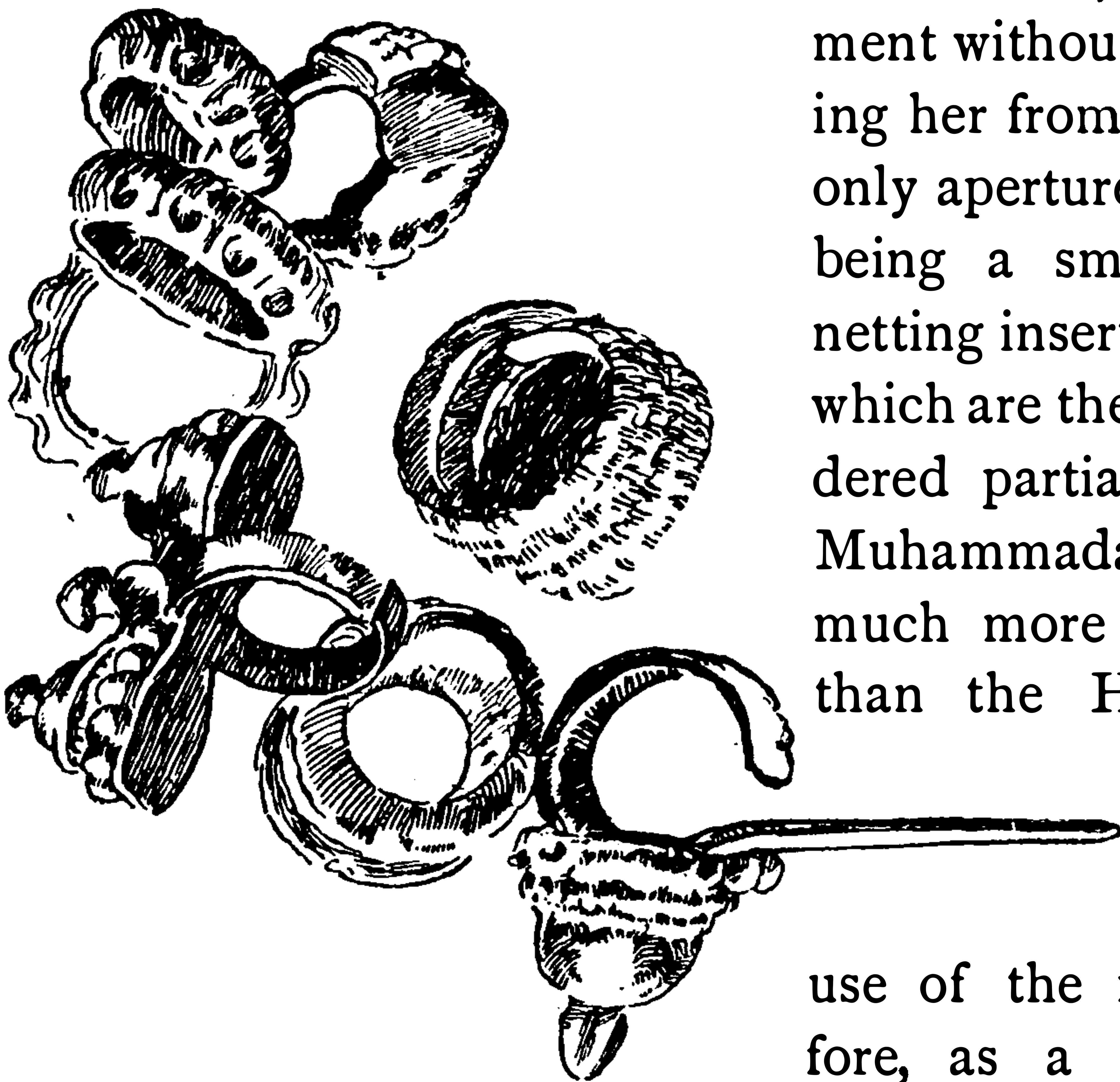
Beneath the sári, well-to-do women wear over the shoulders a tiny 'choli' or jacket, cut from one piece of stuff and only shaped by shoulder seams. This always fits literally skin-tight, and frequently is tied with a crossover string knotted between the shoulder-blades.

The lower Hindustáni castes wear skirts, jackets and 'chaddars.' The chaddar is a garment two and a half yards long and one and a quarter wide, made in any material, plain or embroidered, white or coloured. One end covers the head and the other is brought across in front and thrown over the left shoulder. A group of women wearing blue and red chaddars, at work among the wheat fields, heighten the beauty of an always bright landscape.

Very different from all these are Muhammadan costumes, in which trousers invariably take the place of skirts. The most commonly-worn fit closely at the hips, and are gored to a great width at the bottom, their capaciousness depending entirely upon the wealth of the wearer. A handsome pair would sweep the floor a yard behind, but they are caught up in folds in front, and tucked in at the waist, hanging like large ruffles with anything but a pretty effect. The jacket is a little

vest-like thing, all embroidery, and the chaddar, heavily trimmed, is generally of net or very thin material. The Muhammadans wear much more colour than the Hindus; the order being reversed with them—the well-to-do classes wearing colour, and the working women, white.

The Moslem woman screens herself from public gaze even more rigidly than her Hindu sister. The Muhammadan pardah lady's out-door costume — the white linen 'burqa'—is a voluminous, surplice-like garment without sleeves, enveloping her from head to foot, the only aperture for light and air being a small piece of silk netting insertion over the eyes, which are the only features rendered partially visible. The Muhammadan women wear much more made-up raiment than the Hindu; there are strong Hindu traditions against the use of the needle, and therefore, as a rule, they avoid cut-out or sewn garments.

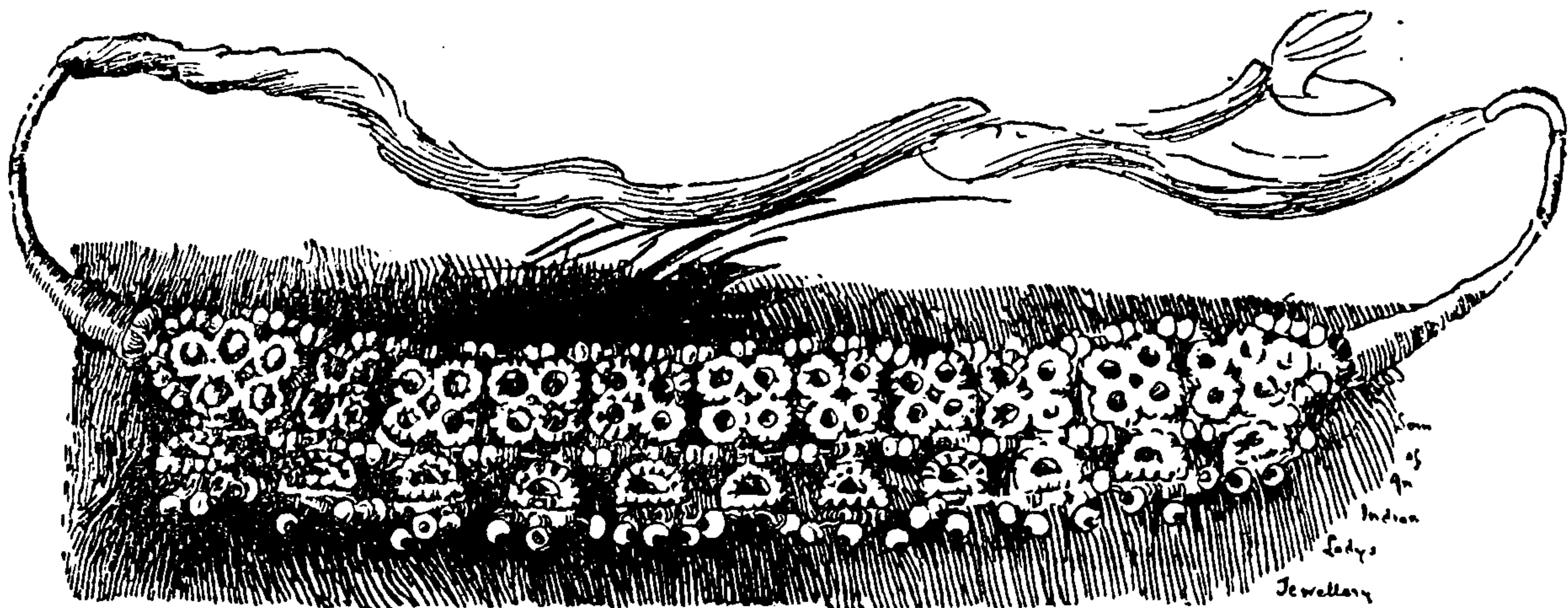


FINGER AND TOE RINGS.

But, from the poorest sweeper-woman of the towns to the wealthy 'begam' of a native State, the women of all classes are loaded with jewellery. There are pendants falling on the forehead; as many ear-rings as can find place from tip to tip of the ear; nose-rings so large that they can sometimes be tied back to the ear-rings; necklaces in close bands round the throat, and hanging in larger and larger circles to the waist; armlets above the elbow, and bracelets by the dozen below; rings on the fingers, rings on the toes—sometimes with little

bells attached—anklets and instep ornaments. It is a curious fact that no native woman uses hairpins. The general method of disposing of her tresses, which she is fond of oiling and scenting, is to twist them into a close knot at the back of her head; and this seldom "comes down" under any exercise or exertion, or looks anything but neat and smooth.

The poor working-women who cannot afford the precious metals, array themselves in heavy pewter or earthenware ornaments, and in enormous masses of ironmongery in the shape of armlets or anklets, five inches deep and one inch thick of perfectly solid ore. From six to eight pounds is by no means an unusual weight for one of these iron rings!



It is not only that Indian women like ornaments and jewels, but because they are a sort of deposit of money, that they are worn. If a woman has money to lay by, she has it made up into bangles and puts them on her arms. "What will you do now?" was asked of a Christian widow who had lost her employment for conscience' sake. "Eat these," she replied, holding out her arms to show a heavy pair of bracelets. She ate them, and when better times came had another pair of bangles made for another rainy day. A bride's dowry consists largely of jewellery and, as may be imagined, it is a fruitful source of trouble in jealousy and quarrels, and a perpetual anxiety, on account of the temptation it affords to robbery

If our peep behind the pardah revealed nothing more to us than the somewhat weird customs of India's women, we might not see more than the irksomeness and the monotony of the life which our Eastern sisters are leading in their Zenánas. We might even argue, in the case of the Muhammadan ladies, that an existence which would be intolerable to active English women is positively pleasant to a people so wanting in energy that they are always willing to postpone indefinitely any occupation in which they are interested, and are placidly content to accept *waiting* as their normal condition. But there is a bitterer condition than semi-blissful *ennui* behind the 'chicks,' *i.e.* sun blinds, of the women's rooms. It may be scarcely credible to us that thousands of women in town Zenánas have never even seen a tree. The utter vacuity of a mind which has no intercourse with others, no books, no amusements, few household duties to perform, and no knowledge of outside life, is difficult to imagine in all its pitifulness. And this is not all. Even where quarrelling is comparatively absent, and the numerous wives and mothers-in-law contrive to live peaceably under the sovereign sway of the oldest 'Bow,' *i.e.* wife (who holds the purse-strings of the household), the conversation of even high-caste women is often flagrantly coarse and unchaste. The English lady missionary has again and again been besought by the educated Hindu gentlemen of a Zenána to visit their ladies, "not to teach them Christianity, but *to raise their tone* by intercourse with them!"

Miss Hewlett, a Medical Missionary of the C.E.Z.M.S., has emphatically dismissed for ever the thought that the pardah system betokens morality.

"The false religions of the land have dragged down woman from the place God intended her to hold. From her earliest years she is a stranger to what is refining and pure; she is conversant with all the reverse. Shall we then wonder that secluded Zenána homes, open to every evil influence, but

unpenetrated by the Spirit of God, are often *dens of iniquity*? We who have been intimately acquainted with the pardah system can most emphatically deny that it has any other than a demoralising effect upon its millions of prisoners. The idea that because a woman is kept in seclusion she is more modest or womanly is a sentiment without foundation in fact; as frequently where pardah is most strictly observed, the greatest impropriety prevails behind the scenes."

But there is even worse to tell. We cannot forbear quoting Mrs. Isabella Bishop's (*née* Bird) testimony on this point. In her soul-stirring address at Exeter Hall on November 1, 1893, she said:

"I have lived in Zenánas, and have seen the daily life of the secluded women, and I can speak from bitter experience of what their lives are—the intellect dwarfed, so that a woman of twenty or thirty years of age is more like a child of eight, intellectually; while all the worst passions of human nature are stimulated and developed in a fearful degree: jealousy, envy, murderous hate, intrigue, running to such an extent that in some countries I have hardly ever been in a woman's house without being asked for drugs with which to disfigure the favourite wife, or to take away the life of the favourite wife's infant son. This request has been made of me nearly one hundred times. This is only an indication of the daily life of whose miseries we think so little, and which is a natural product of the systems that we ought to have subverted long ago."

An incident illustrative of the above is given by the Rev. H. E. Perkins, late I.C.S. in the Punjáb. When he was a magistrate, one day there appeared at his bar a woman and her husband, the chief witness against them being their own daughter-in-law. They were Muhammadans, and under the Muhammadan law widows can re-marry. This young woman had been married to the son of the old couple; he had died,

and she remained as the family drudge. At last growing tired of this position, she had expressed a desire to marry again. The mother-in-law resolved to prevent her. Amongst these people it is customary for the women to paint their eyelids, and when the family was assembled at night, the mother-in-law dipped a little iron rod in antimony, blackened her own lids, and then handed it to her husband. He returned it to her, and she then dipped it into the poisonous juice of a sort of prickly pear which she had obtained on purpose, and handed it to her daughter-in-law. The girl innocently applied it to her eyes. She soon cried out with agony, and after some days of fearful suffering, the sight of both eyes was hopelessly gone. "I shall never lose," says Mr. Perkins, "the remembrance of that sightless face, full of a passionate desire for revenge."

The mother, the oldest woman, is queen of the son's household. She wields immense power, and is generally obeyed as the head of the family by her sons and by her daughters-in-law. As a native writer says: "In battles between wisdom and prejudice, between knowledge and ignorance, the Hindu grandmother often proves successful, and so tenacious is she, that she can be conquered only by death." One of the greatest commandments of the Hindu Scriptures is: "Let thy mother be to thee like unto a god."

Thus, strange as it may seem, the down-trodden, imprisoned woman of India is, after all, the real ruler of India. Ever the most devout upholder of Hinduism, she instils into the minds of her children, from infancy, reverence for the idols and faith in ten thousand superstitions. She maintains a watchful care over husband, brother, son, so as to keep them stedfast to the orthodox creed. The family pujàs and all the religious ceremonial are mainly under her control. And whilst the woman of India continues to teach her infant to worship a god more evil than the worst of men, and ministers to its dawning in-

tellect a succession of "sacred stories" outrivalling each other in loathsome details, so long will the men of India remain in the fetters of superstition or infidelity. A high native official remarked not long ago to a missionary: "While I am with *you* I am free, but as soon as I enter my own portals I am not my own. Mother, wife, and daughter are all against me."

Enough has been shown us to demonstrate that life in an Indian Zenána is devoid of everything that constitutes the "sweetness and light" of an English home. When we know, moreover, that Manu has taught the woman of India that she is "unworthy of confidence and the slave of passion, a great whirlpool of suspicion, a dwelling-place of vices, full of deceits, a hindrance in the way of heaven, the gate of hell," can we not understand something of the awful depths of degradation to which our Hindu sisters are subjected? Do not our hearts yearn over them with infinite pity?

But we have darker woes to paint. Why should a cultivated Hindu thus lament, "An impenetrable darkness and chaos still broods over the greater part of India. See in what a life of drudgery and misery our mothers, our wives, and our daughters live"? Why should a Hindu woman herself wail, "We are prisoners from our birth, and life-long sufferers"?

For answer, let us penetrate further still behind the pardah.

INDIAN GIRLS AT THE WELL.

CHAPTER III

Indian Girlhood: Its Ways and Woes

"A Missionary heard screams issuing from a house in Krishnagar. She asked a man standing at the door what was the matter. It was only a little 'Bow' (wife) lately arrived in the Zenána. She asked permission to enter, and was shown into the women's apartments. In the dim light she could just discern a small heap in the corner, and plaintive moans told her that it was some one living. She drew near and spoke, and a woe-begone face appeared. 'What made you scream?' the lady asked. 'They beat me,' the child replied, and she drew up her sári and disclosed wales which showed that she had had ample excuse. 'Why did they beat you?' 'Because I cried for my mother.' And the face puckered afresh with the recollection of lost love and care."
—*D. L. Woolmer.*

RETTY and winsome though she may be, an Indian baby-girl receives as cold a welcome as her Chinese infant sister. Absolutely unwanted by either father or mother, in numberless cases the frail little life is allowed to pass away, and the parents thus easily set themselves free from the burden of expense inseparable from the gift of a daughter.

The shadow of a double curse is projected over a Hindu woman's life from its first moment to its close. A girl-child's birth is accounted for by the idea of a double sin and disgrace. The child's father is receiving the fate of some ill done

in a previous birth, or the gods would have given him a son. A son is the most coveted of all blessings that a Hindu craves, for it is by a son's birth in the family that the father is redeemed from hell: and if a child of Bráhmans, "he redeems from sin" (if he perform successfully the funeral rites and other virtuous acts) "*ten* ancestors, *ten* descendants, and *himself* the *twenty-first* person." On the other hand, the Hindu sees in a daughter a bitter wellspring of anxiety and expense.

Religion enjoins that every girl must be given in marriage; the neglect of this duty means for the father unpardonable sin. The girl must be married within a fixed period, and the caste of the future husband must be the same: while the marriage ceremony is most expensive. To provide a husband will necessitate the expenditure of the savings of years, or debts will be contracted which will take years to pay off. Generally, if there are more than two girls, the father's ruin is inevitable. For the bread-winner of the Hindu household not only has to feed his own wife and children, but also his parents, his brothers unable to work, their families, and the nearest widowed relatives, besides meeting the often exorbitant claims of family priests and religious beggars.

In a home shadowed by adherence to cruel custom and prejudice, a child is born into the world. The poor mother is greatly distressed to learn that the little one is a daughter, and the neighbours turn their noses in all directions to manifest their disgust and indignation. Among the Rájputs, if a boy is born, his birth is announced with music, glad songs, and by distributing sweetmeats. If a daughter, the father coolly announces that "nothing" has been born into his family, and the friends, after offering condolence, go home grave and quiet.

A lady-traveller [1] says:

"An Indian girl comes into the world amid a cloud of

[1] Miss Billington, *Woman in India*, 1896.

strange superstitions. For weeks before, the mother and mother-in-law have toilsomely observed every mystic ordinance which should propitiate the gods to bestow a son. They have wreathed flowers at every auspicious shrine; they have lit lamps and burned spices; and when, after all, a tiny girl has come into the gloom and stifling atmosphere of the Zenána, it is taken as a token that the gods are angry, and that the poor young mother has incurred their majestic wrath. The air is considered to be thick with omens. A fire must be burnt incessantly in order to exclude the evil spirits which might exercise a baneful influence upon the child's future. Whenever the baby cries, more fuel must be put on the fire, until the degree of heat attained renders existence well-nigh unendurable.

"The disappointment and chagrin are somewhat modified if the infant girl's ears first hear pleasant sounds: if its eyes rest upon such objects as rice, flowers, fruits or honey. But its whole career, it is believed, will prove unlucky should a snake or a monkey cross the road, or a vehicle go by carrying a cot or a stool with the legs upwards!"

If the father wishes to defend himself from caste tyranny, he kills the extra girls at birth. Infanticide, though prohibited by both Government and religion, is still followed in secret to an alarming extent.

If a girl is born after her brother's death, or if soon after her birth a boy in the family dies, she is, in either case, regarded by her parents as the cause of the boy's death. She is then constantly called by some unpleasant name, slighted, beaten, cursed, persecuted, and despised by all. Her father or mother will actually exclaim against the innocent child in such words as these: "Wretched girl, why didst thou not die instead of our darling boy? Why didst thou crowd him out of the house by coming to us? It would have been good for all of us if thou hadst died and thy brother lived!"

However, in many instances, after the birth of one or more sons in a Hindu household, girls are not unwelcome, and sometimes mothers often long to have a daughter, and both parents lavish love and tenderness upon her. For though natural affection may be blunted and crushed by cruel custom, it is not dead.

"Children and the legs of a stool do not feel cold," is a Bengali proverb. Hence babies are considered sufficiently protected by a string of beads round the waist, gold earrings and bracelets, and probably silver anklets. These constitute a full costume! The baby's bath is of oil once a week. In an English home to take the baby and play with it would be a sure way of winning the mother's confidence. But in India the missionary visitor is frustrated in this simple device. What stranger would venture the risky task of tossing a baby who, instead of wearing clothes, is well greased from head to foot!

"POUNDING THE CORN WITH ASTONISHING DEXTERITY."

The girls begin to wear clothing earlier than the boys, and their first garment is usually a comically shapeless sacque of coloured print. They are put while very young to simple household duties, and among the village folk the merest children may be seen cleaning rice and pounding corn with astonishing dexterity. But, on the whole, everywhere throughout India

childhood is the hey-day of a Hindu woman's life. Free to go in and out as she pleases, her days are spent in complete and often joyous liberty. Yet even from babyhood the Indian girl is trained to understand caste principles. As the child of a Bráhman or Rájput, she is never allowed to drink water touched by a Chamár, one of the lowest caste. A tiny girl of only three years old has been known to scream because her missionary-teacher, whom nevertheless she dearly loved, has taken her in her arms *while she was eating*. As to their unfettered freedom until ten years of age, it is of a kind that no English girl would be allowed, and is often fraught with evil consequences. "Let them have their liberty,—it will not be for long," is the common excuse.

Whilst the boys are early sent to school, and at the age of seven or eight are initiated into the Hindu religious system by the 'guru,' *i.e.* teacher, appointed for them by their father, the Hindu girl's whole religious training has to do with certain ceremonies performed with the simple object of obtaining a husband, and that he may live long. When it is remembered that these religious rites are first performed when the girl is but *five* years old, it will be evident that children must be taught a great deal that it would be far better for them not to know at so tender an age.

Indian girls have a few games peculiar to themselves, and very pretty and graceful some of them are. Except in form, the contents of a 'bibi ghár' nursery are not so very widely removed from our own. The 'jhelna,' or swing, with seat like a small cot, is invariably to be found there. The doll, however, is the delight of all others of a little Indian girl's life.[1]

But suddenly the ban of marriage is pronounced, and a yoke is put upon the innocent child's neck for ever.

[1] TWELVE THOUSAND DOLLS are required annually as prizes in the schools and Zenánas taught by C.E.Z.M.S. ladies. *Nankeen* dolls with black hair in gay English costumes are most coveted and prized.

The early marriage system is at least five hundred years older than the Christian era, and may be traced to the same origin as that of pardah. Although no law has ever said so, the popular belief is that a woman can have no salvation unless she be formally married. According to Manu, eight years is the minimum, and twelve years of age the maximum, marriageable age for a high-caste girl. The earlier the act of giving the daughter in marriage, the greater is the merit, for thereby the parents are entitled to rich rewards in heaven. A great many girls are given in marriage at the present day literally while they are still in their cradles. From five to eleven years is the usual period for their marriage among the Bráhmans all over India; and, as they must be married within their own caste, it very frequently happens that girls of eight or nine are given to men sixty or seventy years old.

"It must be borne in mind," says Pandita Ramabai, "that both in Northern and Southern India (except in Bengal) the term 'marriage' does not mean anything more than an irrevocable betrothal. The ceremony gone through at that time establishes *religiously* the conjugal relationship; there is a second ceremony that confirms the rite both religiously and socially, which does not take place till some few years later. In the north of India the little bride is not forced to go to her husband's home until she is about thirteen or fourteen years of age.

In Bengal the marriage takes place when the child is just emerging from babyhood.[1] From her earliest moments she

[1] In Behár, for the Khatbe caste, as many as 47·3 per cent. of very young girls under ten years of age are married, and their average age of marriage is five years and three months. Between ten and fifteen years of age, 90 per cent. of the girls are married, and their average age of marriage is ten years and six months. As all women are married at fifteen years of age, it results that the average age of marriage is the mean of the two preceding, or seven years and ten months.—*J. A. Bourdillon, Esq. Bengal C. I.*

has been taught to look forward to this event as the aim and object of her life. The gorgeous dresses to be worn, the music, songs, fireworks, feasts, and elephant rides, the brilliant illumination of the house, sweet things to eat and to give away, amid all sorts of fun, what could be more tempting than all these to a child's mind? What wonder that the little Hindu maid is eager to be married, little knowing the future before her!

As girls in their infancy cannot be allowed to choose their future husbands, this is done for them. In the Northern part of the country the family barber is generally employed to select boys and girls to be married, it being considered too humiliating an act on the part of parents to seek out their future daughters and sons-in-law.

The marriage negotiations are opened thus:

The father of the bride sends a barber and a Bráhman to look out for a suitable husband. When they return and furnish a favourable report, the father goes to the house of the bridegroom and performs the ceremony known as 'baraksha,' *i.e.*, the seeing of the bridegroom. In the case of approval, he presents him with a 'muhr,' *i.e.*, a gold coin, worth Rs. 16; then a date is fixed for 'tilak,'[1] and after that the day is named for marriage. In other parts of the country it is always the mother of the bridegroom who opens the negotiations. A public announcement is sufficient to constitute an engagement; but the betrothal is irrevocable.[2] Between the young people themselves at this juncture no ceremony takes place.

[1] Tilak is a mark which Hindus make on their foreheads with coloured earths.

[2] That betrothal is considered irrevocable by Muhammadans also is proved by the following remark made by a Moslem woman to a C.E.Z.M.S. missionary. "We *cannot* break the Betrothal tie, it is very sacred with us. The *Marriage* tie is easily broken, but it is very wrong to break that of Betrothal."

The marriage is concluded without the consent of either party, but the bride is not allowed to be acquainted with her husband until after the second ceremony, and even then the young couple must never betray any sign of mutual attachment before a third party. Naturally, they thus remain almost strangers to one another, and if, as very often takes place, the mother-in-law encourages her son to torment his wife in various ways, they begin to hate each other. "A child of thirteen was cruelly beaten by her husband in my presence," says Pandita Ramabai, "for telling the simple truth, that she did not like so well to be in his house as at her own home."

Hindu wedding ceremonies are a great deal more complicated than Muhammadan, and involve endless religious rites.

Just before the bridegroom sets out from home to fetch his bride, he stands on a 'takta,' or board facing the east, and is asked three times by his mother, "Where are you going?" Each time he answers, "Mother, I am going to bring you a servant."

At the wedding ceremony itself, after the priest has tied the hands of the bride and bridegroom together and fastened her 'sári' and his 'dhuti' together, the bride is lifted on a board by her female relatives and friends. A magenta silk sári is thrown as a canopy over both. Small oil lamps are held aloft so as to throw only a subdued light upon the scene, and then the critical moment arrives when the two who have been bound together for life see one another. Their eyes meet for the first time, and they take a liking or disliking the one to the other. The most serious thing is if the bridegroom should take a dislike to the bride. The anxious mother peers through the silk sári to watch the expression of her son-in-law as he sees her daughter for the first time. If the mother be a widow, and not allowed to show her face during the ceremony, she enquires eagerly of those who have been present, "Does he like her?"

One of the duties of the priest during the ceremony is to repeat from memory the pedigrees of the family. At the wedding of high-caste, well-to-do people, two priests are present to officiate, one for the bride and the other for the bridegroom's family.

During the marriage ceremony invocations are made to each god worshipped by the family: to the seven famous penitent sages; to the five incorruptible virgins; to the ancestor gods; to the eight cardinal points of the compass; to the fourteen worlds; to the year, month, day, and minute, each under their special names.

Two bambu baskets are placed close together. The bridegroom stands upright in one, the bride in the other. He pours upon her head the contents of a small basket of ground rice. She does the same to him.

At one stage of the ceremony the bride and bridegroom for the first and last time eat together and from the same platter. Pictures of some of the gods are drawn with flour and red paint on the floor and worshipped. Flour is sprinkled on a stone and some mystic lines drawn across it, which the bride must rub out with her foot. All the time a priest is reading, or rather chanting, from their sacred books. Some rupees are offered to him in a basin of water, and the bridegroom and his bride sprinkle each other with water; for every detail of the ceremony must be performed in the presence of the three witnesses—fire, water, and earth.

Part of the programme is that the girls present should sing and make mocking remarks upon the bridegroom's relatives, such as, "Your father is an owl! Your mother is an owl!" at the same time throwing shoes, etc., at them, or administering a shower of stripes on their backs from little switches to which long silken tassels have been tied, and inflicting all small torments possible, which must be accepted good-humouredly. When the bride goes to her husband's home,

it will be the turn of his friends to treat her relatives thus.

The father takes the hand of his daughter and puts it into that of the youth, pouring water over them in honour of Vishnu. This is the "giving-away" of the bride. A saffron-coloured thread necklace is fastened on the girl's neck by the bridegroom, but the equivalent of the English wedding ring is an iron 'bálá,' or bracelet, which the wife thenceforth wears. Even a widow does not discard this wedding token, for she looks upon herself as *always* the wife of her husband, and, according to Manu's laws, the widow is never allowed to mention the name of any other man. [1]

The vermillion mark upon the parting of the girl's hair an outward and visible sign of marriage throughout India is made by the bridegroom with his own hand, but the concluding and most binding part of the whole complicated ceremony is this: the bridegroom's relatives having cast upon the sacred fire, which has been kept burning, offerings of incense, grain and clarified butter, the bride and the bridegroom, hand in hand, the corners of their chaddars tied together, walk three times round the blazing "sacrifice." Fire, in Hindu eyes, is the most pure of deities, and a mutual engagement transacted over this element is the most solemn of oaths.

We have endeavoured to give some idea of the more typical and important rites connected with Hindu marriage ceremonial, rather than an account of the proceedings in consecutive order. These vary according to the weather, the position and religious feeling of the family, and the locality where a wedding takes place.

A glimpse of a Moslem bride is given us by an eye-witness.

"Last night we went with a missionary lady friend to a Muhammadan wedding. We left home about 9 o'clock in the evening. On nearing the house we were met by a boy, who

[1] Neither a wife nor widow is allowed to mention the name of her husband. If she meets with it when reading aloud she must leave it out!

showed us the way up a staircase to the roof of the house, where the women were assembled adorning the bride. The poor little bride was seated on the floor with her back to us, and dared not look up at us or anybody! Several women sitting round her were dividing her hair into innumerable little plaits, some of which were intertwined with gold lace. All the while the women were chattering vociferously, expressing their opinions very freely with regard to the shabbiness of the bridegroom, who had sent too little food for the feast. About 150 had to be fed, and he had sent enough for only twenty or thirty. A pretty state of things, etc.

"The poor little bride sat looking the picture of misery; but it is thought very improper for a bride to *look* happy. For four days this poor girl had been kept sitting in a corner without food, and during the night she became so faint and exhausted, that at our urgent entreaty they gave her some light nourishment to keep up her strength.

"Then the bride's dress was handed round to be admired. The custom is that the bridegroom presents the bride with a complete trousseau of all the richest and costliest materials available, while she provides an equally beautiful outfit for the husband-elect to wear. In this case the bridegroom was not considered to have acted handsomely, as the red silk 'pyjamas,' *i.e.*, trousers, were quite short, and cost only £30. The 'kurta,' *i.e.*, jacket, was also of red silk with gold brocade, and the chaddar had gold spangles all over it.

"By midnight the bride's hair was plaited, her face powdered and stuck over with bits of tinsel, her jewels arranged and dress put on—but no sign of the bridegroom yet! And no one knew when he would come, 'whether at evening, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning,' and 'while the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept'; just as they were, they stretched themselves out, and went to sleep on the floor.

"About 3 o'clock in the morning we heard the welcome

sound of the 'tom-toms,' *i.e.*, drums, accompanying the bridegroom's procession, but they went off in the distance again, having to march all round the city. At half-past three a.m. they arrived in front of the house, the bridegroom on a gallant charger accompanied by a long procession of dancing girls, torch-bearers, etc. Fireworks were let off, and then the whole party went into a large house opposite and we were left still waiting for the bridegroom.

"Two parties of hired musicians regale us through the night with their sweet (?) sounds, and now begin to vie with each other in dancing. Morning dawns, and at last we hear of some one coming. A long sheet is held up to protect the ladies from view, and four imposing-looking men in white garments appear on the scene. They ask if the bride is willing, but the bride makes no sound, so her mother speaks for her, and they disappear.

"But what is the bridegroom doing all this time? They say that the 'maulvi,' *i.e.*, priest, is reading to him out of the Korán: and he is bargaining with the relatives, for the actual 'Nikah,' or marriage, with the Muhammadans takes more of a legal than a religious form, and is a transaction between the male relatives and lawyers.

"At last, after seven o'clock in the morning, a whisper went round the circle, 'The bridegroom comes!' Some of the younger women immediately disappeared; others drew their chaddars over their faces, and the older ones followed the mother to the head of the staircase, where she went to meet him.

"He was a curious sight. Long garlands of jasmine, finished off with roses, streamed from his head, and he was altogether so profusely and grotesquely ornamented with flowers as to remind one more of a Jack-in-the-green on May-day than anything else. As he reached the top of the stairs, he bent down and ate some sugar and rice out of the hands of his mother-in-

law, and then, followed by his sister, was led into a large room where a grand carpet had been spread for him.

"A pestle and mortar was then placed in front of him, and the right hand being bound, he had to pound the spices to the satisfaction of the bystanders, who, of course, chaffed him well for his clumsy attempts. This, they say, is a test of what kind of manager he will be in his household.

"The mother then disappeared, and in a few minutes returned carrying in her arms an apparently helpless, inanimate being—the bride,—so entirely enveloped in her red garments that no part of her was visible. She was set down by her husband, whom up to that moment she had never seen.

"An old woman, who acted as priestess, put into each of their hands a looking-glass, in which, after a cloth had been thrown over them both, they were to behold one another's faces for the first time. Part of the programme now is that the bride is obstinate and will not look, though the bridegroom tries to open her eyelids, and her friends are entreating her not to shut her eyes! While they remained concealed in this fashion, the old lady repeated over them various passages from the Korán, and then with many congratulations, good wishes, prophecies and exclamations, and a shower of sweetmeats flung over them, the veil was lifted. The little bride was led away to be attired in her glittering wedding garments, and then, in survival of old ideas of marriage by capture, the bridegroom lifted her into the 'duli' in which she was to be taken to his house."

As with Hindu, so with Muhammadan wedding customs, there is great variety in the manner in which they are carried out. In South India, for example, the bride, enveloped in red muslin, is carried by her male relatives to a large wooden cot or bedstead, placed in the courtyard (roofed in for the occasion), on which she is set down opposite the bridegroom, and continues moaning and wailing throughout the ceremony.

A hired professional singing woman guides the bride's hand in throwing sugar-candy and flower petals over the bridegroom from behind a barrier of red muslin held between them. Presently the bride, guided by the singer, holds a piece of sugar-candy to his mouth, and after a little hesitation he bends his head and takes it with his lips; he then returns the compliment by touching the heap of red muslin before him with more of the same sweetmeat.

When their eyes meet for the first time (upside down!) in the looking-glass, the singer asks if the girl has a nice jewel in her nose. He answers that she has. If, however, he should reply in the negative (a very rare occurrence), the marriage would not be completed.

Two uncles, maternal and paternal, of the bride, join the hands of the wedded couple, and when the bride has no father, give her into the bridegroom's charge.

The child-bride does not enter her husband's house to be the head of a new home, but rather comes into her father-in-law's household to take the lowest and humblest position in the family. Breaking the girl's spirit is the first discipline she undergoes. She must never talk or laugh loudly, must never speak before or to the father and elder brother-in-law, or any other distant male relatives of her husband unless commanded to do so. In North India, the young wife covers her face with her veil, or runs into another room to show respect, should the men of the household enter an apartment where she happens to be. In Southern India, where veils are not worn, the women rise and remain standing as long as they are obliged to be in the presence of their husbands.

The mothers-in-law employ their daughters in all kinds of domestic duties. These children of nine or ten years of age find it irksome to work hard all day long without the hope of hearing a word of praise, and probably, for some slight, unintentional fault, receiving a torrent of abuse. Some of the

older women are kind and affectionate to their daughters-in-law, but the majority, having themselves been the victims of merciless treatment in their childhood, become hard-hearted, and are ready to beat and slander the young girls on the slightest provocation.

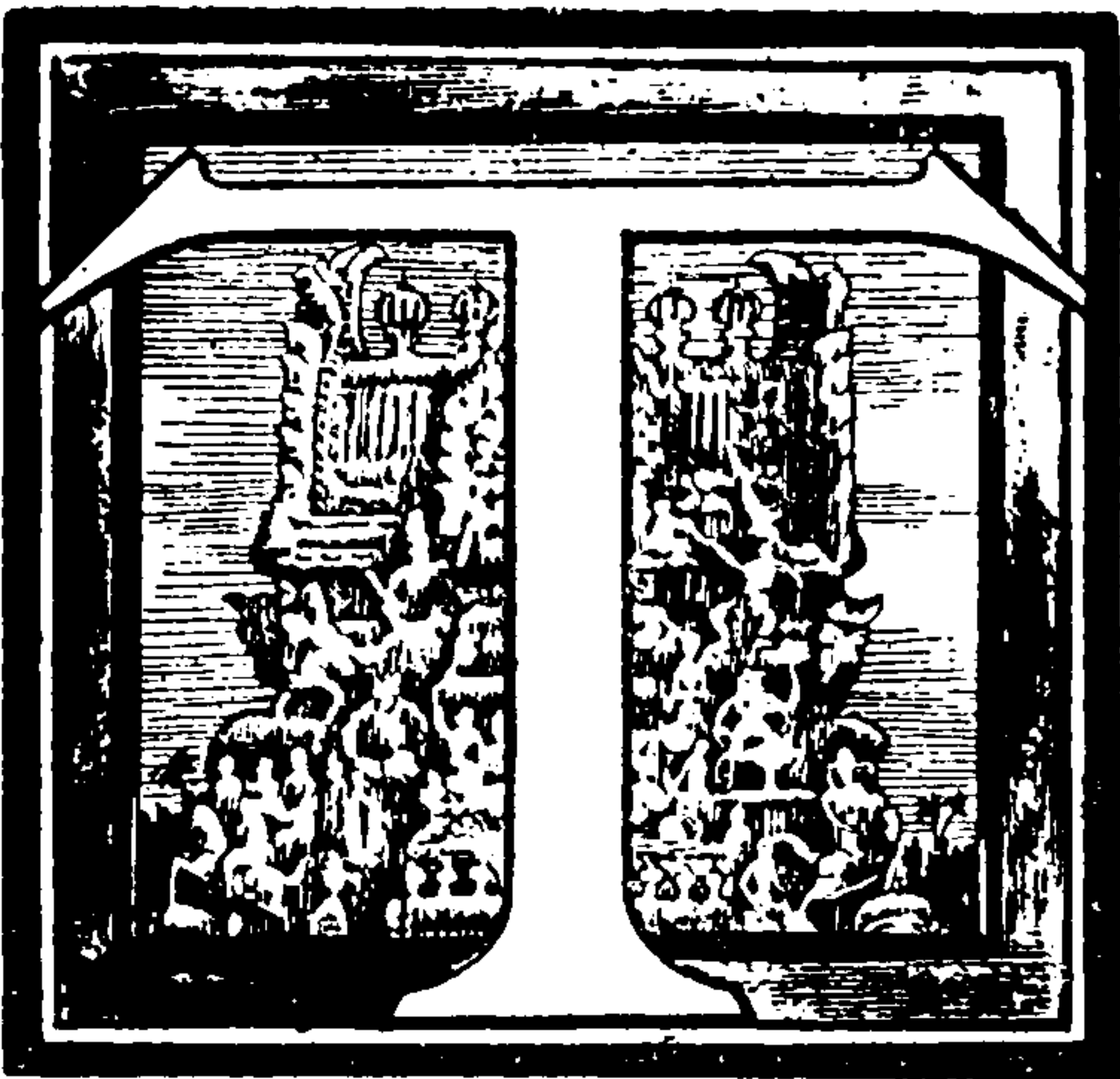
And thus the Indian girl passes out of childhood into womanhood. The young bride, dazzled by the garish light of her wedding 'tamásha,' is thrust into a fresh labyrinth of dark passages, murky yards and musty closets of her husband's home, amidst a crowd of mothers-in-law, stern aunts, child-mothers and widowed girls,—the hidden inmates of an Indian Zenána. But, whether we glance at Hindu or Muhammadan girlhood, we see that the woes of India's child-women deepen from the first faint wail of an unwelcome infant girl to the last stifled moan of an outcast widow.

"I shall never forget," says one who witnessed it, "the sorrowful look on the face of a Hindu gentleman, who, commenting on the happy expression of a young English wife, said: "How different from the sad spectacle I witnessed last night at the wedding of my little cousin Shorot-Kumari. She, poor child, is about nine years old; her husband is a drunken old man of sixty! The poor little one sat in the midst of the company, the picture of abject misery. She never raised her eyes, and the tears rolled down her cheeks the whole time. *She is sold to that wicked old man*, and what can she look for, poor little one, but a life of sorrow, both as wife and widow!"

CHAPTER IV

First Experiences

> "The tender light of home behind,
> Dark heathen gloom before,
> The servants of the LORD go forth
> To seek the foreign shore :
>
> For Christ has called, and His dear word
> Brings bliss, whate'er betide ;
> Tis not alone—'tis with their LORD
> They seek the other side."
>
> —*S. Geraldina Stock.*



HE first voyage out is often one of the most abiding and the most sacred of missionary reminiscences.

Sometimes interest in the outward-bound ship has been deepened when news reached us that a storm had broken on the Channel or the Bay. Yet our GOD has ever canopied the heads of His weak women messengers, and while preserving them has also garrisoned their hearts with His peace. In spite of "heaviest sea ever experienced" the *Rewa* reached Calcutta in safety in 1887 with eight C.E.Z.M.S. missionaries on board. An extract from a private letter giving an account of that memorable voyage is worth quoting.

"The vessel was so completely overmastered by the gale that, at one time, there seemed every prospect of her going

down. The waves dashed five times through the cabins and over the captain's bridge, the engines were jammed together and ceased to work. Ten of the crew were injured, and the scene on board was terrible—every one ill, and many in hysterics or fainting. There were, however, fifteen missionary ladies in the ship, and their calmness and cheerfulness throughout, bore strong testimony to the power of their religion. Some of them seemed to be kept in perfect peace in the midst of the fearful turmoil around and within the ship."

Seldom indeed, thank GOD, have our voyaging sisters to relate such experiences. The time on board is usually calm enough to enjoy daily Bible readings, special consecration meetings, impromptu missionary addresses, in which passengers and crew have united; whilst, with intervals for amusement and recreation, the foreign languages are attacked in advance, and the deck has been transformed for the time being into a floating college, where lessons in Hindustáni, Bengali, or Tamil are vigorously given and imbibed. Last autumn Miss Potter, bound for Bangalore, told of "a most enjoyable time" on board the *Chusan*. "We were such a happy, united party, and experienced very little rough weather. Miss S. Mulvany was very good in teaching us Hindustáni, and Miss Pantin had a large class for Bengali. What I learnt on board has been such a help to me that I have been able to begin the 'Kitab-i-Satis' at once with my 'Munshi.'"

"It is the first step that costs," say the French. Certainly it costs some heartache to be dumb for many months in view of the work and its needs realised as never before. But the first step of the newly arrived "Mission Miss Sahiba" is into the intricacies of Indian grammar, and a maze indeed lies before her!

The number of languages in India has been variously estimated. The C.M.S. Atlas puts the number at 106. But bearing in mind that many of the Indian tongues can only be

reckoned as dialects, it is difficult to state with ȃny accuracy the number of languages properly so called in the Indian territories.

Frequently, in studying one of the languages connected with the Sanscrit, one comes across roots that are familiar in some Western tongue. For instance, *dhri*, to draw, Latin *trahere*. Many of the numerals are easily identified: *duï*, two; *sastam*, sixth; *saptam*, seventh. So that among many strange words the learner is often refreshed by meeting with old friends, though, it must be confessed, with new faces. One finds in the chief Indian languages numerous fossil remains deposited by successive invaders of the land. The Portuguese have left not a few such tokens of their presence; and, of course, English words are being gradually assimilated. Your Bengali 'baburji,' or cook, will suggest that he can make out of cold meat, 'kono sáidish'—some corner side-dish or other.

One of the peculiarities of Punjábi is to import Urdu words and turn them upside down. For instance, *káchu* instead of *cháku* for *penknife*. Then, again, the same word has a different sense: "to rot" in Urdu means "to burn" in Punjábi. In both languages there are hard and soft *ds* and *ts* and *rs*, between which one must carefully distinguish. One might call a blind man "andha," an egg, by pronouncing the *d* hard on the palate instead of soft on the teeth. In Punjábi there are four *ns*; one simple, one nasal, another with the sound of *r* in it, and the fourth with the sound of *y*.

"The children in a village school," says Miss Tuting, "were much perplexed when I told them one day that the Israelites in the wilderness sighed for the 'worms' they ate in Egypt. I meant 'cucumbers,' but made the *r* hard instead of soft, and did not aspirate the *k* with which the word begins. The aspirated letters again are a difficulty in Punjábi. One day I was having a lesson from a friend in pronouncing *bh*, and the only time when she considered me successful was when I

seized my own neck, and nearly throttled myself; for this class of letters can only be sounded by a peculiar compression of the lower muscles of the throat!"

But for the sake of telling "The Old, Old Story" our missionaries feel it is surely worth while to undergo all the labour—and it is not a little—of learning even the hardest of the languages of India.

"I *hope* that friends at home remember to pray for those of us who are studying the language!" pathetically exclaims one of our not least gifted young missionaries. Truly it would seem that a Pentecostal gift of tongues were needed before an Indian worker is fully equipped. In the Punjábi cities, for instance, amongst Kashmírís, Patháns, Bengalis, Hindustánis, and Síkhs, it is absolutely necessary to know Urdu and Punjábi thoroughly, to be acquainted with some Persian and Hindi, and, if possible, to gain some knowledge of Arabic and Sanscrit, so that influence may be acquired over Muhammadans and Hindus respectively. In the same Zenána two languages may be required.

On itinerating tours, when groups of village people of both religions have to be addressed, the linguistic powers of the missionary are not a little taxed as she varies her expressions of the same theme in Sanscrit and Arabic alternately. In one short sentence, such as, "Sin is hateful to God," her Muhammadan listeners (who usually squat together in a little group at some slight distance from their Hindu neighbours) will not understand the two Sanscrit words *sin* and *God* unless the Miss Sahiba is careful to articulate also the Arabic terms for their benefit. Hence a very mongrel dialect must be acquired, and the difficult art of being one's own interpreter by the way.

Yet one of our young missionary sisters is ready to own that even the language difficulty is not an unmitigated evil. "What a number of mistakes I should have made had the

language been no barrier to a 'freshman's' activity!" she exclaims ingenuously.

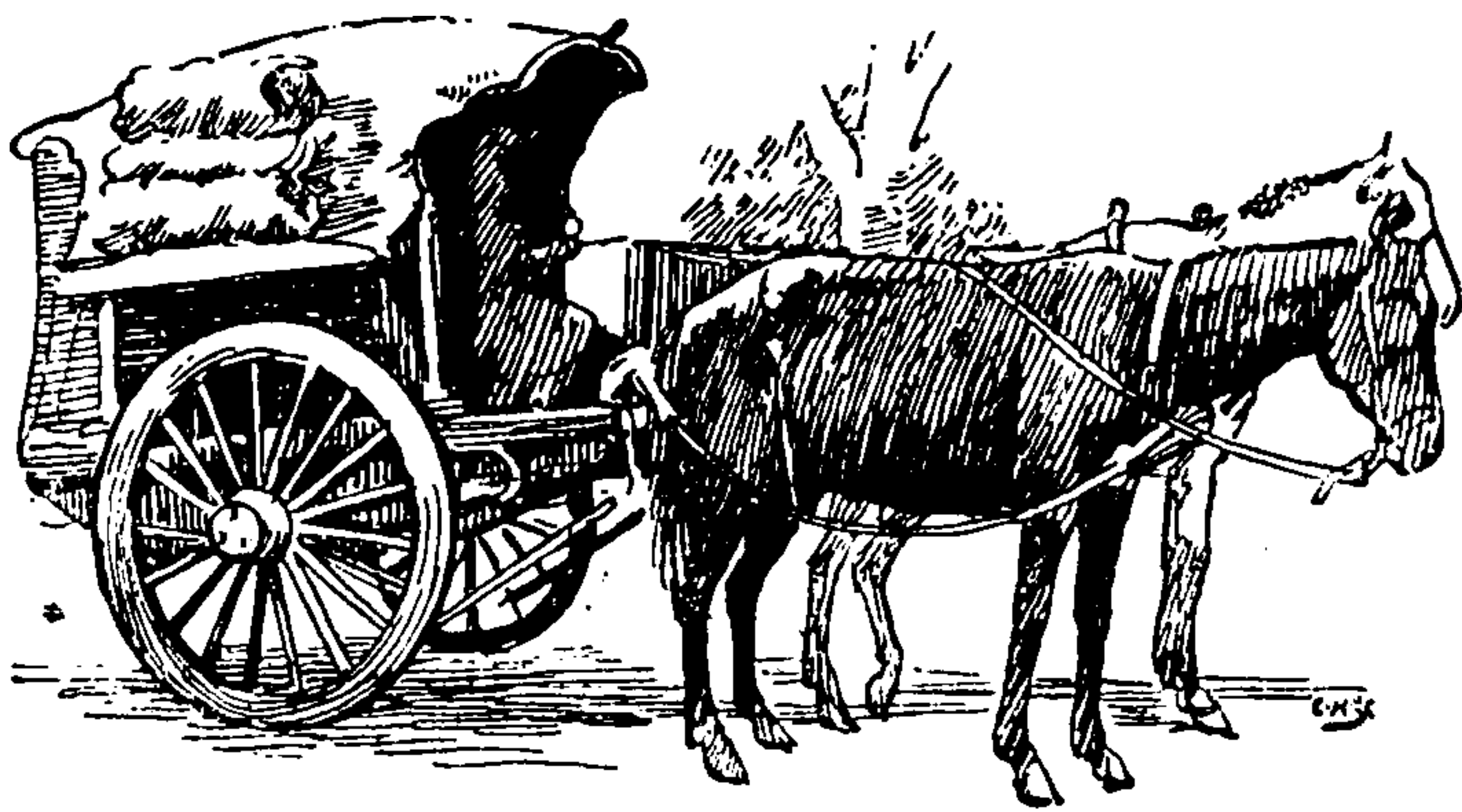
Most of the Indian dialects have two widely different forms—the cultivated and the vulgar tongue. And sometimes even the women's talk differs more or less from both of these. So that the lady missionary may not be content with the language she learns from books, and in which, of course, her Testament is written. She must learn also the "jungly" tongue, with its shortened forms of speech. In England we say "I won't," but write "I will not." In India the difference between the spoken and printed language is carried to a much greater extent, and forms at first a serious difficulty for the learner who wishes to be "understanded of the people."

Yet in spite of such real hindrances heart will reach heart. "How does the Miss Sahiba remember our names?" said one child to another as they came out of school one day. "I suppose she *loves* us, and that is how," replied the little girl. And Hindu women are touched by the earnestness of one whose soul is on fire for GOD, though her lips may stammer. And so, whilst the burden of each missionary's request for prayer may be "for me that utterance may be given me," she realises that it will not be by eloquence, but by the Gospel spoken, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," that the hearts of her Indian sisters will be stirred and won.

Requests for prayer have often come from India for the men who have taught our missionaries the language. Quite recently the Misses Boileau and Bristow sent home the glad news that, at Krishnagar, their Pandit had been baptised in spite of forcible opposition. "For years he has been half convinced of the truth of Christianity, but lately the Spirit has been striving mightily with him. He has found joy and peace in believing, and at once made up his mind to confess Christ openly. It was arranged for husband, wife, and child to be baptised together, but on the day before, some of the wife's

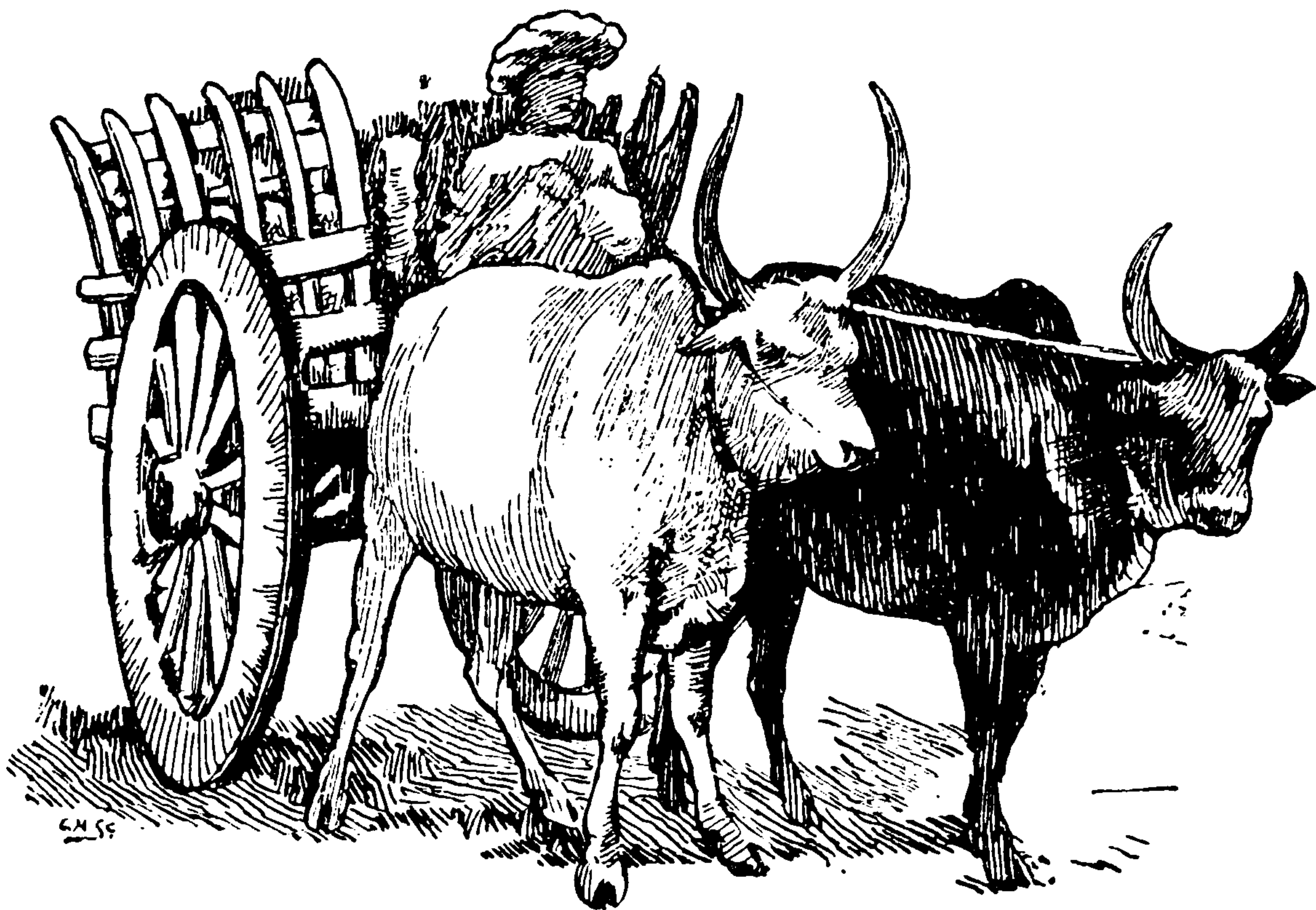
friends came, and, after trying all night to persuade him to give it up, eventually carried off his wife and child, and dragged him to the river to bathe, whence, by some means or other, he escaped, and fled to the Rev. A. Le Feuvre (C.M.S. missionary). Although his wife could not be traced that day, he was not deterred from his purpose, and, in presence of a large congregation of Christians and Hindus, the Pandit was baptised on Sunday afternoon. His face, answers, and whole bearing spoke volumes. There were actually present some of the very Bráhmans who had been urging the Pandit not to be baptised, but they sat in church as quietly as possible, closely following the service, and listening attentively to Mr. Le Feuvre's earnest address on St. John i. 12. It was a testing day to the new convert, but God enabled him to stand. He said to us afterwards, 'We could trace God's hand all through the day.' Since then he has passed through deep waters, his wife having twice been taken from him by her relatives, who are swayed by the people of the village. Yet though he says, 'I am the most happy man, and I am the most *un*happy man,' he exhibits an unwavering faith."

Since itinerating tours are taken in connection with nearly all our stations, various modes of travelling are in vogue among our missionaries, and they learn to adapt themselves to Indian conveyances, such as the 'ekka,' the 'tonga,' the 'bandy,' the 'palanquin,' the 'dooli,' or the 'gári,' in a surprisingly short time. Many a night is spent by our itinerating sisters in Tinnevelly, rocked—but not always to sleep—in a country cart. These vehicles are of the roughest wood,



"A TONGA."

innocent of springs, and protected from the weather by a roof and sides of plaited palm-leaf. A thick layer of straw is placed on the wooden floor, mattress and pillows are laid upon it, and curtains are fastened across the two ends of the cart. It is drawn by bullocks (two or three pieces of rope sufficing for harness, and the animals' own tails answering the purpose of whip and reins !) at the rate of two miles an hour ; and when the route lies across country destitute of roads, and through



A BULLOCK CART.

unbridged rivers and canals, the nights are not very restful. The heat is too great to allow of day travelling.

In Bengal the 'cutcha,' or mud roads, have ruts nearly a foot deep, and it is easy to imagine that one's boxes (and bones !) get terribly shaken as they are carried along in springless bullock bandies. As long as your cart keeps in the ruts it may be all very well, but when you have to move aside for a cart coming in the opposite direction, it is not a very pleasant matter !

In the Punjáb, travelling experiences in the hot weather are often the reverse of enjoyable. On a typical Indian day in the spring of 1896 Miss Jansen, of Jandiála, wrote: "Although it is only April, a scorching wind is blowing hard, whirling clouds of dust before it until the air is quite dark. Down a bare road, which seemed almost endless to us, we drove home from our work, and, with a great sigh of relief, took refuge in the dark little bungalow on the roadside. We carefully shut every door and window to keep out the dust and heat, but, in spite of this, sand and dust are everywhere, particularly in one's mouth! and we can assure our friends that they are not a palatable addition to one's food, any more than are the ants, creeping wherever they can. What I imagined to be raspberry jam the other day, Miss Parslee assured me was no more than *ant-preserve*, and so I found it!"

Novel and sometimes rather exciting experiences occur, too, in missionary housekeeping. Writing from Nyehatti in 1895, Miss L. Parsons has a story to tell:

"Our wee house has been enlarged. Building is a slow process out here. The making of one new room on the roof was ingeniously lengthened out for five months. At this you would not wonder if you saw the manner of proceeding. Two persons to work (one a woman!) and one to smoke are in attendance from three to four hours daily. They leave in the middle of work, and on any special pujà day no labourer can be found at all.

"Gradually, however, the building rose; but when dining-room, sitting-room, class-room, and church combined were nearly finished, the lower walls showed signs of collapsing. In England, we should test the under walls *before* building above, but here our lower walls were tested *after* the upper ones were built! Some of our friends grew alarmed for our safety; but not so our landlord! Plaster cracked, disclosing bulging bricks. Then something had to be done. So we

were banished to our two wee bedrooms for days, with the thermometer abnormally high, and no one could complain that we were living in too great comfort or luxury, although no one could say that we were not happy!

"Finally, the long-desired room was finished, and we thought how nice it would be to sleep on the roof—cooler, fresher, and away from snakes. But the rains began, and oh, how swamped we were!—shower-baths gratis, and alas! not free either from the invasion of snakes. For while we went up our steep, stone staircase, they quietly crawled up a tree overhanging a corner of the roof, and dropped on to it, meeting us at the head of the stairs! 'Cut down the tree,' you would naturally say; but our landlord would not hear of a tree so precious as a mango having its branches cut. However, about the end of the snake season, he consented in view of compensation, and after the rain the roof was patched up! Fortunately, we have nine months before the rainy and snaky seasons come again."

Although several servants must be kept in the Mission-house (as one man will attend to only one set of duties), life is not any the easier for the missionary housekeeper. Here is a sample of what may happen.

"Alas! our cook began to show signs of drinking, and while under suspicion about this, a watch was stolen; the police arrested and marched him off, so we were minus a cook. No other servant would touch our food; and Nyehatti does not abound in cooks wanting situations. We had to cook breakfast ourselves, and with Indian heat and Indian stoves cooking is no very pleasant task. As evening drew on, we kept saying to each other, 'What *shall* we do for dinner?' There was some meat waiting to be cooked, but we could not work ourselves up for the exertion! Then a happy thought struck us. 'Take the train to Calcutta and beg a dinner from one of the Mission-houses.' This we did."

Though difficulties and disagreeables are cheerfully and even merrily met by those who are ready to spend and be spent for the Master Whom they serve, yet there are times when enervation and depression overtake the most brave-hearted, and on their knees they can only articulate the cry, "Lord, hear our praying friends at home." We cannot forbear quoting the words of Dr. Mary Pauline Root, a young American lady medical missionary in South India.

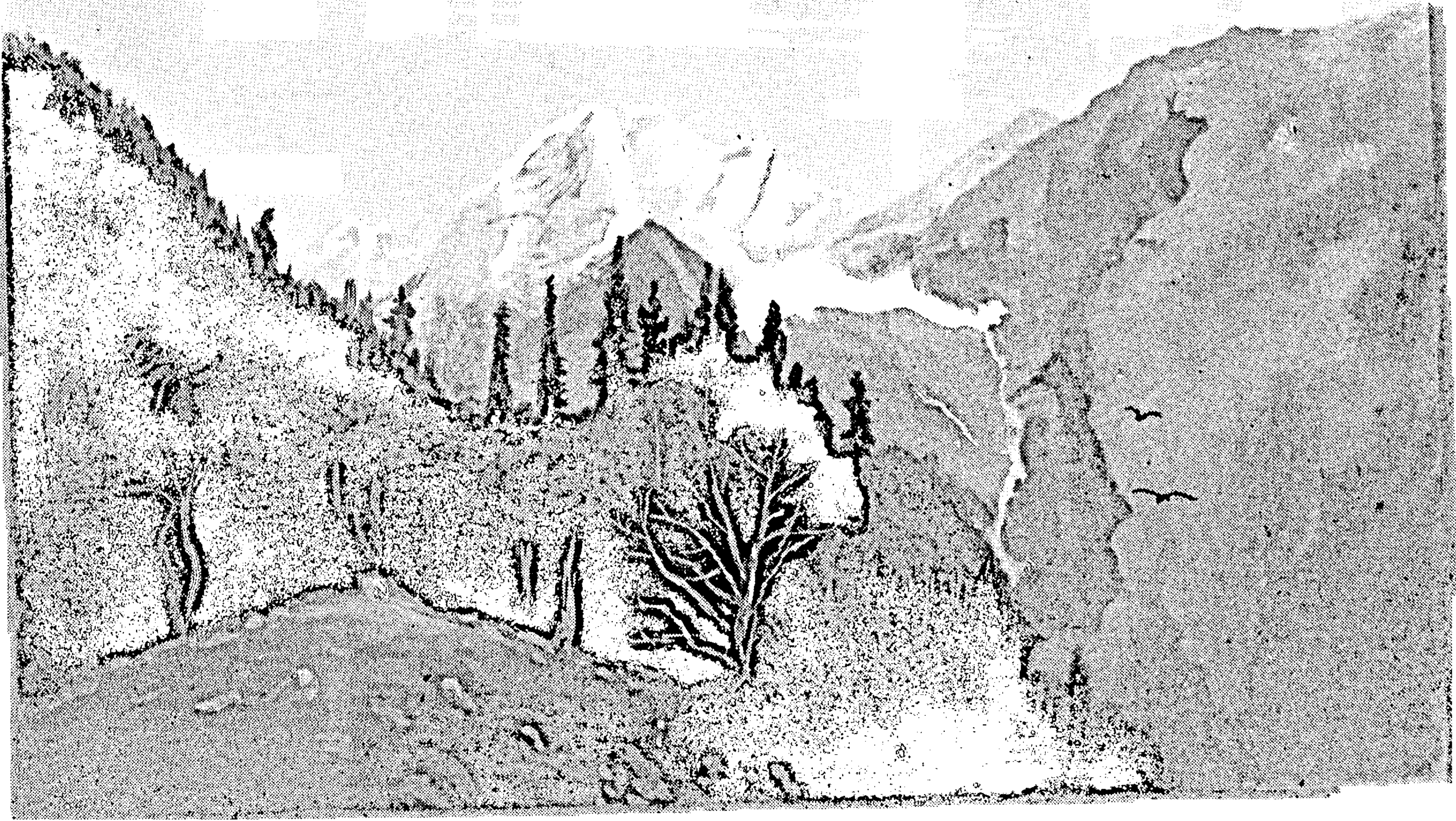
"I do not doubt,—I know, you pray for us, but pray with a faith that will not let go unless He bless us. For we live in the midst of idolatry, and so subtle are the influences about us that we grow deadened to the heinousness of sin. As we go through the vast temples and see the black, greasy idols and bowing worshippers; as we look at the fantastic rag-doll, jewel-adorned idols carried about the streets; as I go into the houses and see an old woman or dirty priest sitting surrounded by many tiny brass jars or lamps, wreaths of flowers, and perhaps the blood of a cock sprinkled about — does it seem like idolatry? Yes, and No. At first it seems like a dreadful sin; then repulsive only; and gradually we grow almost indifferent to what seems like grown children playing with toys. . . . Pray, then, that our hearts may not lose their sensitiveness. . . . Again, we live in the midst of dirt and filth of which you know nothing. Our work is in squalid mud or plastered homes, and the sights we sometimes see would make you turn away with a shudder. We are less proof against odours and sights than we once were. Every year the sickening, withering heat weighs upon us, and every year these things are harder to bear.

"Think of yourself as the new missionary. You begin the study of the language, and it is more than possible that many a time you will throw yourself on the bed and cry—yes, you, a missionary—cry from sheer weariness and discouragement, and perhaps wonder if, after all, you might not have made a

mistake, and run before you were sent. After a little while you are put in charge of a dozen Bible-women. Every word that you teach them or that you carry to the women in heathen homes has to be studied patiently and practised with your teacher—often a half-educated heathen man, knowing so little English that it is almost impossible to make him understand any Scriptural truth in English. It is a real trial and a constant struggle for you to have your Bible studies translated into the vernacular. . . . Little things that would not once trouble us in cool England, become formidable trials in sultry India. And so, I am not ashamed to ask that you will pray for the ladies who are housekeepers, that they may be guided into all patience and gentleness, living a Christ-like life before those who do so much to make life happy for us in this country It is a real heart-cry, therefore, when we missionaries say, 'Pray for us,' 'Pray for me.' "

Yet the first letters home are ringing with notes of praise and even joyousness. Though "Heathenism" is found to be "a great many shades darker" than ever realised before coming out, and the path is not all sunshine, we believe that each fresh missionary band could echo the words of one of their number not long ago:

"The first months have been very happy, full of brightness. The LORD has been good in keeping away even any shade of sorrow at parting. It is just like Him; 'His commandments are not grievous' if only people would believe it, especially the one, 'Go ye into all the world!' My testimony of this short time, like Miss Blandford's of her long missionary career, is that the missionary's life is the happiest one possible."



"VAST SNOWY MOUNTAINS RISING INTO SUBLIME PEAKS," KASHMIR.

CHAPTER V

Villages and their Visitors—I

"HE went round about the villages, teaching."—*St. Mark* vi. 6.

"Have ye looked for sheep in the desert,
For those who have missed their way?
Have ye been in the wild, waste places,
Where the lost and the wandering stray?
Have ye trodden the lonely highway?
The foul and darksome street?
It may be ye'd see in the gloaming
The print of My wounded feet."

—*C. Pennefather.*

LANGUAGE and customs hitherto perfectly strange are growing familiar to our missionary sister, and before her first year is completed she is eager to visit the villages. No other country of the world contains so many villages within a given area as India. About ninety per cent. of the entire population dwell in rural communities of less than 2,000 inhabitants. And, therefore, vast indeed is the field before her.

Although, strictly speaking, there are very few pardah-keeping women in the villages, the middle and lower classes of farmers' wives leading an out-of-door life, and their condition

being far less pitiable than the inmates of grand Zenánas, yet they are extremely dense and ignorant. Whether on the verdant plains of Bengal, in the lovely valleys of Kashmír, upon the vast area of the Central Provinces, or on the slopes of the Nilgiri Hills, numberless village women of every caste are either trifling or toiling away their existence in the darkness of Heathenism or the bigotry of a false faith. And it is towards their village sisters that the eyes of missionaries turn with indescribable sympathy and interest. Their first instinct is to hasten to them with the precious message of GOD'S love.

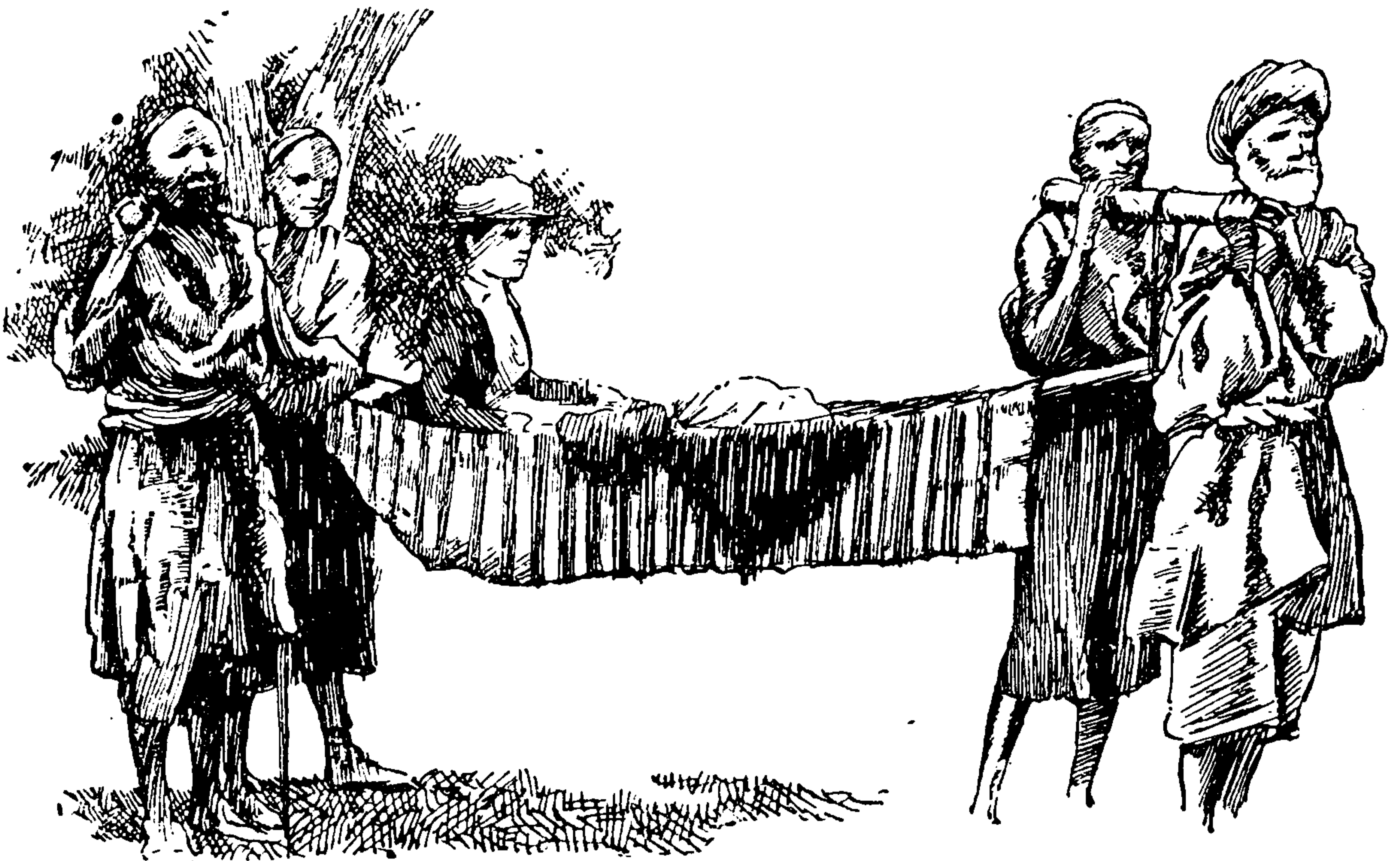
Indian women do not, may not, cannot listen to ordinary open-air preaching. At the approach of a stranger, the respectable Hindu woman will turn aside from the road, cover her face, and stand with her back towards him till he has passed. To remain looking at a man, or to appear to heed what he says, is considered the height of immodest boldness. This relic of Muhammadan oppression is an absolute barrier to the spread of the Good Tidings among the women by ordinary preaching. Therefore, since no one would wish these modest manners to be broken down except by the holy boldness which springs from Christian purity, men can preach only to men, and THE WOMEN MUST BE REACHED BY WOMEN.

In Bengal and the North-West Provinces, in the Punjáb and Central Provinces, in South India and the districts of Travancore alike, wherever GOD has enabled us to plant permanent mission stations, each one becomes a centre, not only of evangelistic and educational work, but of itinerative agency.

In a private letter written in 1885 from Pesháwar, by the Rev. Canon Sidney Pelham to his mother, the Honourable Mrs. J. T. Pelham (wife of the late Bishop of Norwich and a vice-president of C.E.Z.M.S.), we find the following spontaneous testimony of an eye-witness:

"Your heart would be stirred within you to see what the

ladies are doing in India. Here and at Amritsar they are working *splendidly*. Full of energy, bright, natural, and wonderfully *brave*, they seem to have but one thought and one aim—to save souls; and, in this spirit of earnest confidence in GOD and love to Him, they practically give up all the attractions of European society, and spend their lives for the poor women and children. At Amritsar two or three of them live in the heart of the city with no European near them; here they do



"THEY ARE ALWAYS AT IT, GOING FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE."

the same. Miss Mitcheson and Miss Phillips are living alone, a mile or two from the European quarter, and every day they go out visiting the Zenánas, receiving patients at their home, and following very closely, as it seems to me, in the steps of our Saviour Christ. Do not lose any opportunity of creating and strengthening interest at home in their work. GOD has raised them up, we cannot doubt it, and, it may be that, through their influence on the women, India may yet be won."

And ten years later, in 1896, the Rev. E. A. Causton

(C.M.S. Taran Táran) says: "I must mention the splendid work the ladies are doing. They are always at it, going from village to village doing the Master's work, reading to and teaching the girls and women, and are almost always warmly received. It is a thing that strikes you wherever you go. One must admire their zeal, their devotion, their self-sacrifice, their pluck. Would that their numbers were doubled!"

Bengal, by far the largest province, contains one-third of the whole population of India—seventy-four millions of people, dispersed over two hundred and fifty thousand square miles. Although we have eleven mission stations and upwards of forty missionaries amongst these crowded villages, thousands of women have not yet heard the Name of Jesus, and many more in so-called "Christian" villages are hungering to be taught the simple truths that English children learn in their Infant Sunday Schools.

The Bardwán Mission—one of the earliest fields of Church Missionary labours—is a spot that abounds with sacred interest. A district somewhat larger than Lancashire, it contains nearly one-and-a-half millions of inhabitants. The population of India, unlike that of England, is leaving large centres and distributing itself in small towns, villages, and hamlets or "bustis" as they are called. There are about one hundred of such within a walk from the town of Bardwán, which are visited by Bible-women.

Amongst the many able and revered missionaries whose names will ever be associated with this special field, were the Rev. J. J. Weitbrecht and his wife, in memory of whose devoted labours our Mission House at Bardwán is called "The Weitbrecht Memorial."

The C.E.Z.M.S. commenced work in Bardwán at the request of a number of Bengali gentlemen residents of the town.

Of Miss Editha F. Mulvany's work here since 1882, would that we had space to tell! Zenána teaching, day schools,

village visitation for Bible addresses near the town, and, later on, itinerating with tents into the surrounding districts, have been continued and developed by her and her fellow-workers with evident tokens of real blessing.

In spite of interruptions caused by the malarial fever, which is so great a foe to the health of Bardwán workers, and the opposition of the bigoted Hindus of the community, GOD'S work has prospered. In June, 1893, a riot, which might have cost the lives of two of our devoted missionaries, took place in consequence of the baptism of Shushilla, a married girl of only ten years old. She had been a pupil in one of the Bardwán schools for six years, and had induced her widowed mother to take her and her little brother out for baptism. Both mother and child were carried off as prisoners by their relatives in the mob, their own entreaties and the efforts of the missionaries to retain them being unavailing. Some time after, when Miss Harding, on one of her itinerating tours, was camping at Gulsee, she discovered that dear little Shushilla, for whom so many in England were praying, was staying there with her grandmother. Although not allowed to see her, Miss Harding knew that the child was standing close by the open door leading to an inner room, and must have heard all that she and her Bible-woman said and sang, and was doubtless delighting in the opportunity of hearing once more the Word of GOD that she used to love so much. When Miss Harding rose to leave, they quickly closed that door!

The leaders of the Hindu community made a great effort to turn our workers out of the very house which, in GOD'S providence, our Society was shortly afterwards able to buy as our Mission centre! Thus remarkably was the theme of Psalm xxxv. exemplified to our much-tried missionary sisters.

For years Miss E. F. Mulvany and a small staff carried on evangelistic work among the women in Bardwán, visiting as many as one hundred villages and hamlets in the year. One

of her helpers, Mrs. Bannerjee, an assistant missionary (since retired) was a convert of high caste.

But now the expanding Bardwán Mission is to lengthen its cords and strengthen its stakes by establishing village centres. The first of these has already been opened at Mankar, a village some twenty miles north of Bardwán; and the event was a notable one, since the way to this spot was paved with prayer, and this place—an ideal village centre—is now being worked from an ideal mission house. During the winter of 1896–97 Miss Harding was able to visit fifty-six different villages.

The need for multiplying such centres, and the opportunities for occupying such important openings, are alike great. Numbers of "villages" around Bardwán are to-day needing "visitors," who will be the first to speak to their women the message of God's love. At Katwa, already a C.M.S. station, a catechist being placed there, the people are earnestly imploring our missionaries to send ladies to them, and promise to open three girls' schools at once if only they will come. The spirit of eager attention shown whenever the Gospel is preached is an evident token that God is about to richly answer the prayers, which have ascended ever since C.E.Z.M.S. workers entered the Bardwán district, that Katwa might become a mission centre. "The seed sown by Dr. Carey and his sons," says Miss E. F. Mulvany, "seems to be ripening for the harvest. *If only there were reapers to gather it in!*"

Perhaps the most important branch of village work in Bengal is that among the nominal Christians. At the various C.M.S. Rest-houses scattered throughout the great Nadiyá Nuddea) district, the Christian women are gathered together by our missionaries for prayer, Bible reading, and the strengthening of their spiritual life, while also instructing them how to teach the heathen women around them. For a fortnight at a time in each place, the missionary locates herself in some

centre of the native Christian population,—numbering about 5,000,—visiting and holding classes daily. Miss Dawe, who has carried on much of this work for many seasons, thus graphically describes one of her recent experiences :

"How I wish you could peep at me in my little room here! It is one of the C.M.S. Rest-houses at which I am staying, away in the Nadiyá district, and consists of one room only, which leads directly into the church, thus being really a kind of vestry. It has to serve as dining, sitting, and bedroom all in one. Some shelves in a recess contain stores, crockery, etc., and a filter (a very necessary article, which has to go with me everywhere). Two or three other boxes, the bed, one table containing a quantity of medicines ; another, half of which holds my books, the other half being used for meals, comprise the entire furniture. Surely it is in answer to the prayers of many friends that I am able to say that I very rarely feel lonely, though for weeks I do not see an English face or hear an English word."

A NUDDEA COURTYARD.

One of the C.M.S. Associated Evangelists wrote in 1892 : "Work has been going on quietly as usual at headquarters and at our two Rest-houses. At each of the out-stations, Morootiah and Allah Darga, there was an interruption of the sort we always welcome. We urged Miss Dawe, of the

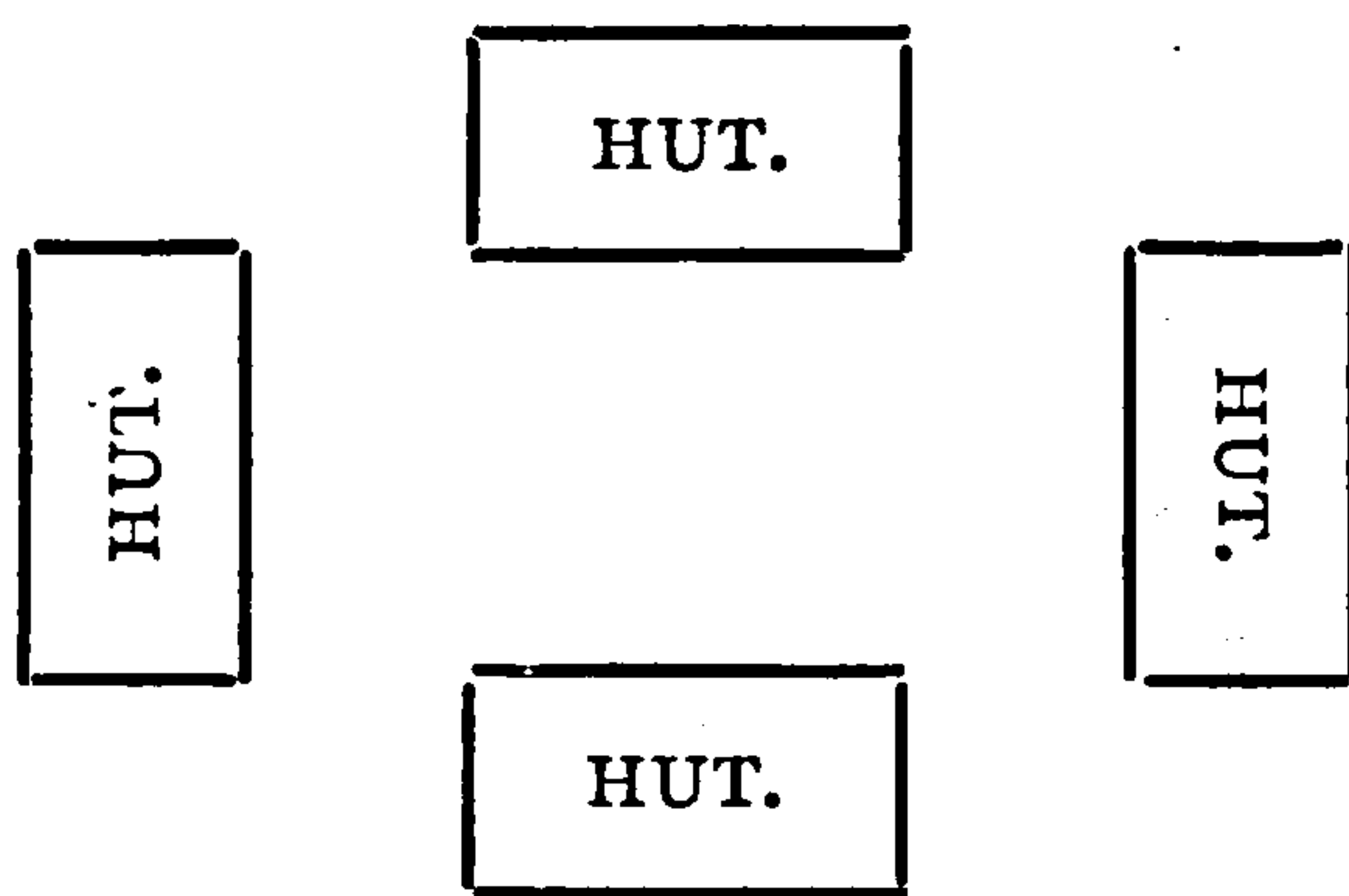
C.E.Z.M.S., to visit them, and she had grand times with the women for a week at each place. At Allah Darga, for some days beforehand, the women were most anxious to know when the Sahib was going to 'clear out,' *i.e.*, to make room for the Miss Sahiba."

No grander field of rural mission work in India can be found than that of the Nadiyá district, which extends over an area more than half as large as Wales, but much more thickly populated, containing at least two million souls. Each mission centre is surrounded by a number of villages, and amongst these during the cold weather, *i.e.*, November to February, camping tours are made by our lady missionaries and their Bible-women. Volumes might be written full of interesting incidents connected with this missionary tent life.

The village women of Bengal, as in other parts of rural India, by reason of their poverty, lead a much less secluded and far healthier life than their 'pardah' sisters of the towns. Whilst the men and boys are busy tilling the land and tending the cattle, the women also live almost entirely in the open air, and, in addition to cooking and looking after numerous babies (the worst performed of all their duties!), they toil all day, bringing water from the river or tank in large earthen vessels, which they poise on the hip, grinding corn, or winnowing rice by means of a curious instrument called a 'dhenki.' The dhenki is a long, heavy piece of wood, with a short pole attached to one end; the outer end of this pole is generally surrounded by a piece of iron. The long, heavy piece is firmly fastened to an upright post fixed in the ground, but in such a way that it can be moved up and down like a see-saw. Under the pole-end, a rather wide hole is dug in the ground. One woman stands at the further end, and patiently works the piece of wood up and down with one foot, while another sits on the ground, continually letting small handfuls of rice fall under the pole as it comes down into the hole. She is also constantly moving

away what has been beaten and thus winnowed by the wind, and keeping the hole supplied with more grain.

The villages consist of groups of little mud huts, with winding, narrow paths leading from one to another. Fields, blue with linseed or yellow with mustard crops, hedgeless and ditchless, are bounded ever and again by a fringe of trees, behind which the houses are hidden. A "house" in a Bengali village means several little huts on raised mud platforms, placed round a courtyard in this fashion:



So that, as the missionary and her Bible-woman sit in the courtyard, as many as a hundred people will collect and be able to hear the Word.

In camping out, if possible, the tents are pitched under the shade of trees near some large village, with a number of smaller villages within walking distance; so that by staying ten days or a fortnight the workers are enabled to take the message of a Saviour's love to at least a dozen places, although some of them are so large that the whole time might well be given to one alone. Ten short days, and for a year the women in that neighbourhood will not hear the Gospel again! "How we long for the time," exclaims Miss Dawe, "when there shall no longer be a year's interval between our visits! What would be thought at home of holding a Bible class *once a year only* in a village where there was no other means of grace,—if such a thing can be imagined?"

At each fresh season for camping out the difficult problem

has to be solved by our workers, Shall we revisit for further teaching, or go to fresh centres where the glad tidings have never been proclaimed?

One poor woman, on hearing that she would not be visited again till the following year, said very piteously, "Then how can our sins be put away? How can we learn to call on Jesus' Name if nobody comes again to teach us?"

After 'chhoté bárzari,' (early breakfast,) every morning the little band of workers sets out for some distant village or villages, and each missionary, accompanied by her Bible-

"TWO WOMEN ARE GRINDING RICE."

woman, agrees to take a different direction: one, it may be, going to the Hindu and another to the Muhammadan 'pára,' *i.e.*, group of native houses. Miss Owles gives us a naïve description of some of her experiences in 1894 ·

"The early morning air is fresh and pleasant as we step forth, bag in hand, and we are seized with a longing to walk on briskly or to wander from the path into the grass. But the Bible-women are following with slow and stately tread, and a warning voice behind recalls the Miss Sahiba to the footpath, from which it is improper to wander! So restraining our natural proclivities, we walk solemnly on in single file till at last the village is in sight. A little lad leads us into a court-

yard in the Musalmán part of the village. Two women are grinding rice; a third is smearing the floor of the house with fresh mud (a daily process), a cow is tied to a bambu pole, and chickens are flying to and fro between house and yard.

"A baby, entirely devoid of clothing, is basking in the sunshine, whilst, on an opposite verandah, a man lounges, his mind apparently incapable of rising above the pipe, long as his arm, that rests upon the ground.

"A MISS SAHIBA."

"Cautiously as we introduce ourselves, the peace of the household is at an end. The baby, first aware of our presence, thrusts its brown fist into its mouth, and, screaming, rushes towards its mother, then, mid-way, falls upon its nose. The cow, frantic with fright, careers round and round the pole, threatening to break the not-too-securely fastened cord. One of the women seizes the baby and flees: then, drawing their sáris closely over their faces, from very curiosity the others peep shyly from behind the wall. Even the pipe is abandoned, and the man advances to enquire our business. We explain, and he, having assured us that the women are like cows and have no understanding, sullenly gives us leave to visit them.

"But the next thing to be done is to persuade the women that their strange visitor is a woman! They are still cowering behind the cook-house and cow-shed in fright and amazement. Perhaps an old woman, the mistress of the house, ventures out first, and, pointing to the English lady, wonderingly enquires of the Bible-woman, 'Is *that* a woman?' 'Yes, it is a Miss Sahiba come all the way from England to see you,' replies Rachel. 'Are you *sure* it is a woman?' 'Of course! Look at her hair.' Whereupon the 'sola topi,' *i.e.*, sun hat, is taken off and the English woman exhibits her hair to aid in convincing all beholders. By this time curiosity gets the better of fear, and the other women emerge from their hiding-places. Presently, a mat is hospitably spread, and a little group squats around the visitors, who sit cross-legged in the centre. Then follows the inevitable string of questions. 'How did you become white?' 'Where is your sahib?' 'Not married, alas! What age can you be? When does the marriage take place?' Their curiosity satisfied, they subside into silence, and the real work begins. Great is the amazement as the story of Redemption is unfolded, and touching are the remarks called forth. 'Does He love *us*? We are only like the animals! This religion must be for you, not for us.' Very eager is the response to the question of the visitors, 'Would you like to hear one of our hymns?' and often tears roll down sad faces while the Saviour's loving message is given in sacred song. But the time flies all too quickly. Their fears dissipated, the women crowd around their new-found friend, their only anxiety being to secure a promise of another visit. 'These words are so new to us. How can we remember if we hear only once? You must come again and again.'

"And so, although the reception may not always be so cordial, for occasionally the men will object to their wives being taught, or one or two bigoted women may argue loudly,

and hinder others who long to listen quietly, the village doors of Nadiyá stand widely open on every hand."

Sometimes the novel contrivance of an open-air magic lantern is employed for sowing the seed in these dark hearts. Hundreds will gather round the spot where two upright bambu posts, and a third across at the top, are prepared to hang the sheet. And there in the still Indian evening, with the fireflies glancing round, as darkness, increased by the luxuriant foliage overhead, comes on, what a sea of faces is turned expectantly towards the sheet! First a picture of Her Majesty, the Queen-Empress; next a few English scenes; and then a series of pictures illustrating the Life of our LORD. As one after another is explained in simple language, a hush falls on the listening crowd, broken only by exclamations of admiration, wonder, and then genuine sorrow as the story of Calvary is told. Not a few, Hindus and Muhammadans alike, thus hear for the first time the Saviour's voice, and turn from idols or a false faith to serve the Living and True GOD. One instance must be given. "At Morootiah," says Miss Dawe, "one dear little child has been gathered into the Good Shepherd's fold above. I had shown my magic lantern in her pára during the winter visit, and her eager interest and pleasure had been delightful to witness. She had given many proofs that, though living in a heathen home, she had given her heart to Jesus. Walking along a road one day, she saw a wild pig (a dangerous animal) approaching. At first she was frightened, then remembered all she had heard about Jesus Christ, and at once prayed to Him to protect her. The pig thereupon turned round and ran off in another direction, and Shorola went home and told her mother how Jesus had saved her. Later on in the spring she died of cholera; but that Shorola loved Christ seemed well known to all in the pára, and we heard how often she had spoken of Him, and had sung the hymns she had learnt from us."

Among the Zenána ladies, too, of this great Nadiyá district the message is winning its way by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Although at the first visit the missionary is met with argument, the second year, faith in the old gods is found to have been severely shaken, and twelve months later the women, wives and daughters, it may be, of the Zamíndar, will confess that they believe no longer in their idols, and that they only wish to learn about the true Saviour. From Camp Murgachi, Miss Rainsford-Hannay wrote in 1892: "One feels such yearning love for these poor souls. Last night I could not sleep for hours, but continued in earnest prayer for the women who had been listening to us. Mohini, the Bible-woman, and I had been in two houses, and in each we spent over two hours, speaking and singing by turns. In each house more than twenty 'Bows,' *i.e.*, young wives, came to listen to us, and they were very attentive, remembering all we had taught them last year. One said quite bravely before all the others, 'Come to-morrow, come every day till you have taught me all about Jesus, the true Pathway of salvation. I could believe in your God, but I don't know Him.' Do you wonder that sleep forsook me while I wrestled in prayer for her and her companions?"

A WAYSIDE IDOL.

The large native town of Nadiyá, seven miles from Krishnagar and on the other side of the Ganges, is not only considered the Oxford of Bengal, on account of its celebrated Sanscrit pandits and colleges, but a peculiarly "holy" place by reason of its numberless Bráhman priests and temples, and the sacred waters flowing through it. On certain occasions, pilgrims, especially women, swarm into the place from all parts of Bengal, coming many days' journey on foot, to bathe in the river, and to cast in their offerings of fruit, flowers, corn, etc. To bathe in the Ganges at Nadiyá in June is supposed to cleanse away the sins of ten births. These 'melás,' or festivals, form the grandest possible opportunities for wayside teaching, and are eagerly embraced by our missionary sisters.

From Bousie, a place in the Bhágulpur district, famous for its religious fair, Miss Haitz and Miss Hall, with their Bible-women, wrote in 1896: "The melá was not so well attended this year. Many of the people are offended with their gods for not sending rain upon their rice crops. Yet when I asked a Bábu how many people were bathing in the 'sin-destroying pool,' he said about 50,000!

"We were at this 'sacred' tank soon after 8 a.m., and a busy time we had, selling Scripture portions and telling the people of the blood of Jesus which does really cleanse from sin. Such crowds of attentive listeners gathered round us! The water being low from want of rain, the banks were large, and we could easily make our way among the people, who, in family groups, sat eating their breakfast. Others were arriving, or in the act of bathing. While in the pool, they worship the sun by throwing up water towards it. When they come out, they prostrate themselves before stones on which the priests have made some red marks, and throw money into the water, for which, doubtless, the priests know how to fish!

"The poor children and old women shivered in the chilly morning air after their cold bath, following upon a long

journey in a bullock cart or on foot. Many had been travelling for several days without a warm meal or bed, huddled together day and night in the gári.

"To one family who looked so tired and cold, and who owned that they had suffered much on their pilgrimage, we spoke of the true way to obtain remission of sins through One who had suffered all for them.

"Voices and feet were very tired when we reached home to breakfast at twelve o'clock; but at two p.m. we set out again, this time to the fair, where the bathers buy what they need for homes or farms. Here the people were thronging the temple of the god Masuden with their offerings. Not long ago an elephant was presented to the temple, and it is now employed to take the idol down to bathe in the 'holy' waters. Such is heathenism. Its gods require cleansing from sin!"

In the early part of this year, (1897) telegrams from India brought news of a terrible calamity which had befallen the empire. Famine had overtaken many millions; 37,000,000 were in "famine" districts, where the food was not sufficient to sustain life, and 44,000,000 more in "scarcity" districts, where the food was insufficient to maintain health. The sick, of whom there were soon many scores of thousands, little children and particularly the women in Zenánas, were beyond the strenuous and noble work of the Government officials in saving life; and to these the sympathy and efforts of our missionaries in Bengal, the North-West and Central Provinces, and in the Punjáb were at once directed. The Jabalpur district was, perhaps, the most severely visited of all, and here our workers' energies were taxed to the utmost, amidst heart-rending sights and sounds, in providing food for the starving, tending the dying, and receiving the famished orphans in increasing numbers day by day. At Penágur, Gurha, Barela, and other out-stations, boys and girls were to be seen wandering helplessly about the roads and jungles, reduced to skeletons, and too

far gone to have the energy even to beg. Thirteen of such children were rescued by Miss Branch, of Jabalpur, on one of her visits to Barela, and sent to Mr. Gill's C.M.S. Orphanage. "You may judge," she wrote afterwards, "how starved the poor little things were, when I tell you that they were brought into Jabalpur (a distance of ten miles) in baskets slung over the shoulders of fishermen, each man carrying two children, and this in pouring rain, and over the river Gaur in a ferry."

RESCUED BABIES AT BREAKFAST.

The *Graphic* filled one page with two illustrations representing a ravenous crowd being fed in the compound of the C.E.Z. Mission-house at Penágur. Visiting the villages at such a time was painful indeed. Writing from Jabalpur in February, Miss Branch said

"Out in the villages it is pitiful to see human creatures picking up dust, and searching for grass, seed, or any other grain, and gathering weeds to boil and eat. . . . Last Saturday a poor woman brought her baby of four months old to us, and begged us to take it, as she could not feed it. She did not want to *sell* it, but to *give* it to us. One of our Hindu school teachers was in the verandah at the time, and she said, 'Give it to me; my own

child is dead, and I will care for it.' The poor little thing was wailing piteously, and was fearfully thin and wasted. It seemed comforted by its new mother's love and by the warm shawl in which she wrapped it. Its own mother shed just a few quiet tears, asked for some bread to eat, and then went away. . . . I should like you to see our native workers; they are simply splendid. They have helped us, heart and soul, in every way, and never grumble at extra work caused by giving aid to the needy. . . . We do hope that *many* workers will come out here next autumn, not only for work amongst Heathen, but to care for and teach the new Christians. Many young girls and women are daily being received into mission homes and orphanages, and they will require much patient training and teaching."

Soon after those words were written, the high-caste Zenánas of two distant villages, hitherto unvisited by any lady missionary, were suddenly thrown open to our workers at Jabalpur, owing to the distribution of Government relief through their hands to the pardah ladies, whom they found to be in a state of great deprivation and distress, and whom only they could reach. Thus a widely-open door for the Gospel message was set before us, and the cry for more labourers for this ripening harvest was redoubled and is sounding still.

And now we come to the Punjáb Village Mission, of which Miss Clay, the greatest pioneer of Village Missions, was the honoured founder at the beginning of our history in 1881.

It is about fourteen years since a remarkable map reached us from the Punjáb. Its outline was shaped like a somewhat clumsy Wellington boot, the sole turned north-west, and a broad band, running from above the gouty toe to the heel, traced the course of the Ravee River. This map was crowded with names and studded with red dots. Miss Clay had begun a Zenána Village Mission in the Punjáb; the map showed its area, and the red dots the villages which Miss Clay and Miss

Catchpool had visited. This land of promise was divided into four districts: Nárowál, Saurian, Amritsar, and Taran Táran. A marginal note explained that the district of the Zenána Village Mission, according to official statistics, contained an area of 2,018 square miles, with a population of 1,087,006 souls, living in 1,571 towns and villages, exclusive of Amritsar and its immediate neighbourhood.

Miss Clay, with this illustration, made an appeal for the "1,550 villages depending on us, of which only about 300 have yet been visited, because English ladies will not or do not come out with the Message of Life." It is appalling to think of the numbers who have passed beyond our reach since those words were written. Yet, owing to GOD's good Hand upon our missionary sisters, there are now seven centres, with churches, dispensaries and schools, and we can count on our roll of workers in the Punjáb Village Mission a band of more than fifty missionaries, assistants and native Bible-women. From the first day that Miss Clay, with her one native helper, began to itinerate from the 'dák' bungalow at Fathgarh among the primitive Punjábi villages until the present moment, there has been no cessation, but continual increase of this evangelistic work among the women. Time and space would fail were we even to sketch what is being done to-day among the numberless villages that surround our mission stations of Amritsar, Batála, Nárowál, Taran Táran, Ajnálá, Bahárwal and Jandiálá. Writing home in June, 1894, Miss Clay says:

"I have no record here of the number of our visits during the early part of the year around Ajnálá and Saurian and Ghogha; but Miss Singh, Miss Toussaint and I have paid 706 visits in the 106 villages in the Khutráin and Thoba part of the district during the course of the year. . . . During the melá there was no need for us to go to it, as the women came to us. The last afternoon, the house and verandah were so filled that we were each busy with different groups.

Amongst others, a young girl was there who had been taught in one of our schools near Ajnálá. She repeated several texts, and then said to us, 'Why have you left Ajnálá? we want you back'; to which a Khutráin woman responded, 'We cannot spare them any more; you have had plenty of opportunities of hearing about Christ. We are hungry; now let *us* have a chance.'"

In 1896, after twenty years' unceasing labour, crowned with abundant success, our veteran missionary, Miss Clay, was compelled by failing health to resign her much-loved work. Miss Hewlett, writing to her in February, 1897, "a few lines of good cheer concerning the Punjáb villages," said:

"I heard the Rev. R. Clark remark the other day, that wherever any one might go in your districts, he would find certain indications that the foundations of the work were laid *in prayer*, *in the power of the Holy Spirit*, and *with wonderful foresight*. This is eminently the case at Khutráin
At the very beginning of this year thirteen persons professed their faith in Christ, and were baptized in the little Prayer-room; they were men, women, and children of intelligent age. . . . You will indeed be overjoyed to hear that in the neighbourhood of Thoba there are 200 inquirers: not ignorant ones, merely coming in a crowd, but intelligent men and women. Every name has been put down, and systematic regular teaching is now *urgently* called for. . . . The time has come for a permanent settlement at Thoba. God has put a craving in my heart to see Thoba a strong village centre, with its little band of workers gathering in these hungry souls that have been awakened. . . . Do beg all your friends who know what it is to 'pray in the Holy Ghost' to plead earnestly that more *yielded-up* lives may be given to the service of teaching these inquirers and new Christians."

CHAPTER VI

Villages and their Visitors—II

"Coming, coming, yes, they are! Coming, coming from afar!
From the Indus and the Ganges
Steady flows the living stream
To Love's ocean, to His bosom,
Calvary their wond'ring theme!"

OUSE-TO-HOUSE visiting in the Punjáb differs widely from the English district visitor's experience! Miss Tuting, of Amritsar, says that there are two methods open to the lady missionary. One is to climb up rickety ladders to the house-tops; the other, to plod through narrow lanes, the centre of which is generally occupied by a "slough of despond." In the rainy weather it is well to borrow a stout stick, and, planting it firmly in the middle of the black slush, hop from side to side of the sloping, slippery bank, supporting oneself by the walls on either side, until the mud houses to be visited are reached, and the central court is entered, where buffaloes, cows, women and children live together.

Then the women and children come swarming over roofs and walls to listen to the Miss Sahiba, and squat beside her, plaiting one another's hair, or winnowing rice whilst they listen.

Outside the village is the pond, made by digging out mud to build the houses. Each year before the hot weather sets in, every thrifty housewife and her children are busy in fetching more mud to spread over the roof and floor and walls, to repair the waste caused by the heavy rains. At that season, if an absent pupil be inquired after, it is found that she is "carrying mud." In the said pond, the buffaloes lie all day in the hot weather, with only their noses above water, and there also the children bathe and play. The greener the pond the better it is, say the mothers, as it will keep the children "fresh."

Miss Dewar thus naïvely describes a typical Punjábi village audience:

"All gathered together to listen—some on the ground, others sticking, crab-like, to the edge of a low chárpaie, the middle and best part being always filled with a swarm of restless, unhappy children—an audience shifting and changing like bees, but attentive, in a way. There was the typical *amiable* old woman, who says 'isi tarah,' *i.e.*, 'just so,' to everything. Then, of course, there were two or three specimens of the 'dense woman,' called by her countrywomen 'nambda budh, *i.e.*, 'felt brain,' who says nothing, and a lady-caller who thought herself above the average in understanding. They liked the story of Abraham and Isaac; even the poor dense face brightened up, and the clever one forgot to argue."

Peeping into a recent journal of one of our Punjábí village missionaries, Miss Jansen, we find some graphic jottings.

"An Indian twilight. How different from the sweet, soft English evenings! A red dusky glare and the great sun sinking slowly with not a single cloud. All around us, half-starved cows are wending their way home through a haze of dust to the little mud-built villages here and there, over which the smoke hangs thickly, for it is evening cooking time. As we drive slowly through Dopayian we are followed by crowds of

children and barking dogs, while the men, sitting in groups round their huqqas, turn to look at us with various remarks. It is nearly dark now, and we are very glad to get out of the little cart in which we have been jolted for hours, and to enter our tent pitched almost inside the village. Our arrival is a great excitement to the children, who peep in, and when we look at them, scamper away, screaming; only to return, however, in greater numbers! It will be difficult to sleep to-night; the oxen are tethered just outside and stamp about, dogs bark and men talk all night long.

"13th. A regular camp day! I spent all the morning visiting in this village; then, coming in, gave away medicines and talked to the women who crowd the tent-door. The monotony of their lives and the future so dark before them are terrible; as one old woman said to-day, 'Yes, we all have to die, and then all is dark; *we* have no hope, no light.' Oh, if friends at home could see the earnest, hungry faces of a few in a noisy crowd, striving to remember the name of Christ! A poor blind old woman to-day stretched out her hands to me and said, 'Yes, yes, all you say is true, one cannot remain young, friends pass away like a lamp that goes out, and one's own turn will come. Then tell me where I can find the True Guru (teacher).'

"To-day a 'Sadho,' *i.e.*, holy man, arrived and pitched close to our tents. He lay stretched out on a bed, with a grand umbrella over him, to receive his worshippers and their offerings. This evening his pujà has been going on, the women bringing him their choicest foods, whilst a most horrible noise of drums and cymbals and monotonous singing is kept up unceasingly.

"As I write, a crowd of faces presses against the tent door. These are some of the remarks that are being made:

"'Look well and long! They are the big unmarried girls!'

"'One has a big face, one has a little face!

"'I suppose they read all night. Such as they would not sleep as we do!'

"14*th*.—To-day we have moved on, and had to be up early to look after the men. They are so fond of doing a little, and then sitting down to smoke and surveying all that remains to be done. One dreads moving days, except for the fact that all the things and scraps of matting get *some* of the dirt brushed or shaken out of them. We, too, feel terribly dusty; but the comfort is that we are both equally in the same plight, and there is no one else to see!

"We have had a difficult time in one place to-day. The men were very insulting. They followed me through the village; hid themselves behind the women, and mocked and laughed. I confess I am very frightened of the men, but God is ever faithful and keeps us from harm.

"In an out-of-the-way village, three old women came up to me and stared, perfectly aghast, and with their mouths wide open, until one of them ejaculated, 'This is a Mem,' *i.e.*, an English lady. I could not help laughing, which amazed them still more. It is so funny to be a kind of 'show'!

"As I sit writing this evening in the tent door, a stretch of sand and dust lies before me, a mud village in the foreground; on one side an old ruin, with the grave of some Guru, where lights are kept burning; whilst men and animals are trudging home after the day's work. Our dinner is being cooked just outside, and the servants are making their flat cakes, of which we often have to make a meal.

"16*th*.—Yesterday (Sunday) was a day of encouragement and blessing. Nearly all day we were besieged by women from all the villages around, coming, not so anxious to get medicine as to hear the Word of God. 'Ah!' they said, 'we cannot see you and hear the sweet words about your Guru Jesus every day; and it seems so good, so full of comfort, that you must not mind if we tire you. We want to look at your

faces, too; they have become dear to us.' I have never felt so strongly before that the Holy Spirit was attracting and drawing hearts to Christ.

"Just as it was light this morning, I awoke to hear crying outside the door, and women's voices saying: 'We thought unless we came very early they might be gone, and we want to see them again and hear the Word of the true GOD. We shall forget so soon. This is only a life of four days, and who knows if we shall hear again? Only the living meet.' So, wrapping myself in my dressing-gown, in the cold of the morning I rose and went to tell them more about Jesus. GOD grant that we *may* meet among the 'great multitude' hereafter around His throne!

"Every day for a fortnight we have been out, steadily teaching and preaching the Kingdom of GOD; and, to our great joy, we realise that we have thus reached eighty villages. Sometimes they have not accepted us, have even insulted us; but 'the servant is not greater than his Lord.' And 'it is an unspeakable honour to be so close to the Master as to be bespattered by the mud flung at *Him*.' And what matter sore hearts and weary bodies if, in the end, souls are gathered into the Fold?"

Of the winter camping season, 1896–97, Miss Jansen has written:

"We have entered 232 villages, and about 889 houses, and have been able to reach a part of our district that has not been visited for about four years. The hot weather is now upon us, and we have had to give up our happy tent life. Since our return to headquarters, one woman has three times walked eighteen miles to see us and hear again of Jesus, the true Guru."

It is now ten years since Miss Margaret Smith (Hon. C.E.Z. missionary) went as a pioneer to explore the Hazára, a district about 150 miles long and nearly fifty miles wide, con-

taining several hundred thousand inhabitants, with three chief towns—Haripur, Abbottábád, and Mansahra. The people bore the character of great bigotry, but belied it by giving her a warm welcome. One who might have been expected to be the last to accept the Gospel proved to be the first. A 'mullah,' *i.e.*, expounder of the Muhammadan sacred writings, whose father was a 'maulvi,' *i.e.*, teacher, and who had never, before he met Miss Smith, heard the name of Christ, came to her with the confession, "I am such a sinner, how can I be saved?" He received in a child-like spirit her answer from GOD'S Word, and afterwards followed her on foot forty miles to learn more. Circumstances obliged Miss Smith to leave the Hazára, but she had the joy of seeing Ghulam Akbar a consistent Christian, and working, until his death from cholera in 1892, as a useful assistant in the C.M.S. Amritsar Hospital. Another attempt to work in the Hazára was made by Miss Phillips in 1890. The Black Mountain Expedition, in 1891, made it necessary for her and her fellow-missionary to retire, but they left the women in tears. At length, a permanent Mission has been started—the first and only one in the Hazára; in nearly a hundred Zenánas the women are being regularly taught, and the surrounding villages visited by Miss Condon and her helper. One sad feature of Hazára village life is the number of destitute old women. The custom of plurality of wives destroys family life. Husbands who cannot afford to support several wives, simplify matters by turning the old wife adrift, and bringing a new one to take her place. Hence, there are depths of woe among the Hazára women, who, in countless numbers, are still waiting to be reached. Little peace or love is known in their homes. Miss Condon, writing in 1896, says: "We know now of one house where the new wife, quite a little girl, is lying very ill, supposed to have been poisoned by the elder wife."

We must now glance for a moment at village work in the

far West. From itinerating tours around Karáchi—recently plague-stricken—comes the same earnest cry for reapers.

"Daily during our visit to Tatta," says Miss Carey, "we visited a dear old woman who has wept herself blind in sorrowing for her three sons, and who listened eagerly to the story of a True Guru, who could give peace to the broken-hearted. Great was her sorrow when we told her that we must go away.

"'Since your feet came into my house, joy and rest have come,' was her cry. And it was sweet to hear her pray the prayer for a new heart which we had taught her, adding, "O God, show me Thy face!'

"'When will you come again?' asked a polite Hindu boy, who had taken us to see some of the ladies of his family, whom he was most anxious we should visit. 'I hope to do so next cold weather,' was the reply. 'Next cold weather!' he echoed; 'why, who will be alive then? We want a lady to live here and teach.'"

But we have yet to tell of villages and village visitors in the south of our great Indian Empire. And, although, in most of the stations, it is Muhammadan women who are being reached (of whom we speak in another chapter), the extensive itinerating work around Madras, Bangalore, Ootacamund, Masulipatam, Ellore, and more especially perhaps in Tinnevelly, cannot be passed over without mention. Of the late Miss Wallinger's devoted and multifarious labours at Ootacamund and Coonoor, Miss Ling, her fellow-labourer, remarks: "How she worked and prayed for the Wynaad will never be forgotten by those who knew her"; and the fact that there is a vigorous branch of the C.M.S. now under the superintendence of a European missionary, is largely due to her representations and efforts.

But unique, perhaps, in the annals of our itinerating work, stands the Mission to an aboriginal tribe, the Todas of the

Nilgiri Hills. According to the last census they numbered only 765. Taller and fairer than the people of the plains, with fine handsome figures and chiselled features, this strange tribe differs widely from the ordinary natives of India. They consider themselves to have been, from time immemorial, "Kings of the Hills," the other hill-tribes paying them tribute, and even our own Government having to make due compensation for their land.

A TODA WOMAN AND CHILD.

The men wear their hair long and in a thick mop. The women, when in full dress, have theirs hanging, as far only as the shoulders, in straight, corkscrew curls. Both men and women alike wrap themselves in large cotton sheets, ornamented with rough needlework in dark blue cotton, while a pocket stitched on the inner side is a receptacle for all kinds of Toda dainties! The women's special adornment consists of an elaborate system of tattoo, with heavy brass armlets—each weighing about 1 lb.—and bunches of kauri shells. The Todas consider washing a superfluous luxury, and it is only at the great annual Toda fête that they make any attempt at cleanliness, either in their persons or their clothes.

The 'mands,' or villages, each enclosed by a rough stone wall, consist of three or four huts of quite an original shape—arched like a half-barrel standing on the flat side, with a thatched roof. In front of the hut there is a small aperture, 3 feet square, serving for door, window, and chimney. Through this only opening one must enter the abode "on all fours." Within, a raised 'pial,' or platform, is on either side, one serving as kitchen, the other as bedroom.

The Todas are entirely a pastoral people, and their one

occupation is to tend large herds of buffaloes, with which their system of religious worship is connected; for, like themselves, their manners and customs, their religion is unique. In every Toda mand is a hut called 'palthchi,' or sacred dairy, standing apart from the rest. Here lives the sacred dairyman, 'Pálkarpál,' whose duty it is to milk the buffaloes of the village, and to store and distribute among the people their fair portions of milk and 'ghí,' *i.e.*, clarified butter. Besides these dairy temples, there are others far removed from all human habitations, where, in turn, a large brass bell is jealously guarded. This bell is supposed to have come down from 'Amnar,' the Toda heaven, on the neck of the first buffalo that was created.

TODA WOMEN MOURNING.

But, beyond a vague notion of one supreme GOD, the rites connected with the sacrifice of buffaloes at their great funeral ceremonies, and the salám they make to the rising and setting sun and moon, the Todas have nothing of what may fairly be called a religion. Their only prayer is a most suggestive one: "May it be well with the male children, may it be well with the men, may it be well with the cows, may it be well with every one!"

The position of women among the Todas is one of great inferiority and degradation. A woman is never allowed inside a temple enclosure, nor permitted to join in any religious ceremonies. The terrible practice of polyandry prevails among them, the custom being for several brothers or cousins to have the same wife. The bride is brought to the house of her future husband, and the chief marriage ceremony is that

of stooping down for the bridegroom to place, first the right and then the left foot on her head. She is, forthwith, ordered to fetch water for cooking, and is installed mistress (or slave !) of the house.

A TODA BRIDE PAYING HOMAGE.

Miss C. F. Ling is at present the only Englishwoman who can carry the Gospel message in their own tongue to the Todas. The story of the way in which she first visited the women at the earnest entreaties of a Toda man, who considered he had been healed through the prayers and medicines of a native Christian from Ellore, is one of thrilling interest. Miss Wallinger opened C.E.Z.M.S. work among the tribe, but it was reserved to Miss Ling to give the Todas the first book one of the Gospels—in their hitherto unwritten language. In 1894 she completed this difficult and noble task, although at the same time she was superintending the C.E.Z. Mission at Ootacamund, a station some thousands of feet higher on the Nilgiris. A twelvemonth later Miss Ling remarks :—

"Lest you should think it is all play and no work in the Ootacamund Zenána Mission House, I will introduce you to an interesting scene. A Bible Revision Committee is being held, and it is engaged on the Gospel of St. Mark in Toda. There are only two revisers, the original translator (myself) and a Toda man, who was not present when the translation was made a little over a year ago. The object is to see

whether the Gospel in Toda is understandable of the people. For if it be so to him—one of the wildest and the most unkempt of this wild and unkempt tribe—surely it will be so to any one of them. There are no fellow-revisers to object to one's rendering, nor is there any one whose advice can be sought on knotty points, and these appear to be many, to judge by the perplexed looks and the quaint illustrations that are used to explain the meaning of some word for which the reviser is trying to find the equivalent in Toda. A 'prophet,' the 'Kingdom of GOD,' 'disciple,' and many kindred terms, are so many enigmas to the shock-headed man before us, whose sole idea of a sacred functionary is the man who milks the sacred herd of buffaloes, and the only thing he has to teach his disciples is how to perform this act. As for the Kingdom of GOD, probably nothing but becoming a member of that Kingdom can teach him what it means. May that day speedily dawn!"

Thank GOD, the day is dawning amidst that strange and interesting people, the remnant of a noble race. Little Toda children are learning in Christian schools sweet texts of Scripture and Bible stories in their own tongue. They are clasping their tiny hands in prayer to GOD, and a spirit of earnest enquiry and longing is being aroused in the hearts of their sad, weary mothers.

Miss Ivy Wallinger, who accompanied Miss Ling on one of her visits to the Toda women, tells of "a delicious day" spent among them in going from mand to mand.

"Away and away over the hills, keeping closely to the path evidently worn by the Todas, we slid on over the burning grass, and at last came to the grey stone walls. We squeezed through the entrance, and there, down in the hollow, lay five huts, such beauties! There was a great shout of welcome as Miss Ling went down the steps, and the women came crawling out of their houses.

"'My eyes have been hungry to see you,' said one old woman. We all crowded together—an audience of fourteen —on the wooden bench outside a hut. The dear women, with their beautiful faces and shy grace, quite won my heart. How they talked when the teaching was over! I asked if I might go into one of the huts. They said Yes, but I must not go near their food. So, taking off my 'topi,' and going on hands and knees *à la* caterpillar, I crawled in at the tiny door. There seemed to be a confusion of brass pots and kettles, etc.

"LITTLE TODA CHILDREN."

I sat on the bed, a raised piece of ground flattened down quite hard, on which the family slept!

"We left the mand with great regret, the women and children, and even the men, calling out after us, 'Salám, salám!' *i.e.*, 'Peace! peace!'"

That the hearts of these strange people are won by kindness, the workers have abundant proof.

"One evening, Thangkem, our Bible-woman, fell and sprained her ankle on leaving a 'mand.' A fortnight later the Todas

came and asked why she had not been to see them lately. Soon afterwards they came again, and said, 'We have vowed two bottles of milk to Jesus Christ if you recover.' She is well now," says Miss Ling.

Since 1875, the Misses Brandon have been labouring indefatigably at Masulipatam, with its now important out-stations of Bezwada and Kummamett. Eternity alone will reveal the extent and depth of a ministry fruitful in result. Work is opening up in all directions. As many as 900 Zenána pupils are being taught, while Converts' and Inquirers' Homes, and schools for Hindu and Muhammadan children, are re-inforced by the labours of those who visit the surrounding villages. The sister-station of Ellore—a flat, green reach, where the sun shines on winding canals, glittering Hindu pagodas and Muhammadan minarets—has been adopted by Australia. One after another, faithful missionaries have been sent out from the Antipodes to carry on both Hindu and Muhammadan work there, and have met with much encouragement.

Of Miss Graham's work among the Kois at Dummagudem, one of our most isolated stations, we tell in Chapter XI.—*Our Suffering Sisters behind the Pardah.*

Reluctantly passing by the manifold labours of Miss Blyth in Tinnevelly, within a radius of some forty-five miles, we glance next at itinerating work in the north of the Province. As early as 1885, visiting the villages was being carried on within a circle of forty miles round Sachiepuram, and two years later, there were ten important out-stations connected with the North Tinnevelly Mission, with a staff of native helpers, requiring the supervision and care of our missionaries.

We have previously referred to the heathenism and idolatry of this most heathen and most idol-worshipping portion of India. No wonder that one of the workers should urgently plead for offers of personal service from her sisters in England

for this needing field! "Until this appeal is answered," she says, "a sad sense of souls living and dying, unsought and untaught, will rest upon us, the few solitary missionaries among the 500,000 heathen of North Tinnevelly."

Since 1893, the Misses Mary and Blanche Turner (the former of whom GOD has recently taken to Himself), in addition to the superintending of Bible-women and schools, have been itinerating among the villages, spending sometimes three out of four weeks in tents. Their own story of one experience in the autumn of 1895 abundantly proves that the LORD was "working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following."

A MUD IDOL.

"We, that is, my sister and I and the catechist of the place, had come to a little courtyard. It was getting so dark that we could scarcely discern the faces of the women, who crowded together to hear our Message. As we came away I said, I cannot help feeling that some heart was touched to-night. Though we knew it not then, such was indeed the case. That evening, one who was there, a high-caste widow from the Zamíndar's palace, decided that she would become a Christian. Three months later, when again at Vazihula, she came over from her village, and told of her great longing. She begged that she might be taken to our village, as, should the Zadarmín

hear of her determination, he would at once take her daughter of twelve and marry her to a heathen. On being asked why she desired to become a Christian, and being reminded that she must give up much—caste, wealth, etc.—she said, 'All these things perish, my soul does not. I want peace, and I believe the Christian religion can give it to me.'

"A month later she secretly left the palace, and came over to Sachiepuram, where she was instructed for baptism, and her little daughter was sent to school."

Glancing next at Trevandrum and its villages, we find that there is no such thing as 'gasha,' or Zenána, amongst the Hindus in the enlightened State of Travancore. "It would doubtless surprise you," writes Miss Blandford, "to see a group of Hindu caste women, chiefly Tamil and Mahratta Bráhmans, bathing *out of doors* in a corner of the sacred tank, close to the high road outside the Fort. These women may not be of the highest rank; such would probably bathe in tanks attached to their own gardens; but by the jewels and rich silk cloths worn by some of them, it is evident that they are above the class of working women. Travancore has never been conquered by the Muhammadans, and the status of Hindu women here is more like that of their sisters in past ages, of whose virtues the poets have sung, than of those in North India. Doubtless, pardah is kept in the few Muhammadan houses, but the Moslems form quite an inconsiderable item in the large population of women. Bráhman ladies here may often be seen driving about in horse or bullock carriages with the windows down, enabling them to see all that passes in the road. Wives of Máharájás and princes are the only ladies obliged to sit behind closed venetians when paying visits to their friends. The women of Travancore, in consequence of the great freedom allowed to them, have, of course, a much larger share of intelligence than their closely confined co-religionists in North India. Six Bible-women, Malayálam

and Tamil, are at work daily, visiting from house to house amongst caste women of lower rank, and I trust we shall meet many hereafter, who have been led to Christ through their teaching, though few have yet come forward for baptism. Tamil women are much more ready to act up to their convictions than those of the Malayálam race, who shrink from the severance of earthly ties which baptism involves."

With one more glimpse at our Travancore and Cochin Mission we must conclude. Miss Waitt, of Trevandrum, who in the summer of 1894 took charge of the important work at Trichur, wrote thus of it:

"From a spiritual point of view, Trichur is a veritable stronghold of the enemy. But the Misses Coleman have done a wonderful work here. Many high-caste women converts are living in our compound, who have become Bible-women, and who are now working for the Master. Others, who come from the lower castes and wish to become Christians, are taken into the Industrial School to learn mat-making or to beat paddy, etc., during their probation. There are some twenty women and children living in or around this compound."

Though we have rapidly scanned most of our village centres, how much remains untold!—facts stranger than fiction, trials of faith and triumphs of grace—that would make an almost interminable record. But our glance will not be in vain if, as we look at some of India's countless villages, we hear the cry of India's village women, "Come over and help us!" For that cry is growing louder as the days multiply. Each new worker takes up and echoes the same ringing invocation, until it reverberates, as it were, from station to station, in one long, loud agonising appeal. And from Heaven itself the VOICE of the Triune GOD is calling,

"Whom shall I send? and who will go for US?"

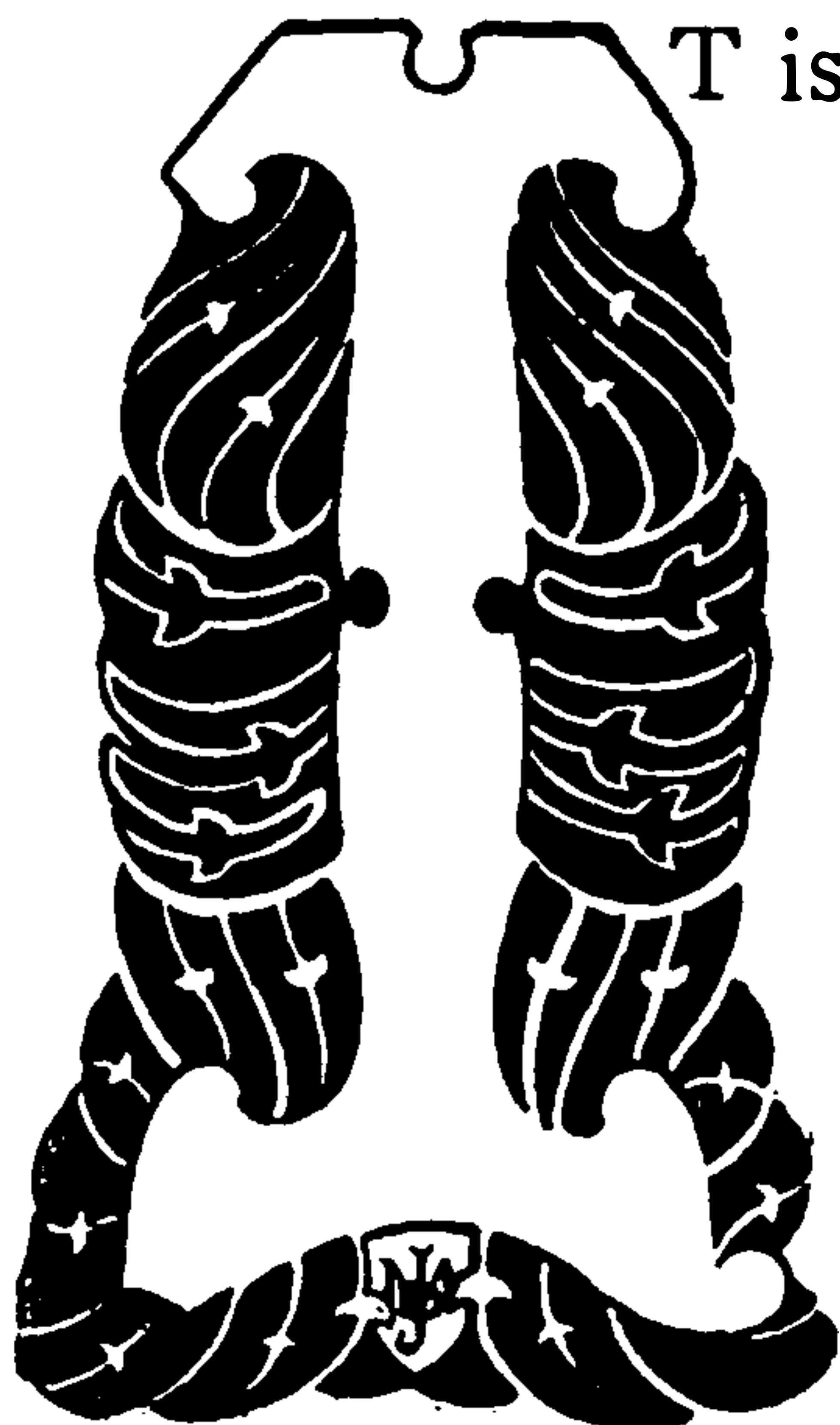
WHOM? . . . . . WHO?

CHAPTER VII

Indian Women their own Evangelists

"She went away and called her sister, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee."—*St. John* xi. 28.

"The native workers need our prayers as much as the missionaries who go forth from home. Though the climate and the general surroundings do not equally try them, they have to face the same labour, the same or equally great temptations, the same disappointments as the European missionary, and they need no less than she does a large measure of the grace of GOD. How much have we prayed for them?" —*Georgina A. Gollock.*



T is a very remarkable fact," says Dr. Pierson, "that the native converts in every land where Missions have been established have, within one generation, furnished five times as many evangelists, teachers and native helpers as the original missionary force. If the Church could be aroused to such holy effort as could at once ensure the sowing of the whole world-field within fifty years, the number of native converts that would take up the work of Missions among their own countrymen might make unnecessary all foreign missions in the Church."

The C.E.Z.M.S. has ever looked upon its growing band of native women workers as an indication of its vitality and strength. To-day (1897) it sees 700 Bible-women and native teachers upon its rolls, and takes up the inspired Apostle's

words concerning such fellow-labourers, "I thank my GOD upon every remembrance of you." Of many it may truly be said, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, and ye became followers of us and of the LORD, having received the Word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost, so that ye were ensamples to all that believe . . . for from you sounded out the Word of the LORD."

The training of Bible-women is perhaps one of the most important of all branches of C.E.Z.M.S. It is impossible in these pages even to glance at the various training stations, but a description of a Training Class at Palamcottah, begun in 1895, will tell something of the methods pursued.

"Will you just take a peep into the drawing-room of a Mission bungalow? About seven women all look up brightly, and, rising from their cross-legged position on the floor, give a hearty salám. The teacher has, perhaps, the happiest face and brightest greeting of all. These are the members of our Bible-women's Training Class, who make this room their schoolroom, for there is no other.[1]

"The need of training our Bible-women more efficiently has long been on our hearts. The Master wants the best instruments for His work. Often these women meet with hard questions, and they must be ready to answer, and able to give a reason of the hope within them. Some supporters of Missions question the use of secular education. An earnest native Christian, now gone to his rest, had his mind first opened to see the falseness of his religion by reading geography and finding that there were no seas of 'ghí,' or milk, as he had been taught! Practical teaching on simple hygiene must be of use in a country where the simplest rules of health are unobserved and unknown. In everything the one object is

[1] A large class-room has since been built by C.E.Z.M.S. in the Mission compound.

kept in view, to make the students more fit instruments for future work.

"A catechist gives the Scripture instruction, his wife, a trained teacher, taking the secular work. Twice a week, towards the end of their time of training, the women go out with some of the experienced Bible-women to be tested as to their power of imparting knowledge. In the Home, untidy habits and useless customs are quietly reproved. Day by day the bond between teachers and learners grows stronger, until they become one united family.

"The story of the first woman to leave the little band as a full-fledged Bible-woman is not without its pathos. It was a step which cost.

"A letter from Ootacamund—a distant place—with a plea for a Bible-woman could not be refused. The only member of the Training Class equal to the work is called out. 'Remember, this may be GOD'S call; go and think about it, and give your answer to-morrow.' A sorrowful face goes back to the beloved class.

"The next morning this woman presented herself with the quietly spoken words, 'I will go.' She knew nothing about wages, except that her wants would be supplied. She knew that the villages close to her, where she had worked before, were waiting expectantly for her, but, like many an English woman, she knew that her place at home could be filled more easily. The pastor and his wife from Ootacamund were returning from their furlough, and the would-be teacher had to leave under their escort four days after the 'I will go' had been said. There was an old mother, of whom farewell must be taken, and an only child to leave behind, a delicate little fellow, needing boarding-school life.

"A short dismissal meeting was held the night before. The new Bible-woman, the first-fruits of the class, must be a true missionary! Few farewell gatherings have been more im-

pressive; prayers, dedication, bright and earnest words from the pastor, and a hymn for workers sung by the class. The next day there was a little crowd at the station, and then came the good-bye salám, the mother and child standing with their hands clasped together as if they could not part.

"Not a pretty child, this little son of our missionary Bible-woman, and with a reputation for being 'rather a mischievous boy'; but only eight years old, and with a warm, loving little heart," wrote Miss Ridsdale. "If you had seen his half-dazed look of rigid pain as his mother finally unclasped his hands from her own at the railway station, and left him, and afterwards as he watched the train disappearing, your sympathies could not fail to be enlisted. It was arranged that he should come to me at five o'clock that day and write a little letter to his mother. I had to go out, and as I feared I might not be punctual in returning, I left pencil and note-paper on my table. When I came home, I found him waiting with the letter written—just such a little, brave, manly letter as a wee white laddie might write to his absent mother, telling her that she 'must not be sorry about him, for he had not cried so very much, and that she must be brave also and pray to GOD for him, as he would for her, and that he was going to be a very good boy.'"

In Calcutta, the devotion of the Bible-women to their work is very real. In speaking of them, Miss Hunt says: "Signs of age in some make me wonder what we shall do when their time of rest arrives. But I firmly believe that when that day comes, none of them will go empty-handed into the presence of the King. The other day Rebecca was visiting a Zenána. When she went in, a vendor of grass 'chooris,' or bracelets which the Bengali women are fond of wearing, was sitting near by, and said rather rudely, 'What do you come for? Who is Jesus?' A little 'Bow,' *i.e.*, young wife, took up the word before the Bible-woman could answer. 'Who is Jesus? Jesus

is the Son of GOD.' Immediately a discussion arose among the women of the house, but she kept to her point, giving the reasons for her belief, and finishing thus: 'I do not care what you say. I shall always believe in Him as the Son of GOD.' Rebecca remarked afterwards, 'She preached so well that I said nothing, but only listened quietly.'"

The Converts' Home at Barrackpore, like the Calcutta Normal School, is a handmaid to all the C.E.Z. stations in North India. Our devoted missionary, Miss Good, whose successful work in India began more than twenty-five years ago, has had the joy of seeing converts returning to their own villages to assist in schools held in their own homes; of witnessing, in one instance, the baptism of a woman, for *ten* years under instruction, who, in spite of all the opposition of Bráhmans and others, was enabled to return at once to her own home, resuming her place in the household (a most unusual circumstance); and who so faithfully witnessed for Christ, that her two sons—one in early manhood—have also been baptised; whilst, shortly afterwards, her husband—won by her prayers and consistent life—was received into the outward fold of Christ.

Converts from any Missionary Society are welcomed to this refuge for those who wish to give up all for Christ's sake; and the life of each one is watched with interest. During the first eleven years of its existence, more than fifty women were received into it, and these have been carefully taught and trained. Some were appointed as teachers in one or other of the twelve thriving Mission Schools around Barrackpore; others have become medical students at Calcutta, or pupil-teachers in Mission Boarding Schools; but each and all are alike imbued with the one burning desire to win their country-women for Christ. At the close of 1895, five women, among them two young widows, who had been under instruction in the Barrackpore Home, were baptised; and a further joy to our workers in 1896 was the fact that GOD had given them, as

head teacher, one who herself, some years ago, was a convert from Hinduism. "We have had many teachers for this class," says Miss Good, "but for one so specially suitable we thank God." An inmate then under her care was a girl of only fifteen, who had been married at two-and-a-half years old, and became a widow at seven years of age!

As an instance of the sharp trial of faith which many a convert undergoes in the Barrackpore Home, the following was related by a worker a short time since:—

"Two years ago, Giri's relatives tried hard to persuade her to come back and to forsake Christ. Her father then came again and again to see her, but has neither written nor enquired after her since. During this year her mother died. This was a terrible grief to Giri, who had never seen her since the day, eighteen months before, when she, the mother, came over in a closed carriage to Barrackpore to try to induce her daughter to come back. She occasionally hears of her relatives through a married sister. The letters are affectionate, yet nearly always contain such sentences as the following:—'Why do you want your father's present address? Have you not brought disgrace enough on him and on us all? To see your handwriting, or even to hear your name, does but renew his sorrow. You are as dead to us. Only I, who cannot quite give up my affection for you, feel I must write sometimes. Do not expect more than this.'"

Miss Collisson tells of the value she attaches to the work of native fellow-labourers in her itinerating campaigns around Krishnagar, Nadiyá, and Santipur. The Bible-women, some of whom are experienced village preachers, and some, recent converts, walk long distances uncomplainingly, and meet our missionaries at the entrance of the villages. Old Dubi's knowledge of the Bible and her apt readiness in meeting the arguments of Hindus and Muhammadans are astonishing. She takes their objections point by point, giving numerous

quotations from the Prophets, reading portions to prove the word spoken (she knows exactly where to find them), and then, putting down her Bible, she looks stedfastly at the arguers with the challenge, "Brother, answer *that* if you can!" and with outstretched arms she waits for their answers, until sometimes they slink away from her earnest gaze. "Dubi has a wonderful power, such as I have never seen," says Miss Collisson, "in any other preacher, man or woman."

The reality of the constraining power of Christ's love in the hearts of these dear native workers is sometimes touchingly shown.

"Our Bible-woman, Nestarini," wrote Miss Dawe some time ago, "has for years longed and prayed for an opportunity to go among her own people (Hindus), and tell them of her Saviour. Much to her delight, she was able to go there during the pujà holidays this year, provided with a quantity of tracts, picture leaflets, and Bible portions. Before starting, she asked every one to pray for a blessing on her visit and her work. I had a most interesting letter from her some days later. After telling me how warmly she had been welcomed by all her people, and how kind the Christian family were who had received her as a guest, she said, 'My mouth has not had one day's rest.' She spoke faithfully to large numbers of her own and her husband's relatives and friends, and returned with a greater desire than ever that we should go and work among the people of that village."

In the Medical Mission stations, and especially in connection with the Open-air Dispensary, the Bible-woman is an invaluable helper. Miss G. Gollock, in *A Winter's Mails*, thus relates her experiences as an eye-witness of the group of patients surrounding the Ratnapur Dispensary, Nadiyá. "The Bible-woman was speaking to them. Instantly I had a strong, deep sense that GOD the Spirit Himself was there and at work. It was very solemn and wonderful. The Bible-woman,

whose life bears out her words, was talking simply and lovingly, as one would readily gather from her tones, and the dear, simple, hard-worked women were *drinking in.* Some of the faces were wonderful; it seemed, too, as if the *hearts* were willing, though the poor minds were dull and slow. As I write, the face of one woman, middle-aged and careworn, rises before me. She was straining every power to grasp what the Bible-woman said; and if ever a face indicated thirst and utter willingness to take hold of the Water of Life, that dear brown

THE BIBLE-WOMEN'S BOAT—NUDDEA.

face did. Other women glanced aside at us; this woman, I believe, had caught some glimpse of Christ, and her soul was going after Him."

Most graphic is the way in which some of these Indian women evangelists illustrate their subject. Of one in the Jabalpur district, Miss Branch says:

"I was sitting near her one day while she was telling the women about the miraculous draught of fishes. She said· 'While the fishes were *in* the water they were not sensible

that they were there, but when they were being drawn up in the net they began to feel uncomfortable and to say, "Hai! hai! what a sad condition is mine!" So men, when they are drowned in sin, do not think about their danger; they are as happy as the fishes in the sea. But when their hearts are touched by the Holy Spirit, and by hearing the words written in God's Holy Book, then they begin to be uneasy and to say, "Hai! hai! what a sad state is mine!"'"

Space would fail us to tell of the noble work in which the staff of Bible-women at Amritsar is engaged. But a few words from Miss Hewlett's pen give a glimpse of a unique evangelist.

"A peculiarly bright, happy-looking girl of about eighteen, sitting down at the beginning of the morning in one of our Amritsar Dispensaries, with her large Gospel of St. Matthew, in Dr. Moon's system of raised characters for the blind, open on her knees; she can see nothing, but her fingers move swiftly across the page, and she begins to read better than some persons who have the use of their eyes! As the morning goes on, all the sick who come for medicine will listen with astonishment and pleasure, and she will have opportunities of witnessing for Jesus to those who ask her a reason of the hope that is in her. She was once herself in the darkness of Muhammadanism, and in the Blind School found Christ. She is now a rejoicing and consistent Christian. Do you think that as we stood and watched her *delight* in reading the comfortable words of our Saviour Christ, we asked ourselves if to bring such to the Lord were work *worth doing*? Rather is it not work which angels might envy?"

To Miss Hewlett also we are indebted for the following pathetic story:

"More than forty years ago, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, one of the first missionaries in Amritsar, opened the first little school for

girls. Two Muhammadan girls attended it, but were kept so strictly in pardah that their father only allowed them to go when Mrs. Fitzpatrick took a house next door to his own, and made a door in the wall for their use. She greatly attracted them by her loving, gentle ways, and she taught them to read. When she left Amritsar—never to return—they became careless, and to a great extent forgot their early impressions. Not until the year 1881 did they truly turn to GOD, and then He found them and brought them to Himself, through the instru-

A BLIND BIBLE-WOMAN.

mentality of the Medical Mission, in the great pestilence which visited Amritsar that year.

"After their baptism they began learning to read again, and it was surprising how quickly their old knowledge came back. Their baptismal names were Lydia and Phœbe. Both were soon put into training as Bible-women and nurses, and for several years both laboured diligently, and with many marked instances of blessing, in bringing others to Jesus. Lydia died in 1892, and it is a delightful fact, as showing her

real love for the work and zeal in it, that during a long, weary 'breaking-up' time, in a hopeless illness, though she rested in the afternoons, often partially unconscious (from fatigue and weakness), yet she insisted on dressing every morning and going to her work as Bible-woman at a dispensary. On the last day she said, 'No, Miss Sahiba, don't detain me; *just for to-day*, I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the LORD'; and she bravely went, and read and *sang*! Coming back, she lay down to die, so happy!

"Phœbe still works on, weak, but just as bright and brave."

Miss Dewar has told exquisitely the story of 'Mai' (*i.e.*, mother) Susan, the veteran Punjábi Bible-woman, as "A Child of Long Ago." This oldest convert of the Amritsar Mission, a high-caste Bráhman woman, was an indefatigable witness for GOD among the children, in the Zenánas, and, in later years, among the neglected women of the villages around Amritsar. She was winning in manner, and as sweet-tempered as she was faithful and skilful in argument with her Hindu and Muhammadan sisters, whilst our itinerating missionaries found in her a devoted and spiritually-minded companion. "Everybody loved her. From the toil-worn grannie down to the noisy, dirty little children, all looked upon Mai Susan as their special friend. And when she passed away in 1889, all mourned her loss." Her name is still a household word in many a Punjábi village.

As one of the foremost among native Christian women-workers in South India, we must mention Mrs. Hensman, (daughter of the late Rev. W. T. Satthianadan, B.D.), who is devotedly labouring for the good of Hindu women in Madras. As Hon. Lady Superintendent of a band of native Bible-women, whom she herself has trained, she is winning her Indian sisters for Christ throughout that neighbourhood, and her recently published Report abounds with interesting tokens that the leaven of the Gospel is surely, though secretly, raising

the thoughts, feelings, and aspirations of Zenána inmates. When we read of a Harvest Thanksgiving Service at which a table is filled with the freewill offerings of our Hindu sisters;—one woman giving her ear-rings set with precious stones;—when we are told of a social gathering of some 150 Hindu ladies and 100 children held in Mrs. Hensman's house at the beginning of this year (1897); and, more especially, when we know that on the same spot, a few months later, she was able to convene a T.Y.E. Conference of native Christian ladies, at which a Hindu widow spoke for some fifteen minutes, with deep emotion, of the blessing of direct evangelistic work in the Zenánas, we may well exclaim with Mrs. Hensman, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!"

From Tinnevelly, in which province there are fifty-four C.E.Z.M.S. Bible-women at work, Amurtham, a Bible-woman who has itinerated among Coolie women in the Nilgiris and in the Wynaad—the high tableland near Ootacamund, where Miss Wallinger so long laboured—has written of her own work thus:

"For many years, by the arrangement of our Lady Superintendent, we have been preaching the Gospel to many different castes and selling Bibles to them, staying for two or three months together in the different villages. For the three months of March, April, and May (1891) we were in the Surandei district, and preached to the poor people in Utrancottai, and in the village of Sambootoo near it. Before this only one family came to church. As most of the people are small farmers, we used to go at five o'clock in the morning, and at seven o'clock in the evening, to preach and sing to them. After singing hymns we found that the people listened much more willingly to Bible stories. The women would come in numbers to hear us. Many wished to change their heathen names; and when we told them about the great privilege of baptism, they were all anxious to receive it. The congrega-

tion and pastor asked permission from the missionary to have these people prepared for baptism. We remained, teaching them daily for two months; and on the 12th of July the Rev. T. Kember and the Rev. Anthony James came and baptised sixty-eight people—twenty-four men, twenty women, and twenty-four children."

At Trichur, where seven Bible-women are now at work, much of the good seed of the Gospel has been scattered solely by their hands. One of these native workers, Elizabeth, will take the Message to no fewer than 4,700 people in the year, chiefly high-caste women; while another Bible-woman, Rahel, toils amongst the scattered houses and villages far away from the high roads, thinking nothing of fatigue if only souls can be won. As a sample of the kind of argument which these native teachers skilfully wield, the following may be cited:

One day, a woman was talking about going on a pilgrimage to some distant shrine. The Bible-woman asked her, "Will

going on a pilgrimage and bathing in the great river at Kashi—*i.e.*, Benares—*cleanse* the *heart*? Do not people sin after going to Kashi? If your gold necklace were bent or broken, would you wash it or scour it? No; you would take it to the goldsmith, to the man who made it. So, if your heart is wrong, you must take it to GOD who made it."

Again, speaking to an old woman who had told her of the death of a boy the day before, "As from the mango tree there fall to the ground flowers, buds, green and ripe fruit, so young and old fall by death. You are now very old, and must soon fall; therefore must you seek salvation at once." The old woman said, "What must I do? If I am pious, is not that enough?" "No," replied Elizabeth. "Suppose a person owes you some money, and, when asked to pay the debt, says that he will never borrow again; will that be enough? So, if our sins are unpardoned, what is the good of being religious? We must *first* pray for the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus Christ the Mediator. If we offer our prayers to GOD through Him, He will forgive all our sins. *After this* we should lead a pious life, and for this we must ask for grace from GOD. In order to pray to GOD you need not go to Kashi; you can pray at home, in your own house. Therefore pray now, seek salvation at once; for now is the accepted time."

Among our missionaries to-day we thankfully reckon many Indian women of good birth, refinement, and education. Henry Martyn thought that it would be a miracle if a Bráhman became a Christian. What would he have said could he have foreseen that the daughter of a Bráhman convert would, within the century, have been able to plead with English ladies to help their perishing sisters? Yet in *India's Women* for July, 1897, appeared the substance of an address, given at the C.E.Z.M.S. annual meeting at Calcutta, by Mrs. Chowdhury, the daughter of a high-caste Bráhman convert,

and the widow of Dr. Kali Prosonno Chowdhury, who, since 1885, has been devoting herself to efforts for the spiritual welfare of her countrywomen at Bardwán and Howrah. We quote some of her stirring words, as they fall with peculiar power from the lips of an Indian lady:

"Our lines have fallen in pleasant places, and we have a grave responsibility, a duty which we owe to India. The Hindus and Muhammadans know no difference yet between the professing Christian and the true servant of Jesus. . . . They will not read the life of Jesus for a holy example, but form their opinion of Him by your life and mine. . . . Some will go as far as to say that 'mission work is a failure.' I should have been a Hindu and a worshipper of idols to-day, had not the Gospel of Jesus been brought to our land. . . . We believe that the Holy Spirit is secretly working in many hearts, and, though we see only a few baptisms, '*that Day*' will reveal what the unceasing prayers, tears, and labours of our English brothers and sisters have done for India and her people. . . . Dear English and Bengali friends, have we no part in this glorious work? With regard to the hungry multitude, our dear Master said to His disciples, 'Give ye them to eat.' He says the same to-day; but not until we yield what is already in our possession can He work *through* us and *with* us to feed the hungry thousands with the Bread of Life. The Master asks from us the "five loaves and the two fishes." May we hear His voice speaking to us now, and calling us into partnership in the glorious work!

"'For we must *share* if we would keep
That good thing from above;
Ceasing to *give*, we cease to *have*—
Such is the law of love.'"

That consecrated, refined, intelligent, and educated Indian women are the fittest evangelists to their own sisters there can be no doubt. God is raising up a noble band of such workers

from the ranks of the down-trodden, imprisoned Hindu and Muhammadan women in answer to the prayers, and as a reward to the unceasing labours, of their European missionary sisters. A passing mention must be made, ere we close our chapter, to the honoured names of Christian Indian lady missionaries upon our roll-call, past and present, whose influence is permeating Zenána life to-day, lifting it upward, heavenward, CHRISTward.

Has it been in vain that our missionaries of long ago plunged into the darkness of Zenána homes, and, lifting the pardah of ignorance, sin, and suffering in the name of Christ, let in a flood of life-giving light upon the tear-stained faces of their secluded sisters? Let the life histories of such as the Lady Harnám Singh, Mrs. Golakhnáth, and Mrs. Satthianadhan, with their accomplished daughters, Mrs. Chowdhury, and her sister Mrs. Chatterji, Mrs. Mitter, Ellen Lakshmi Goreh, and many another, whose names are too numerous to mention here, teach us to pray that thousands of Indian women, by GOD's grace, may quickly become evangelists to the women of their native land. So shall India be won for Christ.

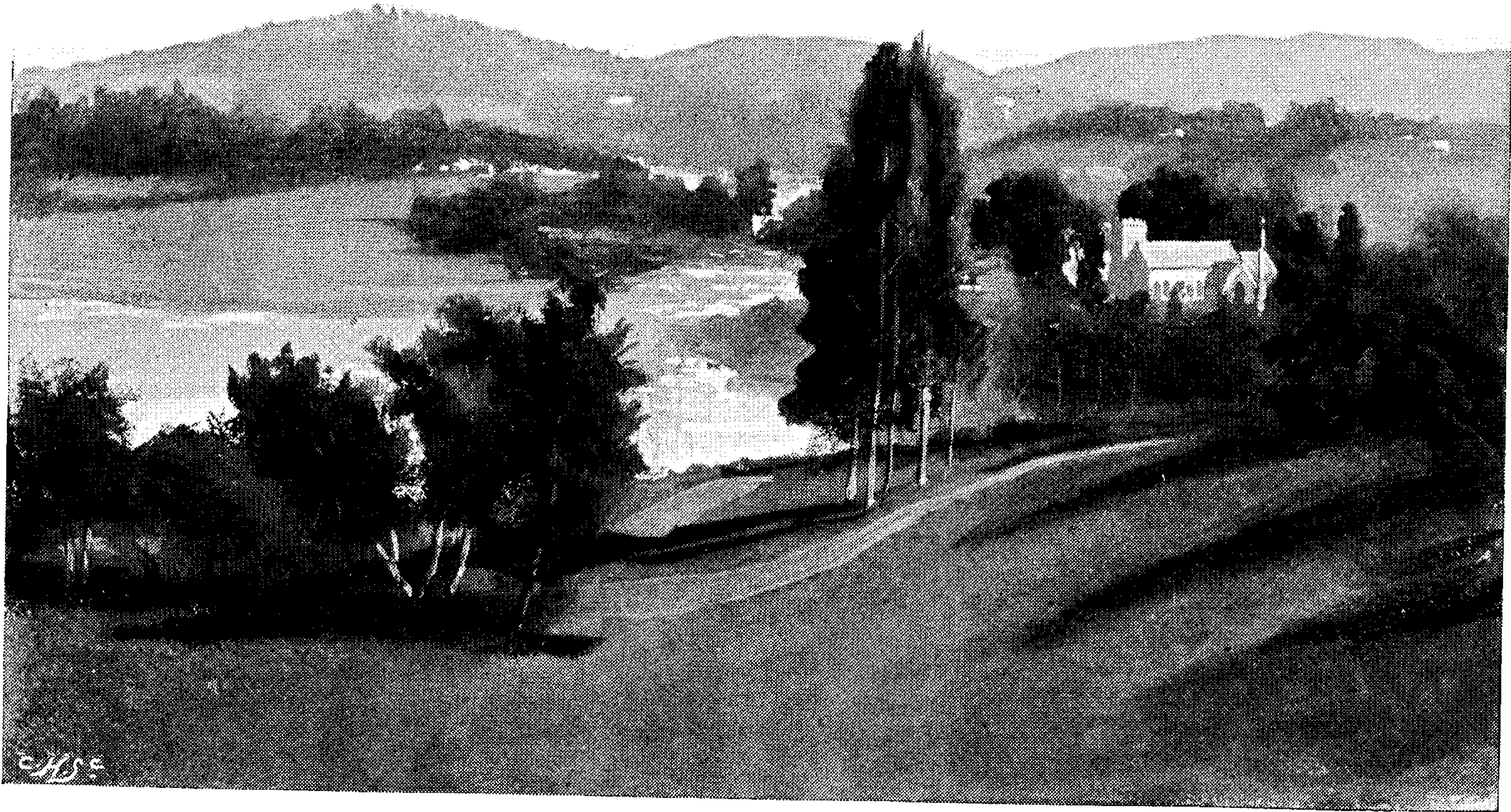
CHAPTER VIII

India's Girls for Christ!

> "How sweet 'twill be at evening
> If you and I can say,
> 'LORD Jesus, we've been seeking
> The lambs that went astray;
> Heart-sore and faint with hunger,
> We heard them making moan,
> And lo! we come at nightfall
> And bear them safely home!'"

" HRISTIAN schoolwork arches India like a magnificent rainbow of hope." Would that we could tell a long, unbroken story of each spot on that large, dark continent where this arch springs and rests! Hopeless as we may be tempted to feel when we glance at the masses of sunken, superstitious Hindu womanhood, despairing as some may be regarding the fanatical Muhammadan adult, we cannot be sceptical of results among the thousands of the bright, impressionable children, who, at their own earnest entreaties, are crowding our Mission schools. From the tiny Village School to the City College for Girls, let us trace how the leaven of the Kingdom is working, "taken" and "hid" by *women's* hands "till the whole is leavened."

Our village schools in the Punjáb would certainly startle a



"SOUTH INDIA HAS A LOVELINESS ALL ITS OWN"—OOTACAMUND.

To face Ch. VIII

School Board teacher in England! Frequently an old crippled woman acts as recruiting sergeant, hobbling round to fetch the children, whom she will drag straight out of bed, unwashed, unfed. It is not the custom here to change clothes at night, and the daily toilet is almost *nil.* Hair-dressing, in the innumerable tiny plaits which is the Punjábi fashion, is far too long a process to be performed oftener than once a week. The mothers are seldom energetic enough to cook the food before school-time, *i.e.*, ten o'clock in the cold season and seven o'clock in the hot weather. So the children are hungry when they arrive, and soon want to run home for a meal, or have their food brought to them. This is generally a flat wheaten cake, 'chhápáti,' with some curds. If they are Hindus, they retire into a corner, sometimes behind a bedstead standing on end, to avoid any defiling touch or shadow while eating.

In this schoolroom all the children sit on the floor, which is covered with matting, and the elder ones are provided with benches for desks. The tinies use their fingers as pens, and write on sand-boards; the next grade use white mud on black wooden slates, with reed pens; the older ones have white wooden slates and Indian ink, which readily washes off; while the most advanced write on paper.

The head teacher sits on a low chair, the frame of which is covered with red sealing-wax; while her assistants have plain four-legged stools with rope seats. The children like to read in a monotonous chant, rocking themselves to and fro all the time, and to prepare their lessons aloud and all together. Quietness is an unknown art, difficult for both teachers and children to acquire; yet it is being instilled.

Hindu children call their teacher "Sister," or 'Bahin-ji,' which they are always bleating out like a little flock of goats. "Bahin-ji, there is no mud in my ink-pot!" "Bahin-ji, Gango is pinching me!" or "she has pulled my ear-rings!" etc., etc.

The regularity of attendance, too, leaves much to be desired. Inquiry is made for one child—she has gone to a wedding, or a mourning; for another—she has fever, or "her eyes have come," *i.e.*, she has an attack of ophthalmia; for a third—"she has fallen off the roof.' One has gone on pilgrimage to some sacred bathing-place, another is "carrying mud." A mother comes to fetch her child to go to some religious ceremony; or, on a particular day in the year, to be worshipped (!), when she will return with a patch of red paint on her forehead.[1] There are also numerous festivals, when the schools must be closed altogether.

The ages of our pupils vary from three or four to thirty or forty years, or even more. The elder ones are nearly always widows, or forsaken wives, who come to learn in order to earn a livelihood as teachers. It is quite a common thing for a mother and daughter to be taught in the same school, and even in the same class.

As long ago as 1885 Miss Dewar wrote cheerily of the large Girls' School at Amritsar, in the building lent by the Síkh Sardáni.

"'What bright, happy faces!' visitors exclaim on seeing our pets. They are; yet let us peep into their hearts, if we can. Here, glittering in the sunlight, is a little child-bride, proudly showing off her jewels to a circle of admiring playmates; there, in a dark corner, is a poorly-dressed little creature, sadly peering out from beneath her cotton chaddar, who has come back to school again because she is a widow!

"Let us tell them a story—the story of Moses. How readily they imagine the grief of the Hebrew mothers when the command has gone forth to kill the *boys*. 'They cry loud and

[1] There is one day in the year when it is the custom in the Punjáb to worship unmarried Hindu girls. The worshipper proceeds in the same way as in worshipping an idol—presenting offerings of sweetmeats, etc., to her, and putting a daub of red paint upon her forehead.

long when a boy dies, but very little if it is only a girl,' says a sweet wee thing, who *ought* to be a home pet. And how wondering and wistful the big eyes look when we tell how much little English girls are loved!

"Poor child! Over all her troubles, present and future, she has to bear such names as 'Akhi' (weary), or 'Kauri' (bitter), telling of the cold greeting which met her at first. Still, if there is anything in a name, we can read brighter tales elsewhere. Perhaps next to her sits 'Dhamie' (the blessed), or 'Jai-kor' (the princess of victory).

"Let us take a peep at Mulo, the Punjábi teacher, in the midst of her work. We are in the courtyard before either the teacher or children are aware. Many injunctions have been given to work quietly, yet we can see some half-dozen wild little things running to and fro, screaming for a pen, or a slate, or quarrelling with some equally noisy ones over an ink-, or, rather, *mud*-pot. But Mulo is equal to the occasion. Rising to her full height, she puckers her good-natured face into a frown and says 'Chup!' (silence) in so awful a tone that without more ado the mud-pot is left alone, the pens and slates are forgotten, and the little wranglers are all standing in a row. Then Mulo looks so graciously on her little troop that we cannot help forgetting, in such perfect stillness, that the rule was ever broken.

"There are some interesting girls in the little band. One, a fat, comfortable-looking creature called 'Nikki,' used to come to school under false pretences. Telling her people that she was going to the Golden Temple to do pujà, she ran off to have reading and writing instead. The trick was soon found out, but happily no hindrance was put in her way.

"There is something lovable in Mulo's funny face. One day, while listening to the children's Bible lesson, she said, 'Why don't you teach me?' 'Don't you hear what is being taught in the school?' the missionary said. 'Yes,' said

Mulo, 'but I cannot listen with my whole heart while the children are here.' Accordingly, after school hours, Mulo has a lesson in her own home. A short time ago, when the subject to be studied was the Second Coming of Christ, Mulo looked thoughtful for awhile, and said, with real earnestness, 'I do want to know Him *now*, so that when He comes I may not be left behind.'"

The value of the simple secular teaching given in our Mission schools is sometimes strikingly evident. The elder girls are questioned, perhaps, on the piece of black stone, which they have been taught to hold sacred. "Why, Mem," they cry, "it's an *inanimate object*; how can it be GOD?"

A LITTLE SCHOOL NEAR KRISHNAGAR.

Let us go into the class-room of a school near Barrackpore, and listen to the catechising for a few moments. Here, under one teacher, are about twenty children, most of them eight or nine years old. All can read Bengali well enough to learn a verse of "The Old, Old Story" daily, and some can read *Peep of Day* fluently. It is past three o'clock; each child has fastened up her little bundle of books, and placed them on the mat before her. Now they all stand up, and one of them hands us the Catechism specially prepared for Hindu children. Opening it somewhere in the middle, we ask:

"What is required that sin may be forgiven?"

"Atonement," is the answer, with one voice.

"What kind of atonement? Will a few flowers and a little water do?"

"A perfect atonement, a sufficient atonement." "We don't think that flowers will do: all flowers are GOD'S," adds an elder girl.

"Can atonement be made by man?"

"No; because man is sinful."

"Can the priest make it?"

This is another home thrust. Some reply "Yes," others "No"; so we continue:

"Is the priest sinless? Has he never broken GOD'S commandments?"

"Yes, every one has sinned; so of course he can't make atonement."

"Why? because he himself needs——"

"Needs atonement."

"Has there ever been a sinless man?"

"The Lord Jesus Christ, Miss Sahiba."

"Yes, He is both GOD and——"

"Man."

"GOD and man. Then He can make atonement between GOD and man. Has He done so?"

Children all together, quoting from the Catechism:

"'The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of GOD, died upon the cross to make atonement for the sins of all the world.'"

In speaking of a little school near Krishnagar, Miss Collisson some time ago remarked on the brightness and intelligence of the children. "They hasten from one lesson to another in a breathless hurry, as if their little lives depended on making all possible speed, and putting down one book, with 'What next?' will pounce upon another, and begin to repeat a fresh lesson before the teacher has time to find her own place. They positively run races with sums, spelling, etc.,

winding up by repeating page after page of a little book of poetry, of which they are extremely fond, and also the 'Old, Old Story.' Little Locki, the head girl, is very bright. In reading St. Matthew's Gospel, the words, 'My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' took special hold of her mind, and she learned the whole passage by heart. One day I said, 'Tell me, Locki, do you understand those words, and why do you think that they are so beautiful?' Her answer came readily enough: 'Why, He was suffering His Father's anger *all for us*, and it was so dreadful that He could not help calling out. That is why I think them so beautiful.' I wish I could convey to you the expression of intense feeling with which she said this, and how the meaning of the words seemed to have entered her heart.

"In one of their favourite hymns there is a verse which runs thus:

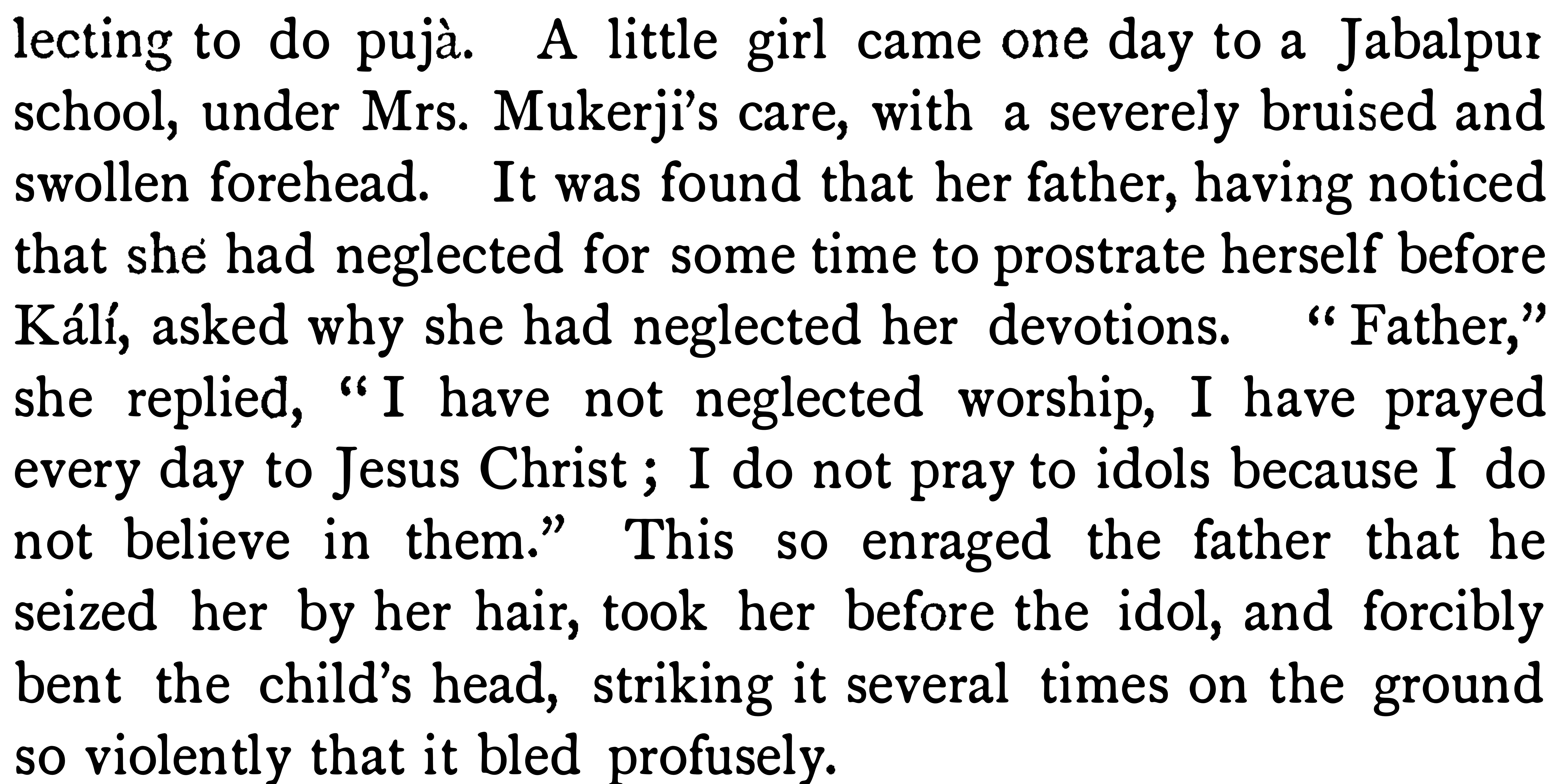
> "'Before, I was the servant of sin, . . .
> But now I am GOD's child.'

I drew a pencil through the lines, saying, 'You cannot sing those words; they are only for Christ's little children to repeat'; and you should have heard how they begged me not to make a mark through the verse, 'for,' said they, 'we *do* love Jesus, and we do want to serve Him, so those lines will do for us!'"

For a moment let us glance at the Girls' Boarding School (C.M.S.), under Miss Bristow's care at Krishnagar. Miss A. Sampson (formerly in charge) tells us:

"There are about forty little girls, whose homes are in the pretty brown mud huts in the villages around. They are the children of Christian parents, and the school was opened in 1891, with the special object of training and watching over the girls of the native Christian Church, in view of their becoming the wives and mothers of the future Christian community. The institution is worked on the simplest lines,

with as little difference from the children's own home life and habits as possible. No shoes or stockings are worn; no spoons or forks are used; the beds are simply mats, spread out at night, but rolled up and laid aside during the day. There are no benches or forms, the pupils sit at the feet of their teacher. The 'three R's,' sewing, singing of hymns, cooking their simple meals, and the learning of other homely duties, form the code of instruction, with, of course, special Bible teaching. It is a happy home; and if the workers' earnest prayer that every girl who enters may learn to love the Saviour be fulfilled, what may not be expected in days to come as each young life takes its place in the little Church of Christ in the Nadiyá district of Bengal?"



The instances are not few in which these dear Bengali girls are ready to suffer persecution for Christ's sake. They have constantly to bear harsh treatment at home for neglecting to do pujà. A little girl came one day to a Jabalpur school, under Mrs. Mukerji's care, with a severely bruised and swollen forehead. It was found that her father, having noticed that she had neglected for some time to prostrate herself before Kálí, asked why she had neglected her devotions. "Father," she replied, "I have not neglected worship, I have prayed every day to Jesus Christ; I do not pray to idols because I do not believe in them." This so enraged the father that he seized her by her hair, took her before the idol, and forcibly bent the child's head, striking it several times on the ground so violently that it bled profusely.

No wonder that another Hindu father should say, "My

child is saturated with Christianity; her very books smell of Christ." And we need not be surprised to find that the Bengali newspapers lay complaints against such schools. "Before our children can read the *Ramayan*, they know the Bible down to the Flood, and of course *everything* about Jesus Christ. *And they never forget it.*"

But, though the heathen rage, "*I* will work, and who shall let it?" At Majitha, in the Amritsar district, "the wrath of man" was lately, in a remarkable manner, made "to praise GOD," while "the remainder of wrath" He "restrained." The young teacher of our Werka village school, 'the firstfruits of the girls' school at Majitha' (her home), was baptised, and her conversion caused great dismay and disturbance there. A man was hired to go round the village as a crier, to proclaim that if any one, Hindu, Sikh, or Muhammadan, dared to send his children to the Mission schools, he would not be allowed to drink water from the well, or to smoke a 'huqqa,' *i.e.*, pipe, with his neighbours. But, after a time, the man seems to have forgotten his message, for he began to say instead that the teaching there was very good, and the children would get nice prizes! Of course his employers were furious. Yet, since then, the head Sirdar of the place, a Síkh, has promised to give any piece of land our ladies choose for a bungalow; the school has recovered from the opposition, and now numbers fifty scholars.

Of the work and worth of Mission schools amongst Muhammadan children we tell in a later chapter, *The Daughters of Islam*; and it is the Moslems themselves who, in the vehemence of their denunciation, pay the highest tribute!

Many a sweet story could be told of the way in which tiny hands are sowing the Seed, often unconsciously, in dark corners where the older missionary may not penetrate. "Charniti, how is it you remember your hymn, 'There is a happy land,' so correctly?" "Oh," replied the little Sunday

school girl of Bhágulpur, "I wrote it on the wall of our house to recollect it." At the Sarah Tucker Institution, little Thai and her sister Sundram were baptised at their own desire, and with their mother's full consent. Dear, bright little things, they evidenced real love to the Saviour, and begged their mother to be baptised also. "As she was very ignorant," says Miss Askwith, "we thought she had better wait awhile. During the long vacation, April and May, little Thai and Sundram taught their mother all they could, and I was quite surprised, when she came again, to find how much she knew. The way of salvation was quite clear to her, and her great wish seemed to be to follow the one true GOD and Saviour Whom her little girls had found. Though unable to read, she knew the Creed and LORD's Prayer perfectly, and the substance of the Ten Commandments. Her own children had taught her entirely. On Friday last, we had the great joy of witnessing her confess simple faith in Jesus by baptism in the Mission Church. It was quite touching to see the excited joy of the two little sisters."

Sometimes the Good Shepherd folds these little Indian lambs of His very early, and verily takes them "away from the evil to come." Last autumn, little Atchari of Batala, a tiny pupil of A.L.O.E., was gathered Home. She was baptised on her death-bed at her most earnest request. Bright and happy in the full and perfect trust of her redemption through Jesus Christ, one morning she said to her Aunt Umri, a Bible-woman, "Did you see Him—Jesus? He came all shining, and taking me by the hand, brought me before GOD, and said, 'Forgive this little one her sins.' I'm not a bit afraid to go."

Picture to yourself a large double-storeyed house, built round two squares, open to the sky and containing several families. It is a night in June, the hottest month of the Indian year. All the inmates have retired to rest, either on the flat roof or in the open courtyard. Mother and child are lying side by

side, and in the dead silence of the night, with the bright stars above, and many listening ears around, a lesson begins, the mother repeating after her child, word for word, the Second Commandment. Who can tell how many shall thus be led heavenward —"from idols to serve the living and true GOD, and to wait for His Son from heaven"?

If in each of our very numerous C.E.Z.M.S. schools scattered over India, one child becomes "like a little candle

shining in the night" to illumine the darkness behind the pardah, who shall say that our labour among the little ones is "in vain in the Lord"?

Time and space would fail us to tell of the interest surrounding the village schools of Jabalpur with their simple-hearted, affectionate little pupils; of the children of Mirat, whose studies are not unfrequently interrupted by an invasion of the sacred monkeys, "grinning behind the teacher's chair,"

and causing a general stampede; of the little Muhammadan school-girl at Klarkabad who brought so many of her people to Christ; of the young student winners of the Baring Memorial Scripture Prize; or of the encouraging school work at Batala, and the tiny school at Fathgarh, taught by a young convert; of the almost insuperable difficulties to be overcome in teaching the children of Ajnálá; of the steadily growing girls' schools of Jandiálá; of the invaluable work done by the Bahawa Girls' Boarding School; of the determined effort made to do away with Mission girls' schools in fanatical Pesháwar, and how GOD has overruled it; of the intelligent high-caste pupils at Karáchi, in the Sindhi girls' school, or of the little schools in the Sukkur bázár and Bahárwal Atári compound; and last, though not least, the teaching given to the little Kashmírí girls in all their unkempt loveliness and ignorance.

But we must turn from village schools, with their fascinating stories, to glance at three great colleges which are centres of extreme interest.

About three miles from the English quarter of Calcutta, and in just the centre of the Hindu population of the town, there is a large square, around which cluster many memories of missionary work and workers. It is, perhaps, about the size of Lincoln's Inn Fields, but, except for the fact that it is enclosed by an iron railing, Cornwallis Square is altogether unlike its London prototypes.

The centre is occupied by a large tank, with grassy slopes to the water's edge, but innocent of buttercup or daisy. Still, mignonette and other familiar English flowers are to be found in the gardens during the cold weather, while palms and plantains are reflected in the water. Passing Christ Church and its parsonage, now occupied by the C.M.S. Boarding School for Christian Girls, we come to the gate of the Bethune School for non-Christians, where the teaching is strictly secular, under

Government survey, and whose pupils are almost all members of the Bráhmo-Samáj.[1] On the opposite side of the tank we have the Scottish General Assembly Institute, connected in our minds with the honoured name of Dr. Duff; and lastly we come to the Church of England Zenána Mission Normal School,—the cradle of the infant C.E.Z.M.S.

A sketch of its history has been given to us already (see *Introductory*). Like the pebble thrown into the pool, it has been making an ever-widening circle. Opened as long ago as 1852 for training as teachers the daughters of European and Eurasian parents, to-day there is scarcely a Mission in North India that does not owe some of its best workers to this noble Institution. Forcible facts in its favour have reached us in the life-stories of its pupils, since the saintly Louisa Gomez was in their ranks until the present day.

The glass windows of a beehive can hardly disclose a scene of greater activity than that witnessed in our Mission Boarding Schools. During the winter of 1894 Miss Billington, in sending home articles to *The Daily Graphic* on 'Woman in India,' wrote thus of a glimpse she gained behind the scenes:

"Among the mission agencies most earnestly and energetically at work in Calcutta, the Church of England Zenána

[1] The Bráhmo Samáj is an attempt of some Hindu reformers to revive ancient Hinduism. They say that modern Hinduism is the corruption of a belief in the worship of the one supreme GOD: that image worship, caste, the pardah system, infant marriage and widowhood, and other hindrances to the work of missionaries, are the unworthy accretions which this creed has gathered in descending, from century to century, further from the truth. It will be easily understood that the freedom to take in new ideas, which men and women of this creed enjoy, opens the way for evil as well as good. The daughters of some of the leading gentlemen of Calcutta are members of the Bráhmo Samáj community. Many of them are earnest seekers after truth, and are in a sort of borderland between the darkness of Hinduism and the bright light of the Gospel. A Christian school for Bráhmo girls is urgently needed.

Mission takes a leading place. Miss Hunt and Miss Sophia Mulvany carry on respectively the control of the Hindu and Muhammadan spheres of labour.

"Miss Hunt, with a band of highly educated and devoted assistants—European, Eurasian, and Native—lives at and directs the Normal Training School. In the primary school section there are some hundred and fifty little Hindu girls in regular attendance. I think it is only fair to the Mission to state, that it honestly and straightforwardly warns all parents that their children will receive full Bible instruction and be taught to sing Christian hymns. So certainly are the demands upon the school increasing, that fresh arrangements are being made in its training department to allow of more room in the college. The children read and write from dictation, and some questions in arithmetic which I put to them were answered, verbally and on their slates, with commendable readiness and accuracy. At Miss Hunt's desire, I asked also for a proof or two of Bible learning, and my request for information on the story of Joseph and his brothers, and some of the miracles, received replies from these little Hindu girls which would have shamed many Sunday schools at home; and they also repeated the Ten Commandments. In the Training School were some thirty girls, all Christians, and all, save four,

the daughters of convert parents. The Mission, naturally, sends out none but Christian teachers, and the girls, for the most part, are boarders in the college, where their quarters are modelled entirely upon native lines. In respect neither of accommodation nor of food, are they allowed to form any habits which they could not maintain upon the salaries of nine to twenty rupees a month, which will be all that they can command for some years. These young women have been specially well taught singing, and, indeed, theirs was the first part-singing I heard in India. Miss Sampson was their teacher, and it is certainly to her and their credit to find them singing three-part choruses, and such an excerpt as Mendelssohn's 'Oh lovely peace,' which I heard them render with real taste and expression, and with wonderfully clear enunciation of the English words."

Miss Hunt, the valued Lady Principal of this Normal School for more than fourteen years, contributes the following especially for our pages:

"There has been a great advance with regard to education among the Hindus since I remember Calcutta. Girls who can read and write, and have passed some examination, are preferred as wives, so that more interest is taken by the parents in their studies. Of course the early age at which they are married, prevents them from reaching to a high standard, but, each year, a large number from our day schools meet at the Senate House for the Government examination—a thing that we should hardly have thought possible ten or twelve years ago. The children gain certificates at this examination which recommend them in the matrimonial market! For a long time, a bridegroom who is F.A., B.A., or M.A. has been valued according to the number of passes, but it is a new thing for a girl to have such a recommendation! We hope that it may be one of the forces working against the terrible custom of child marriage.

"The superintendence of all the Hindu C.E.Z.M.S. schools in the city falls to us. For the most part they are held in the houses of Hindu gentlemen. We hire one or two rooms, often including the idol-house! This hall is set apart for the worship of the idol only when the special pujà day arrives. For the rest of the year it is empty, and, as it is not used by the family for other purposes, we can rent it. One of our schools has been held in the house of a Rájá for many years, and the Ráni and her family take the greatest interest in it, and will sometimes come into the schoolroom to listen to the Bible lesson and to the hymn-singing.

"Altogether we have about 800 children in our Hindu Day Schools, all receiving Scripture teaching, and we are sure that many of them have received the Truth into their hearts.

"Among the Zenánas, there is a constantly increasing number of houses open to us for simple Bible teaching, where we need nothing besides to make us welcome. This is a very encouraging feature, and I believe the schools are, and have been, the means of bringing this about, to a very great extent."

In 1894 Miss Hunt was the recipient of a letter which bore high tribute to the work which GOD has permitted her to do. Written by the father of one of the Central School children—a dear girl who, while in the school, showed every sign of being a believer in Jesus Christ—it ran thus:

"Dear Madam,—I am glad to inform you that my son-in-law, Dr. S. P. Sarbadhikari, is desirous to present annually a silver medal to the most successful girl in your Central School, who should pass the minor or other scholarships examination, as a gift in commemoration of the memory of his lamented wife, my daughter Nerojenee. He further wishes to present your said school, where his wife was educated, with an enlarged bromide portrait of the departed girl, to be, by your permission, hung up in your school hall. If you kindly accede to

these proposals, please drop a line in reply. Yours sincerely——."

It is needless to add that such gifts were gladly accepted; and in 1895, at the distribution of prizes by Lady Elgin, the silver medal, presented for the first time, was won by a Christian girl who had passed first in the Government examination.

For many years the training of young European and Eurasian teachers was carried on at the Normal School; but in 1894 it became a separate branch of work, and a Missionary Training Home, now under Miss Ashwin's superintendence, was opened at Baranagore. The work of preparing young edu-educated women, acclimatised and familiar with one or more Indian dialects, to become assistant missionaries, cannot be too highly valued and extended.

The daily routine of the students, who must be upwards of eighteen years of age, and who have received already a good English education, is modelled upon the lines of the C.E.Z.M.S. Training Homes in London. Each student must remain at least a year in the Home; and if, after a term of probation, she still wishes to become a missionary, she signs an agreement, promising to work in connection with the C.E.Z.M.S. for a period of three years.

The chief studies are the Bible and the Bengali language, but every student has some kind of teaching to do every day. In addition to a Practising School for the European children employed in the surrounding factories, a school for little Hindu girls is taught by the pupils in the Training Home. One result of the daily Bible teaching given by these students, was seen not long ago in the case of three little sisters who attended very regularly, and who, one day, confided to their young teacher: "We pray to Jesus now; but mother gets angry, and won't let us pray to Him in the house, so we go down the lane and pray there."

The students who have passed out of the Baranagore Training Home are now successfully working, not only in that town, but in Calcutta, Krishnagar, Barrackpore, and elsewhere. Would that we had means to multiply such institutions among our stations!

Hard by the Golden Temple of the Síkhs, where their sacred book, the Granth, is watched over and worshipped, where Hindu temples are crowned with the trident, and the crescent glitters from many a mosque, Jesus has been made King in the hearts of some of India's fairest daughters. To-day, in Amritsar, GOD is using us to polish corner-stones for His Temple that is being reared surely, though slowly, in the sight of the heathen.

The Alexandra Christian Girls' School at Amritsar, under the valued superintendence of Miss L. Cooper, C.E.Z.M.S., was founded in memory of the Prince of Wales' visit to the Punjáb, to afford a sound high-class Christian education for the daughters of the upper class native Christians.[1] By his Royal Highness' request, it was called "The Alexandra," as a reminder to all our Indian fellow-subjects that the Queen-Empress and the Princess of Wales alike, were anxious that the girls of India should share all the advantages of the Christian education enjoyed by their English sisters. As a renewal of this kindly feeling, the Princess, shortly afterwards, sent beautiful portraits of herself and the Prince to be hung in the large hall of the Alexandra School.

It was opened in November, 1879, and before the end of the year, thirty pupils had been enrolled. To-day the number has increased to sixty-three boarders.

A veteran missionary and valued friend of C.E.Z.M.S., the Rev. R. Clark, in his interesting book *Thirty Years in the*

[1] The building belongs to the C.M.S.; the school teachers to the C.E.Z.M.S. Miss Saw, C.E.Z.M.S., is head of the educational department.

Punjáb, describes it as "an institution which has probably no parallel in Northern India, and one of which the Amritsar Mission may well be proud. The building is a pile of red brick, remarkably well planned and furnished with grand, airy dormitories and a fine large hall. One room has been nicely fitted as a chapel."

The curriculum of study includes English, Urdu, Persian, Needlework, Domestic Economy, while all the higher branches of English study, mathematics, etc., are taught; a Government inspection taking place once a year. The elder girls are also trained to teach, and, in turn, give object lessons to the little ones. Each elder girl has charge of a younger one, for whom she is responsible, helping her to prepare her lessons and looking after her in every way.

As early as 1882, several of the Alexandra girls were beginning real missionary work. Two were going every day to the Amritsar Hospital to teach new converts, and finding great pleasure in it. Another was teaching three times a week in the City Schools. Two others were conducting a little Sunday school, in the verandah, for heathen children; whilst another held a class for Ayahs.

The next year the girls gave proof of their intelligence and facility for acquiring languages, by originating a monthly magazine, *The Alexandra Magpie*, in which most of the articles were written by themselves.

In 1884 their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, then in India, expressed a wish to see the Alexandra Christian Girls' Boarding School, and were shown over the building by the Rev. R. Clark, Miss Swainson (then its Lady Principal), and other members of the Mission. The Duke seemed to be struck with the refined and ladylike appearance of many of the girls, for he had never before come in contact with any Indian women of the higher class.

It was in that same year that the Alexandra girls began a

Sunday school, entirely conducted by eight of the elder girls among the younger ones. It transpired quite accidentally, a few months later, that one of these girl teachers, of her own accord, had begun a daily prayer meeting with the children, in which many a little one took part.

Thus God is graciously fulfilling the promise taken as the motto of the school, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Many a cultivated Christian lady of India owes all that she is to-day to her holy, happy school time at "The Alexandra."

There is probably no part of India more full of Heathen degradation and darkness than Tinnevelly. Signs of devil-worship abound everywhere. Yet, in this stronghold of Satan, a fortress for God has been raised.

The C.M.S. Sarah Tucker College for Native Christian Girls at Palamcottah,[1] is the largest girls' school in the whole of India. It is worked by C.E.Z.M.S. ladies, and for sixteen years Miss Askwith has been the honoured Principal. In 1896 it was raised from the rank of Training Institution to the status of a Second Grade College, teaching up to the F.A. (First in Arts) Standard, corresponding to the London Intermediate, and was affiliated to the Madras University, the first college for women in the Madras Presidency. The first F.A. class was opened in February, 1896, by Miss C. E. Cowell, B.A. There are two hundred and eighty-nine boarders and about eighty day pupils in the parent building; but the Institution is in reality a network of agencies, since it has no fewer than

[1] Established in 1868 as a memorial of Miss Sarah Tucker, sister of the Rev. J. Tucker, C.M.S. Missionary, Madras.

thirty-six Branch Schools, two Boarding Schools, two Blind Schools, two Industrial Classes, a little School for Deaf and Dumb children, and a small Hospital.

A large number of the children are those of Christian catechists and schoolmasters, while others have heathen parents who are, nevertheless, willing for them to be trained as schoolmistresses, sick nurses, or taught to gain their livelihood by needlework. The girls study up to the same standards as English girls, but really work harder, since, if a student wish to earn a first-grade Normal Certificate, she is obliged to pass her Matriculation examination in English.

Miss Walford bears testimony to the true Christian character of the pupils thus:

"The Government Inspectress sometimes writes to us for teachers, and the salaries offered are good; but, as Government teachers are forbidden to speak of religion, our girls will not bind themselves to be silent about Christ before their heathen sisters, as it is their chief delight to tell of the Saviour Whom they have found to those who do not know Him. Besides this, the main object of the College is to train the daughters of Southern India to become missionaries. And to-day, throughout Tinnevelly—a district the size of Yorkshire—Christian girls are to be found working earnestly and prayerfully as the mistresses of some fifty schools, attended by 2,000 heathen children.

"The girls have their own Gleaners' Band Monthly Missionary Meeting, and at their *daily* prayer meetings it is sweet to hear them take up a special country and plead for it with God. The proceeds of their missionary working parties help to support the schools for the heathen children; and, from time to time, they will send parcels of their own needlework to the Foundling Home at Ku-cheng, to the Leper Home, Jerusalem, or even to Dr. Barnardo's Homes at Stepney.

"Sunday schools, for both Hindu and Christian children,

are an important feature of the 'Sarah Tucker' work, the teachers being Institution girls. Miss Swainson, for many years Miss Askwith's fellow-labourer, has herself lately opened one such school in Tinnevelly town, about four miles off. 'I take five of our elder girls in the bullock-bandy,' she says, 'and four Christian women meet us there, and we have *very* happy times with these dear little Hindu girls. Yesterday we had 156, only six being Christians.'"

One incident may be given to show the indirect influence for good at work in this centre. During an outbreak of small-pox in the Sarah Tucker Institution, a heathen woman was engaged to help in nursing. She was filled with wonder because not one of the Christian girls had been afraid to die, and all the Christians were bright and happy. She returned to her village, but the impression remained, and she came back to learn of that Saviour Who had robbed death of its sting. Having found Him, she openly confessed herself His disciple; she became a teacher, and now, under the superintendence of the C.E.Z. missionaries, she is telling her own people of Him Whose "perfect love casteth out fear."

In addition to the young Widows' Embroidery Class at Suvisachapuram, is the Industrial Class at Palamcottah, where girls, disqualified to be teachers, are taught plain and fancy work, mending, knitting, cross-stitch, linen embroidery, basket and curry-powder making. So successful has been the sale of their work by "orders" from England, that thirty-three girls are thus being clothed and entirely supported. Connected with this class is a little School for Deaf and Dumb girls. "I have nine children," says Miss Swainson, "and have taught two of our trained girls to teach them reading, writing and arithmetic, and to talk on their fingers; but it is not quite so easy in the Tamil language, with its 247 letters in the alphabet, as in English! Still, we have adapted it, and the first three girls now know about 100 nouns, twenty

verbs, and can write little sentences from dictation. The children thoroughly enjoy their lessons, especially the Bible stories, taught by pictures, and it is most interesting to see how their faces brighten as they begin to understand. We have begun morning and evening prayers with them, and they quite take it in. I write the prayer on the blackboard, and show them the meaning of each word before we begin; then we kneel down and make the signs on our fingers. Pray that we may be able so to reach their minds and hearts with the love of Jesus, that these doubly pitiful little lives may be won for Him!"

The little Blind School, the first effort of the kind in South India, is a most fascinating sphere of work. As early in its history as 1891, the pupils, ten of whom were girls, were ready to undergo a Government examination, which greatly pleased and surprised the inspector, who had never examined a *blind* school before.

Christian school work among the girls of Madras has been well depicted by an observer. Again we quote Miss Billington's words for their value as an independent and impartial testimony.

"Among the special educational efforts made on behalf of the high-caste Hindu girls in Madras, none I found more interesting than the Mission schools carried on under the auspices of the Church of England Zenána Mission, by the daughters of the late Rev. W. T. Satthianadhan, a convert from Bráhmanism. These two ladies, who are both highly educated, and speak English perfectly, have six schools with about 400 pupils under their supervision. In order that I might gain a rapid view of their work, Mrs. Hensman and Mrs. Clarke had the pupils from three of their schools brought before me, and I enjoyed the opportunity of seeing in demonstration lessons how good was the training. The singing was meritorious, the needlework highly commendable, and the

drill quite up to the standard of some of the best reputed London Board Schools. The Kindergarten action-songs and exercises by mites of three to five were marvellously good, and I watched with great interest the two charming native exercises called "Kollatrini" and "Kummi," which have been turned to account in the schools, the former resembling in idea the plaiting of ribbons round the May-pole. The pupil teachers, who are all converts, sang a hymn in English sweetly. . . . The principles of Christianity are kept to the fore in these schools, . . . and the fact that they have now gone on for twenty-five years with growing popularity, is proof enough of appreciation of the work; while to-day many of the scholars are the daughters of its earliest students."

To reach the 'gasha' girls (South Indian term for pardah) seemed at one time impossible, yet, by God's blessing, prejudice is being overcome, and the schools for Muhammadan girls under Miss E. L. Oxley's care are not the least flourishing to-day. Such, however, is the fear on the part of Musalmán parents of their daughters being seen in the streets, that the school has, even now, to provide covered conveyances to fetch and take home the pupils.

Our glance at C.E.Z.M.S. endeavours to win the girls of India for God would be incomplete without noticing the royal pupils at Trevandrum, whose school-house is the old Palace within the Fort. As long ago as 1864, Miss Blandford had the joy of taking possession of rooms "set apart for our use by the then distinguished and enlightened Prime Minister, Sir Mahdheva Rao." To continue in Miss Blandford's own words, written in the spring of 1897:

"Two young Ránis had been recently adopted by the State to become wives of the Maharájá and mothers of its future kings. They were fourteen and fifteen years of age respectively, and the younger had a small son a few months old. They shortly became my pupils, and wives of princes and other

ladies of rank soon followed their example, and studied English, needlework, music, and painting, besides the far more important study of God's Word. No restriction of any sort has ever been laid upon me; in every house where I have taught secular subjects I have been allowed to give religious instruction, and I cannot but hope that the seed sown will spring up and bear fruit in years to come."

One would fain pause here and remember the names of all who have prayed and worked under the roof of each Mission school building, great and small, but space forbids. The record of their "work of faith and labour of love and patience of hope" is on high. Meanwhile, those who are labouring now, press forward with eager footsteps, and echo the same exultant cry as those gone before,—

"India's Girls for Christ!"

CHAPTER IX

Work for Widows and Widows at Work

"I beheld . . the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter."—*Eccles.* xi. i.

"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your GOD."—*Isa.* xl. i.

"Nearly every fifth female in India is a widow, and it is said that in Bengal alone there are 129,000 widows under *fifteen* years of age, and 7,000 of these are under *four* years of age. My great-grandfather had as many as eighty wives, all of whom became widows when he died."

—*Mrs. K. P. Chowdhury.*

SADDEST of all sights behind the pardah is the tear-stained face of the Hindu child-widow.

Throughout India, widowhood is regarded as the punishment for some horrible crime committed by the woman in her former existence upon earth. If the woman be aged or the mother of sons, social abuse and hatred are greatly diminished. But it is the child-widow and the childless young widow who have to encounter for life the curse of the community, in recognition that they are the greatest criminals upon whom Heaven's judgment has fallen.

Now that the Sati rite[1] is prohibited, it may be thought by

[1] The burning of the widow alive beside the body of her dead husband on the funeral pyre. Abolished by British law in 1829.

some that the Hindu widow has been delivered from her sufferings. Little do they realise the true state of affairs!

Throughout India, except in the North-Western provinces,[1] Hindu women are put to the severest trial imaginable after the husband's death. Among the Bráhmans of the Deccan, the heads of all widows must be shaved regularly every fortnight. A Hindu woman thinks it worse than death to lose her beautiful hair. Girls of fourteen or fifteen, their eyes swollen with shedding bitter tears, are glad to keep in the darkest recesses of the Zenána, where they may hide their shame. Stripped of her bright-coloured clothing and of every jewel, the widow must wear a single coarse garment, white, red, or brown. For twelve months she must eat only one meal during the twenty-four hours, and this consists of rice, vegetables and milk, never of fish or meat. Twice a month she must observe a fast called "Ekádoshee," during which she takes nothing in the shape of liquid or solid food for twenty-four hours. The upper class Hindu widows during fast hours cannot even once drink water, be the weather never so hot. Besides these bi-monthly fasts she has many more to observe.

The treatment of a widow varies in different families; yet always by her dress and food she is constantly reminded that she is under the curse of the gods. She must never take part in family feasts, nor show herself to people on any occasion of festivity. A widow is called an "inauspicious" thing: a man will postpone his journey if his path happens to be crossed by a widow at the time of his departure. There is scarcely a day of her life that she is not cursed by the relatives of her husband as the cause of his death; while the mother-in-law gives

[1] It must be understood that we are speaking of the usual experience of *Hindu* widows in the greater part of India. There are exceptions, and many instances in which young wives are happy and even widows fairly well treated. Amongst the Muhammadans, widows are no subjected to cruelty and indignity, and they are allowed to marry again.

vent to her grief in language that stabs the heart of the innocent girl. Hated by mother and sisters-in-law, closely confined to the house, made to sleep on the bare earth, shunned by the very children, considered a disgrace and treated as the drudge of the household, what wonder that the Hindu widow's life becomes intolerable to her? If, for the sake of peace, she would like to live alone, she is considered disreputable.

If a widow is left any property by her husband, she cannot call it her own. All her wealth belongs to her son; and if she has no son, she is made to adopt an heir, and to give him all her property as soon as he comes of age, while she has to wait on his wife, and lives on the bare allowance which he grants her for food and clothing.

A WIDOW!

"Even death cannot save a widow from indignities. For when a *wife* dies, she is burnt in the best clothes and jewellery she possessed, but a *widow's* corpse is covered with a coarse white cloth, and there is little ceremony at her funeral."

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the miseries of India's TWENTY-THREE MILLION widows, of whom hundreds of thousands are young children, doomed to perpetual and life-long suffering. We stand aghast at the number, and ask how it is that there are so many. The answer is, that, as every man or boy who dies leaves one or more widows, though thousands die, more live on.[1]

One thrilling glimpse of this fearful "tragedy of existence" is given us by a Hindu widow herself, of the Kayástha class.

"When a husband dies, his wife suffers as much as if the

[1] In Bengal alone at the last census there were 43,000 widows under ten years of age.

death-angel had come for her also. Several women, wives of barbers (a class who are kept for this object), are in waiting, and as soon as the husband's last breath is drawn, they rush at the new-made widow and tear off her ornaments. Ear and nose-rings are dragged off, tearing the flesh, ornaments plaited in the hair are torn away, and if the arms are covered with gold and silver bracelets, they do not take time to draw them off one by one, but holding her arm on the ground they hammer with a stone until the solid, heavy metal breaks in two. It matters not to them how many wounds they inflict; they have no pity, even if the widow be but a child of six or seven who does not know what "a husband" means.[1]

At the funeral all the relatives must accompany the corpse on foot to the Burning Ghát. The men follow first, then the women, well veiled from sight, come after, and last, the widow led by the barbers' wives. They take care that at least 200 feet intervene between her and any other woman; for it is supposed that if her shadow fall on any (her tormentors excepted) she also would become a widow. One of the rough women goes in front and shouts aloud to any passer-by to get out of the way of the accursed thing—as if she were a wild beast; the others drag her along. Arrived at the river where the body is to be burned, they push her into the water, and as she falls so she must lie, with her clothes on, until the body has been burned and all the company have bathed, washed their clothes and dried them. When they are all ready to start for home, but not before, they drag her out, and in her wet things she must trudge home, it matters not whether under a burning sun, or with an icy wind blowing from the Himálayas.

"For fifteen days after a funeral the relatives must eat and drink only once in the day, but a widow must keep this up for a year, with frequent fasts. When she returns from the funeral,

[1] In Bengal a widow may continue to wear some of her ornaments till she is twelve years of age.

she must sit or lie in a corner on the ground in the same clothes she had on when her husband died, whether still wet or by this time dry, and is subjected to the abuse of her relatives. Her own mother says, 'Unhappy creature! I can't bear the thought of any one so vile. I wish she had never been born!' Her mother-in-law says, 'The horrid viper! she has bitten my son and killed him; now *he* is dead, and she, useless creature! is left behind.' And this, even though the speakers themselves may be widows. If she shows her grief, they all say, 'How immodest, how abandoned. See, she is crying for a husband.' They have no pity. *Only those who have been through this know what it is.*

"I saw a widow die, one of my cousins. She had been ill before her husband's death. When he died, she was too weak to be dragged to the river. She was in a burning fever. Her mother-in-law called a water-carrier, and had four large skins of water poured over her as she lay on the ground, where she had been thrown from her bed when her husband died. The chill of death came upon her, and after lying alone and untended for eight hours, her breath ceased. Every one praised her, and said she had died from love of her husband!

"The English have abolished Sati; but alas! neither the English nor the angels know what goes on in our homes. And Hindus not only don't care, but think it good. I am told that in England they comfort widows' hearts; but there is no comfort for us. The only difference for us since Sati was abolished is that we died quickly, if cruelly, then, but now we die all our lives in lingering pain. O GOD, I pray Thee, let no more women be born in this land!"

Sympathy, and not mere sentiment, should surely rise within us as we see tears fast falling from the eyes of India's widows, and remember that of the *twenty-three millions*, 600,000 are girls not yet nineteen years old. Many of them have been wives only in name, but most of them must remain

widows in reality until death. What can we do for them? will be the cry which their anguish wrings from us.

When we heard, in 1891, that two widows of our Krishnagar Mission had escaped by night from their Zenánas to seek baptism, and had taken refuge with our missionaries, the news was received with thankful confidence that they would prove only the first of many caste women won from Krishna to Christ. And it has been true. Numbers of intelligent young widows are now under Christian influence and instruction, who never cease to thank God for His "comforters"—their English missionary sisters.

At the urgent request of the C.M.S. missionaries, a Widows' Training Class was commenced at Chapra in 1885 (subsequently, in 1896, removed to Kapashdanga), its object being to choose and train widows who showed a real desire to devote themselves for Christ's sake to evangelistic work among the 190,000 women of the Nadiyá (Nuddea) district.

Some neat mud-houses, with thatched roofs, built exactly in native fashion, were erected. They consisted of two blocks with four rooms in each, opening into a verandah in which the inmates could cook and eat their food. We do not seek to raise them above their own mode of life, but to send them as village women into the villages, to carry on their work amongst the people of their own class without any feeling of superiority, except the dignity and importance of their Message. The course of training extends over three years or longer, as may be found necessary, and comprises an elementary education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and a thorough knowledge of the Bible and the great principles of our holy religion; the first and prayerful aim being to enable these widow evangelists of the future to tell their ignorant countrywomen, both simply and fully, of the Saviour Whom they have found precious to their own souls. Though they are taught that it is wiser, as a rule, to refrain from argument, yet it is endeavoured to fit

them to meet, should necessity compel, the fierce attacks of the defenders of a host of Hindu deities, or those of the False Prophet.

The success of this new movement was evident during the very first year of its inauguration. In February, 1886, the Rev. G. H. Parsons was able to write: "I have been successful in arranging for the whole of our Chapra Widows' Training Class to be out for a few days in camp, in order that the women might have practical experience of their future work. The experiment succeeded very well, and a great deal of work was done among the heathen women during the ten days. Everywhere the workers were warmly welcomed."

Miss Adams, writing to us in 1897, says:

"It has been my joy for the past four and a half years to have charge of the Kapashdanga Widows' Training Class. During that time, a number of women have passed out to work in various places, and constantly do we hear cheering news of their faithful labours. In the past cold weather season, November, 1896, to February, 1897, we all went into camp together in order to give the widows some practical experience of evangelistic work. How good it was, every morning, to be able to divide our force into three bands (with an experienced worker at the head of each), and to go out into as many villages with the message of a Saviour's love!"

One of our missionaries, to whom some of these widow workers were sent as fellow labourers, said not long since:

"Our dear Bible-women are a great help,—always ready for work. I cannot help thinking of the words, 'How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring good tidings of good things!' when I see them trudge, so willingly, over dusty roads and muddy fields to tell of the salvation of God. Such energy in Indian women involves great self-denial."

At Bangalore, where a somewhat similar work is now going

on, the missionary in charge is able to give just as encouraging testimony. "The convert, Nistarini, a widow, who was baptised with her three children, in January, 1891, is a general favourite. She is being trained to be a Bible-woman, and understands the people so well that I feel that she will be a great power for good. If we go to a house where on a former visit she may have been with us, the first question always is, 'Where is the barber's widow?' She is never so happy as when telling the good news of the Gospel; be it the milk-woman or washer-woman, no matter whom, if she get the chance, Nistarini will take her aside for a talk on religion."

But, it is obvious that all destitute Indian widows have not the intelligence and capabilities required to fit them as evangelists to their own people, even were there sufficient training homes to receive the would-be applicants.

It is impossible for the Hindu widow woman to become a household servant or seamstress, etc., and thus obtain an honest livelihood, since she cannot undertake any menial work for Christians without incurring pollution; and, moreover, since in India, servants do not live in the same house as their employers, and amongst those of one establishment, Muhammadans, Hindus, Sweepers and Christians will be found, it would be considered the height of indiscretion for a young widow to live in the midst of these without the protection of father or mother.

"Will not your own parents support you?" has frequently been asked.

"Alas, no," one will reply. "My father spent all that he could afford on my marriage; he has been in debt ever since. How can he help me now?"

If there is no father, we ask, "What about your mother?"

"My mother? She is herself a widow. What can she do for me?"

"Have you no brothers?"

"Brothers?" she will answer; "why, my brother will pass me in the street, taking no more notice of me than if I were a dog, lest I should appeal to him for support."

The widow, then, must earn her own livelihood. Yet, by grinding corn, the lowest avocation, she can make only about one anna a day; and since there are sixteen annas in the rupee, and the rupee is not worth more than one shilling and threepence-halfpenny, she is as badly off as the celebrated Margery Daw of nursery fame, who should have "but a penny a day because she can't work any faster." The embroidery merchants extort labour by a kind of "sweating" system, which, while it ensures large gain to the seller, doles out the merest pittance to the toiling needleworker.

Well may Pandita Ramabai exclaim, "Starvation and death stare the Hindu widow in the face. No ray of hope penetrates her densely darkened mind. The only alternative before her is either to commit suicide, or, worse still, to accept a life of infamy and shame. Oh! cruel, cruel is the custom that drives thousands of young widows to such a fate!"

"May she become a widow!" is a form of malediction often used by those who wish to bring down a curse on any woman who may have excited their wrath. The very word employed in some parts of the country to designate this class (the same as that given to a woman leading a life of infamy) shows the category to which they are consigned, and also the temptations to which their lot exposes them.

Miss E. G. Sandys, in trying to trace an old Zenána pupil who had removed, came upon house after house, street after street, of these poor unfortunate women, who, even from their secluded homes, had been enticed away and were living a life of sin and misery. No wonder that the pressing needs and distress of these neglected sisters have burnt into the souls of our Zenána workers, until they have devised means of practical help and succour.

Miss Wauton, our senior missionary in the Punjáb, who says that during the whole time she has spent in Amritsar "the cry of the widows" has never ceased sounding in her ears, was the first to begin a movement on their behalf which is spreading now, thank God, from Mission to Mission. Industrial Classes for Widows have been opened, and are besieged by more eager and deserving applicants than can possibly, at present, be received.

In the largest of these, the Hindu Widows' Industrial Class at Amritsar, 150 women of all castes and ages, but alike in one common bond of sore poverty and desolation, are happily earning their bread, and at the same time are brought into close contact with those who care for their souls. In the heart of Amritsar stands a tall pile of buildings lent by Ráni Kirpa De, on the upper floor of which about 100 members of the first department of the Class work every day. The method at present adopted is that of carrying on purely indigenous industries, a knowledge of which often forms part of a Hindu girl's scanty education. One of the chief of these is 'phulkhari,' or 'kasida' work, *i.e.*, flowers embroidered in floss silk on coloured materials (all worked from the back), which is becoming familiar in the shape of fire-place curtains, tablecloths, cushion covers, bags, blotters, and photograph frames in many an English drawing-room.[1]

[1] The Hon. Sec., Miss Sandys, Manorside, Leigh Road, Highbury, N., is always ready to send parcels of work to any friends who will help

The materials used, and all patterns and designs, are purely Indian; but the Oriental love of strong and variegated colouring has sometimes to be controlled. In her own home, a woman working golden yellow 'Kikur' blossoms on a red ground would probably insert two or three blue roses or purple elephants to ward off the Evil Eye; but the inexorable Superintendent of the Industrial Class considers that these are blemishes, and dares to take the consequences of omitting them!

Miss M. E. Jackson, "our *own* Miss Sahiba," as the widows delight to call her, thus describes the busy scene, full of living interest and pathos:

"In the first and largest room, about thirty-five or forty women sit on the floor, all busy with phulkhari or 'chope'[1] work. In one corner, a large curtain is being made in dark red and gold colour, with little pieces of glass let in round the border. In another, four women are working at a large rug. One woman, with very clever fingers and an imaginative brain, is making, what she calls, 'a picture cloth.' The central figure (so she says) is Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. It represents a person wearing a small round hat, driving herself in a sort of gig or trap. All round the border is a circle of bipeds, which she pronounces with much complacence to be 'all the Miss Sahibas.'

"Our second industry is the spinning of cotton, and this department is carried on in a rented building in another part of the city. We often found that those whose claims were most urgent were either too old, too blind or too stupid to do kasida work; it therefore occurred to us that they might spin

with the sale of it: 2*d.* in the shilling discount is allowed to C.M.S. or C.E.Z.M.S. stallholders at sales of work.

[1] Another kind of embroidery, exactly the same on both sides, in silks or cottons on white washing material, much in demand for toilet covers, side-board and tray cloths, etc.

cotton to be utilised for other branches of the class. As all Punjábi women know how to spin, this proposition was hailed with delight. The cotton they produce is wound into skeins and hanks by the most infirm. The finer-spun thread is either sold in the bázár just as it is, for the full value, or it is reserved and dyed for the embroidery work; the coarser cotton is needed for the third industry, *i.e.*, the making of 'nawar,' a kind of webbing much used for native bedsteads in place of iron or wooden laths. As this requires a considerable amount of space, we have erected a thatched shed on the roof, where a happy little group carries on its work. The webbing is made on a small wooden frame, about eighteen inches high, and the threads are stretched on tall iron pegs at each side of the shed. The left hand passes the shuttle backwards and forwards, and the right hand presses down the threads with a piece of wood shaped like a large carving knife."

It is worthy of record that in this Diamond Jubilee year, 1897, the loyalty of the Industrial Class widows determined them to execute a special piece of embroidery to celebrate the sixtieth year of the reign of their Queen Empress, and Her Majesty graciously accepted an embroidered curtain, "the gift of 100 Indian widows." The Dean of Windsor, who made the presentation, was asked to ensure that Her Majesty's thanks would be conveyed to the donors of the gift.

Samples of embroidery from the Amritsar Widows' Class, it may be mentioned, obtained a medal from the Chicago Exhibition; and the gaining of such a distinction was celebrated by admitting to the Class five or six of those whose names had been on the long roll of waiting candidates for a year or more.

To turn away, sometimes, nearly a hundred applicants for admission is a heart-breaking task. Yet it must be done.

And what is the coveted allowance for four hours' work a day? Only about *2s. 8d.* for the embroiderers, and *2s.* for

the spinners per *month*![1] Yet it is higher than non-Christians pay for the same amount of labour; and the fact that the Missionary Superintendent is daily besieged by applicants proves that the system adopted is just and reasonable. The value of this monthly wage seems to consist in the regularity with which it is received, and the hours of labour being short, these earnings can sometimes be supplemented by grinding corn, etc., at home.

Our missionaries in charge of these widows at work find a humorous side to their philanthropic efforts. In response

to the statement that many a worker in the Class suffers from defective vision, friends at home are asked to send pairs of spectacles, new and second hand, for the widows. "It would make a grave person laugh," says Miss Jackson, "to see the women sitting in a row trying on the spectacles. They place them upside down, inside out, or on the very tip of the nose, and often, instead of consulting their own eyes, ask the opinion of their neighbours as to whether they will suit. Those who

[1] Small Scholarships of two shillings a month for six or eight months to widows while learning the industries, are thankfully received by the missionaries in charge, and may be sent to Miss Sandys, Manorside, Leigh Road, Highbury, N.

are supplied with eye-glasses fasten them on by means of a string tied to the spring in the middle, which is passed up the forehead, across the head, and then tied round the neck! They call the eye-glasses 'spectacles without legs.' One widow complacently remarked, 'Though my spectacles have no legs, I like them very much, because they make me look just like Miss Wauton!'"

The raw cotton for the Industrial Class is purchased by weight from the bázár, and the process is somewhat amusing. As the buyer approaches the shop, she can see nothing but a huge pair of scales and snowdrifts of white cotton. But where is the keeper of the store? The lady calls out, "Oh, respected shopkeeper! Oh, my brother! of your kindness come quickly." After she has repeated this polite salutation three or four times, and has aroused considerable interest in the narrow street, the person in question, who may be flying a kite on the roof, or smoking his 'huqqa,' *i.e.*, pipe, with a neighbour, becomes aware that he is wanted. With a great semblance of making haste he comes forward, putting on his 'kurta' or winding his turban, and saying, "Your Majesty! the shop is yours! What will you have from it?" Then ensues a good deal of haggling over the price, and also a good deal of unasked advice from the bystanders. Finally, when the purchaser has agreed to give a little more, and the vendor to take a little less, an amicable settlement is arrived at, and the huge mass of fluffy cotton is packed in a coarse sheet and carried to the Institute on the head of a coolie, the lady following, greeted on her way with shouts of "There goes the Cotton Madam!"

A native Christian teacher at the present time (1897) is taking charge of the Widows' Class at Amritsar, and Shauti's earnest care for the spiritual welfare of the women, as well as her complete knowledge of kasida work, make her peculiarly suitable for the post. She teaches them from the

Bible every day, and some of the widows, having lately expressed a wish to become Christians, are receiving special instruction.

Miss Wauton, writing during the time of famine (1897), said: "The municipality here are giving relief through our hands to a large number of destitute women, chiefly widows, by giving them spinning to do in their own homes. The cotton is given out daily in our Central School, and the thread is brought back there again as each one completes the amount taken for the week. While the business of weighing out is going on, delightful opportunities occur for reading and speaking to the women.

"Many now are believing in the Christian's GOD as the Hearer and Answerer of prayer. When speaking in the Widows' Class the other day of the beautiful rain which had just been given to us, they all said, "Yes, it was your (the Christian's) prayers that brought it to us."

Miss G. Gollock, in *A Winter's Mails*, written in 1895, says brightly: "Then there are Miss Jackson's widows, to whom I have lost my heart. They gather in, day by day, poor, weary souls, with nothing of joy in life, and no hope for hereafter, and they are taught to work and to sing, and they are *loved*, until the weary old faces soften and brighten, and the chilled hearts grow more ready to melt into kindness as the story of the Cross is told. There have been no visible 'results' as yet from the Widows' Class, but I was certain as I gazed on the dear, softened faces that the seed was sprouting under ground. I look on that Widows' Class as one of God's 'future tenses' in the Mission field."

The last two years have seen great advance in the development of this industrial scheme for Indian widows. Our missionaries at Calcutta, Krishnagar, Nárowál, Pesháwar, Bangalore, Tinnevelly, and Trichur have been enabled to help destitute women, and have thus ministered temporal as well

as spiritual relief. Miss E. M. Sandys, in a preface to her booklet, *Industrial Mission Work in India*, says:

Miss Ling sends us some of the cloths worked by Toda women; Miss Blyth, bead work and aprons made by her Hindu widows. Miss E. L. Oxley sends exquisite work by Muhammadan women in whom she is interested; and sometimes we have silver brooches and bracelets to sell for the Misses Coleman, of Trichur, for a convert—a goldsmith turned out of employment by his heathen masters; crochet, too, they send, made by their women converts. We have just made arrangements to receive and sell work from the Industrial Class, Masulipatam; and, a short time ago, a petition for help came from two ladies at the Barangore Converts' Home, to which we have not turned deaf ears."

"It has been objected," writes Miss Wauton, "that Industrial Classes should be the work of the philanthropist rather than the missionary. But where are the philanthropists who will undertake the work? Let them quickly step forward into this field of labour if they feel so constrained. But meanwhile, who that hears what abundant opportunities are afforded for preaching by word and deed the Gospel of Him Who came to *minister* to the poor and needy, will dare to assert that this is not true missionary work?"

The C.E.Z.M.S. Indian Widows' Union[1] by which the Christian widows of England band together in a united effort to improve the condition of the Hindu and Muhammadan widows of India, is a movement which God has signally blessed. By prayer, by raising and keeping up a fund for establishing Industrial Classes and aiding widows by training them to support themselves, and by helping to dispose of the work done in these schools, hand joins hand of those who are "widows indeed" in a holy bond of enterprise which must

[1] Hon. Secretary, Miss MacGregor, C.E.Z.M.S., 9, Salisbury Square, E.C.

indeed be well-pleasing to the LORD. Thrice happy must they be who, though also under the cloud of a sore bereavement, are finding leisure from themselves to soothe and sympathise, and are making even the sad widow's heart in far-away India to sing for joy!

CHAPTER X

Our Suffering Sisters behind the Pardah—I.

"Higher and louder than all the invitation calls of men, comes the dying appeal of a poor heathen woman, albeit it was uttered in the last stage of feebleness, and amid the gaspings and chokings of death, 'Tell your people how fast we are dying; and ask if they cannot send the Gospel a little faster.'"

NCE, in days not far remote, India might have been called a Land of Sickness and Death. Fever, ophthalmia, and other epidemics were allowed to take their own course; while the dread foe, cholera, or the plague, was left to number its victims almost without check; and this, because the deity presiding over each disease might otherwise be offended. For instance, even now, thousands of human beings are sacrificed every year on the altar, as it were, of the imaginary Goddess of Small-pox, who is supposed to scatter the seeds of this terrible disease for her amusement, and would be enraged at vaccination!

Still, although beneficent British rule has enforced sanitary regulations, and while, in many of the large centres, Western science is eagerly sought, and Indian medical men, intelligent and well educated, are being trained and paid by Government, prejudice and carelessness slay thousands of victims. And

amongst the villages, generally speaking, the native doctors, 'hakíms,' though numerous enough, are totally ignorant of Western medicine and surgery, their medical knowledge consisting only of a few nostrums handed down from father to son for many generations.

The sadness which surrounds the life of the Indian woman in health is intensified a hundred times when illness and suffering come. "All Hindu women," wrote the veteran missionary, Mrs. Weitbrecht, some few years since, "whether rich or poor, are utterly neglected in the time of sickness." The death-rate amongst Indian women and children still is enormous, and the reason is not far to seek. Except in large towns, such as Calcutta, Amritsar, etc., be the patient never so ill, she must not see a man doctor; death is preferred. Examination of pulse and tongue through a hole in the pardah, unsatisfactory at all times, is impossible when the patient is prostrate in bed with serious illness; and no mere verbal description of the case would suffice. Therefore the native nurses are virtually all that the sick women of India have for doctors in their own homes. These women are not only ignorant and excessively meddlesome, but often do incalculable mischief when they are called in. Countless mothers and infants fall victims to the merciless and nameless barbarities inflicted upon them in their hour of peril by the 'daies.'

After the birth of a child, a Hindu woman is kept in a very small, close, dark room, with a fire (which is generally placed in a brazier under her bed), and without any possibility of fresh air; on the next day she is given a cold bath, and returned to her cell like a prisoner! For three days after her baby's birth she is allowed nothing but a little water, *perhaps* with a little bread soaked in it.

Cases of heart-rending cruelty and neglect, in which, had medical aid been within reach at the proper time, all would have gone well, occur continually in the dark recesses of

pardah life. "More than once," says a gentleman, a well-known medical missionary, "we have been asked for ointment to heal the broken limb of some inmate of the Zenána; and when we told them, in such cases, that we must see the patient, and that perhaps some operation might be required, or that the broken bone must be set and the limb put in splints, 'That cannot be; it is not our custom,' has been the reply; and the poor woman has been left to linger on in suffering, or to die in agony, simply for want of that help which the lady physician, or, in many cases, even the trained nurse could have given."

It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the misery of the scenes witnessed by the Zenána medical missionary, as she takes her place by the side of some poor, pain-tossed one, and looks round, in vain, for any sign of comfort or alleviation in the wretched apartment. It may be illness in which the utmost quiet, the most absolute rest, are imperatively demanded, or it may be that the sand of life is rapidly running out. Often in such cases, the room, or roof, or courtyard, as the case may be, is crowded with noisy women, not one attempting to do anything to help the sufferer, while beneath the bare charpaie, *i.e.*, bedstead, generally too short for the patient to lie at ease, is assembled the family stock of poultry; and dogs, goats, and children divide between them the little remaining space. Not unfrequently at such a moment, the sick woman will seize the hand of the missionary and eagerly say, "Oh, Doctor Miss Sahiba, *don't let me die*!"

Facts and testimonies to the value of C.E.Z.M.S. Medical Mission labours show, thank GOD! that this department of service is no mere experiment, but an all-important and increasingly valuable part of women's work in the great harvest field. It is bringing our missionaries into contact with thousands of needy women whom otherwise they would probably never see. In the course of a single year (1896) as

many as 178,182 sick in India were being attended or prescribed for, either in hospitals or at dispensaries, by our comparatively tiny medical staff on the field.[1]

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To describe St. Catherine's Hospital at Amritsar, our largest C.E.Z.M.S. home of healing, and the vast network of agencies radiating from it, would occupy a far larger space than we have here. Yet, an outline of this remarkable institution will indicate, somewhat, the area of its influence and work.

The Medical Mission in Amritsar was begun in the spring of 1880, when the first City Dispensary, two rooms only, was opened in a densely populated Muhammadan quarter, where no access to a Zenána had yet been obtained. The first morning one woman attended. From that time, however, Miss Hewlett has carried on the work she thus began in faith, with untiring energy and growing success. The next year, a Zenána Mission Hospital was established, where, during six months, 7,000 visits from out-patients were received, and whilst upwards of 300 visits were paid to Zenánas, no fewer than forty-one were to women keeping strictest pardah. As proof of the interlacing of our branches it may be mentioned that some of the linen for this new Hospital was prepared by the girls of the Alexandra School, two of whom, Miss Abdullah and Miss K. Bose, at once went into training as medical students, and are still valuable workers. Year by year the numbers of patients rose, and additions were made to the staff and to the building.

[1] The C.E.Z.M.S. Medical Mission staff, either in home or local connection, comprises, in 1897, nine fully qualified doctors (the Misses Holst, Sharp, Von Himpe and Wheeler, who have each taken the degree of M.D., the Misses A. G. Lillingston, Mitcheson, and Vines, who have each won the diploma of the L.R.C.P. and S.Ed., and the Misses Adams, F. Cooper, L.S.A.), twenty-five recognised medical workers, and twenty qualified as nurses and dispensers. The term "doctor" in the following narratives, must be understood as the respectful title given by patients to each and all of our "medical missionaries."

Peculiar opportunities for speaking to the hearts of the people and for soul-winning were afforded by the hospital. Some of the suffering women—their prejudice softened by kindness, and gratitude taking away all feeling of bigotry—would say to their nurses, "Tell us more, if you think we shall die without your Saviour; tell us all about Him"—a request eagerly granted. By the year 1884, it was necessary to open a third Dispensary, and this was in a building close to the Golden Temple, the shrine of the Granth, the sacred book of the Síkhs. The spot was an excellent one, on account of the number of women who came to bathe in the sacred tank, and it was given to the workers in direct answer to prayer. In the Hospital by this time, the work of preparing the medical and surgical stores, and the dispensing of the many thousands of prescriptions, was taken over by the pupils, who were being trained in all missionary habits, and were entering enthusiastically into the efforts made to win and teach the patients. During this year, the Maternity Hospital was committed to Miss Hewlett's care by the municipal authorities, since which time the systematic training of the 'daies' has always been a most important and successful department of the work.

The poor, the low, the outcast women of city and villages, far and near, thronged the Hospital as a refuge and place of comfort and healing. The number of innocent victims exposed to suffering through moral degradation and sin, as revealed day after day by medical mission work in Amritsar, is almost beyond belief. In 1888, a home for Destitute Convalescent Women was opened, which is conducted in the simplest possible native style. But we can only enumerate the agencies which, by this time, were offshoots from the one great centre. Taran Táran Dispensary,[1] with its openings in

[1] Taran Táran Dispensary was opened by Miss Sharp and Miss Hewlett at the request of the Rev. E. Guilford, C.M.S., and was worked from Amritsar until Miss Grimwood took it over in 1887.

a hundred Zenánas, visits to the Leper Village, Sunday Schools for Christian, Muhammadan, and Hindu children, a School for Blind Women, Bible Readings for English people from the station, a Converts' School, a Crêche, Servants' Bible Readings—all were prospering when, in 1890, Miss Hewlett wrote a deeply interesting review of ten years' work. Thirty-five converts had been baptised, eight had been called Home, and three old medical students had gone to take charge of separate medical mission stations. Such were some of the items calling for heartfelt thanksgiving from every worker.

In her book, *Daughters of the King*, Miss Hewlett thus graphically describes "a curious night experience," of frequent occurrence as darkness settles down on Amritsar:

"A man has come to call the Doctor Miss Sahiba, with all urgency, to see some very sick woman. He goes away to fetch a hired gári, and we prepare to start. The 'gári' is a remarkably shaky contrivance on four wheels, with wonderful propensities for letting its doors fly open, and its wooden shutters fall down with an alarming bang. . . . On the roof of the gári, with his legs crossed, sits our driver, who wears no livery! One of the first things that strikes us is the fact that the streets are full of chárpaies; every shopkeeper has placed his own just in front of his shop, and is sleeping as soundly as in a well-protected house. In the wider bázárs there is still plenty of room for our gári in the middle; but when we come to narrow ones, our driver has to call vigorously to rouse the sleepers. They, poor creatures, not at all pleased, stand up, and hold their chárpaies flat against the walls of the houses, and, as soon as we have passed, replace them, and, with a little grumbling, go off to sleep again. But, it may be, that in half an hour we return the same way, and once more they must be disturbed, unless they are to be run over. No wonder they seem not very amiable!

"At length we reach the house, and find our patient. Had

she been a Hindu, and very seriously ill, we should have found her downstairs and on the bare floor, as it is a great sin for any Hindu to die in an upstairs room or on a chárpaie. But she happens to be a strict Muhammadan, and she is carefully hidden away in an upstairs room, which is crowded with relatives and friends. . . . It requires great patience, and some tact to find out what is really the matter. Nobody in a Zenána ever seems able to give a history of her own illness, and when the mother begins to explain she only complicates matters. For example, it was asked of one young Zenána lady, 'Have you any children?' 'No,' was the emphatic reply of a friend standing by, 'she never had any.' Again the question was asked, and again a very decided negative. But, presently, the patient casually said, 'I have not been well ever since my baby was born'; and upon the visitor expressing great astonishment at this contradiction—'Why, you told me she never had a child!'—the answer came very promptly, 'Oh, yes, she had a *girl*; but what is that?'

"By degrees we calm the excited and perhaps frightened women . . . and, amid many difficulties, the medical part of the visit is at length accomplished, and the simple message of God's redeeming love is quietly whispered to the sufferer. Then, promising to come again in the morning, we leave, and are soon driving home again, in our shaking, rattling conveyance, through the quiet streets. The necessary medicines are given to the messenger who accompanies us, and we retire to rest once more."

Seventeen years ago, and St. Catherine's was represented only by one small building, which stands at the corner of the irregular pile, now 255 feet in length. Then, six beds only were available, and sufficed for the attention that could be given by Miss Hewlett and one co-worker. To-day, there is accommodation for forty-two in-patients, while no fewer than one hundred people can live on the premises. Miss Hewlett

has a staff of eleven fellow-workers, besides sixteen Bible-women and several Christian converts in training, who divide the work at St. Catherine's and Khutrain between them. Two hundred in-patients were nursed in the Hospital itself during 1896, while thirty-eight thousand out-patients visited the three Dispensaries. In addition to these, about two thousand visits were paid to sick ones in their own homes. All who come for medicines to the various out-patient rooms hear, at least once, of Jesus and His love, while those who are nursed are lovingly directed to Him by those who have found Him themselves.

One such woman, a widow she believed herself to be, came for treatment to Miss Kheroth Bose at Taran Táran, and on hearing the Message for the third time only, received it into her heart. She was directed to St. Catherine's, and presented herself there as an inquirer anxious for baptism. Her three sons came with her, and occupation in grinding corn was found for them, so that they could all remain for instruction. On the morning after their arrival, however, an order was given that the boys' hair should be cut. At this the eldest rebelled, and, with an air of authority such as mere children in India assume towards their parents, he said, "Mother, you must not stay in this wicked place, where they dare to cut the hair of a Sikh man!" The woman, afraid of her son, went away sadly with all three lads; but, in a day or two, the craving for teaching gained the ascendancy over her fear, and she returned, saying to her boys, "I mean to go back to St. Catherine's, and if the Miss Sahiba wishes to cut off your heads as well as your hair she shall do so."

Within a week the woman and her children had begun to learn to read, and very soon were prepared for baptism, when they took the Christian names of Miriam, Ambrose, Basil, and Clement.

Some months later, Miriam came to her teacher in tears.

Her husband, a Sikh soldier, had not been killed in the Egyptian war, but, having returned to Amritsar, had come to St. Catherine's to remove her and her sons. Much prayer was offered with the weeping woman, and then the man was interviewed. To the relief of all, he said, "I came here with the devil in my heart, but when I saw the change in that woman, I made up my mind to stay, if you will allow me, and find out what has caused it."

Employment as window-cleaner was offered and accepted by the finely-built, stern Síkh warrior, and rooms were appointed for him and his family in the compound. It was not long before a change was wrought in his heart also, and he became humble and teachable as a child. A touching sight was soon witnessed, when Ambrose and Basil led their father to the font for baptism. So full of joy were the little lads, that, on reaching home, they threw up their caps in the air with the ringing shout, "Father's a Christian! father's a Christian!" The whole Christian household rejoiced over the little family as a trophy of grace, very delightful to the Saviour's heart.

Some time after, as the father was on his way to the Bible Reading, which he dearly loved, he was seized with fatal illness, and passed away almost suddenly. His widow has now become a Bible-woman nurse in Ludhiána, under the ladies of the F.E.S., while Ambrose, now a youth of eighteen, is shopman in the Blind School.

No more pathetic incident in reference to our suffering sisters in India has reached us, than one which occurred at St. Catherine's Hospital, of which Miss Hewlett told at the C.E.Z.M.S. anniversary meeting in 1891.

"One dear girl came to us for medical training. She took delight in study, but she was not to carry out the great wish of her heart. I became anxious about what she called 'broken chilblains,' and asked a doctor to examine her. My fears

proved true; he pronounced it to be leprosy, and said she must at once be separated from the others. It fell to me to break the terrible tidings to her. Never shall I forget her heart-breaking wail when she understood the truth. Then she knelt by her bed, and at last I heard the whisper, 'Not my will, but Thine be done!' Mr. Karney was with us, and he administered the Holy Communion to the suffering girl privately in our little chapel at St. Catherine's. The next day she went to the Hospital for Lepers at Calcutta, where she is doing a missionary's work among the patients. I love to add that when the lady who bore the expense of her training heard what had happened, she wrote to us, 'Henceforth little Bessie shall want for nothing; I shall continue the annual £10.'"

Let us glance next at some of the Medical Mission Dispensaries for the neglected village women. Wherever a station is established something, at least, is being attempted, something done, on medical mission lines. Every lady missionary is expected by the people to be a Siyáná (wise person) or a Hakím (doctor). There is much disappointment if she fail to produce, out of her treasures, some little remedy for fever or sore eyes, when visiting a village.

At Ratnapur, a centre of village work in the Nadiyá (Nuddea) district, the Dispensary is a home of healing for thousands of sick around. Miss G. Gollock, during her winter tour in India, caught a glimpse of a busy scene continually being enacted in these far-away districts.

"At 7 a.m. we heard a babel of voices in a room adjoining ours, and remembered that Miss Trench opened her dispensary at that hour. A message came to ask me to look in at the work. Miss Trench, who has had medical training under Miss Hewlett at Amritsar, sat at a little table, receiving the very small fee of two 'pice' from each patient, entering the name, village, diagnosis of complaint and treatment, and writing rapidly her prescriptions for her patients. The pre-

scribed-for patient was passed under a rope, a quick 'Esho!' (Come!) brought another patient from the verandah, and the prescription, passed on to Miss Leslie, or a native lady who is learning, was quickly and carefully made up. Presently, we passed behind the busy doctor to the door of the verandah, where about thirty women still sat on the floor. Some were waiting their turn for admission, others, long since supplied with medicine, of their own accord, had come back, to listen to the Bible-woman."

The patients gather in characteristic groups, listening to the Words of Life. Old women squat in the foreground, while mothers with sick babies stand on the outskirts of the little crowd, where also the empty bullock carts, that have been used as ambulance waggons for high-caste invalids, will be drawn up. Some of these suffering women and children will walk two or three days' journey for one bottle of medicine. In 1895, no fewer than 38,265 visits were paid to this Dispensary alone, and each patient who received a prescription, found on the back of the paper a very simple Gospel tract, printed in Bengali. These sick people, coming from *nearly* 900 *different* villages have thus carried back the two-fold gift of healing, for body and soul, to countless homes.

No wonder that the Ratnapur workers long to replace the mud shelter, dignified by the name of "Hospital," by a clean, cool, properly furnished building, where serious cases may be received and dealt with as they need!

In dispensary work, patience—that virtue so greatly in demand in India—is often sorely tried. Some of the women, as they come for the first time, forget everything in gazing vacantly at the Miss Sahiba, and can only nod and reply "Yes" to every question put to them. Carefully as directions are given, some will misunderstand. A woman hands in a white bottle to the dispenser; it is filled with red medicine and returned, but she refuses to take it. "It is not mine,"

she persists; "my bottle is white." It is quite a revelation to her that red medicine accounts for the change in colour!

These "impotent folk" never know the time; and if it should happen to be a cloudy, wet morning, they still come to the dispensary three hours after it clears up and they see the sun, believing it to be about nine o'clock, though perhaps it is after noon!

It is hard work to persuade village patients that it is easier for the doctor and better for themselves to see and be seen one by one. What they would like best would be to rush into the tiny consulting room together, tell their symptoms and receive their medicine immediately. Sad experience and stern dispensers at length make them wiser and more willing to wait their turn! A matter of considerable surprise, too, is it that all are treated with fairness, on the principle that the first to come are first to be served. The Bráhman lady looks on contemptuously, and thinks in her heart that things are coming to a pretty pass indeed, when *her* turn comes *after* that of a Sweeper-woman, and she has no more of the doctor's time than any one else.

One of our fully qualified lady-doctors thus recounts her difficulties as a medical missionary:

"The Hindus do not want water in their medicine, and so we give them powders. The others use shells as measures, and these shells vary much in size. One woman will drink up medicine sufficient for three days in one night. Another will throw the medicine away, and then complain that she is no better. Another will eat the powder with the paper in which it is wrapped. Again, another will come up determined to have an eye powder. You assure her that her eyes are not in a fit state for a powder, and give her drops. She refuses them, and if you still decline to give her a powder for herself, she demands one for her aged mother at home. Poor women, shut up from babyhood in their own small village, is it any

wonder that they are so ignorant? One woman brought her dear little girl. Alas! it was too late; we could not save the eyes. The poor mother said, 'I have been *so* careful; I have put the country medicine in every day.' We asked what it was, and this was the answer: 'A donkey's tooth ground up with charcoal, and the powder put into the child's eyes.' And for two whole months the mother had patiently applied this."

An interesting account of Asrapúr Dispensary reaches us from Miss Kheroth Bose, in charge of the medical work at Babárwal Atári. After supplementing her Indian knowledge by two years' medical training in England, Miss Bose is showing what a noble sphere of usefulness to her countrywomen may be filled by a daughter of India. In 1890, when appointed to Bahárwal Atári, she began to expand the medical work which was commenced, single-handed, by Mrs. Perkins, C.M.S.

Mrs. Perkins' dispensary—begun in her bedroom for want of a better place—has now grown into a Hospital with eight fair-sized rooms, four of which, for the out-patients, are in a beautiful courtyard shaded by trees. In 1893, while 153 cases were treated within those walls, the total number of visits from old and new patients was over 13,000.

Miss Kheroth Bose speaks thus of the work at Asrapúr—"the Place of Hope."

"I well remember how, in visiting the village of Bahárwal with Mrs. Perkins in 1890, we tried to persuade the headman's wife to come to us for medicine for her little boy. She seemed to think it would be a great disgrace if she were seen in the Christians' compound, and made a great many excuses At last she managed to summon up sufficient courage to come late in the afternoon, and sat, huddled up in a modest heap, outside our premises, until we discovered and brought her into the house! To-day it is difficult to believe that any of the village women have ever been shy—so thoroughly at home do they make themselves now in all our rooms. They walk

numbers of miles, and collect in crowds before the Hospital is open. They wait restlessly but good-humouredly enough, expressing their impatience by some such exclamation as, 'Miss Sahiba, our necks have grown long with stretching them out for a sight of you!' or, 'We were young when we arrived, but have grown white-haired and old in your Hospital, waiting for your coming!' and so on."

Of course there are lights and shadows in medical mission, as in all other work amid heathen darkness, and we find that Miss Bose continues:

"It is discouraging to see the weary or hard look that comes into the face of some bigoted Muhammadan woman, who knows she must hear the oft-repeated story, so hateful to her, if she would have her medicine, and one's heart sometimes fails. The very presence of this bigoted daughter of Islám seems a hindrance. Yet we remember such an one who, recovering from an almost incurable disease after months of patient, loving nursing at Asrapúr, has made an open confession of faith, and is now a humble believer in the Lord Jesus. We see her telling others of Him Whom she has found, and the patients say that when any one of them is in great pain at night, Jiuní kneels by the bedside of the sufferer praying for relief, and GOD hears her prayer. The once stubborn Muhammadan woman is now being trained as a gentle Christian nurse, and is preparing also for baptism. We thank GOD and take courage."

Sick children, too, are cared for in this Place of Hope.

"Two little crippled boys have been left here by their relatives. Allah Ditta (given of GOD) was brought to us a year ago, and was so deformed with rickets that he could hardly move in bed. He can walk now without crutches, but will always be very crooked. He is anxious to be baptised; but as he is only ten, and his parents are not Christians, though willing for him to be one, we are waiting till he is a

little older. He has learnt a great many verses and hymns, and has taught them all to the other cripple who came to us only a few months ago. Niyaz Ali's legs are quite contracted and wasted, and are fixed in such a way that he has to walk on hands and feet. He is a Sayard, *i.e.*, a descendant of the Prophet himself—this is the highest Muhammadan rank—and he would always be maintained by the alms of the faithful. Some of the surrounding Moslems think it a disgrace and pity that he should live upon the charity of Christians, but they all agree that he is better off with us. The two cripples are very fond of racing each other for the amusement of the other patients, and their infirmities in nowise affect their spirits! The danger is, that they will be spoilt with all the petting they receive."

Nine years ago, at the request of the people themselves, a Medical Mission to women was begun in Batala,—name ever associated with the consecrated labours of A.L.O.E.,—by Miss Dixie, who ministered there unceasingly until her marriage in 1897. Now, the Star Dispensary and Hospital open their doors widely to many thousands of patients in the year. Women and children flock thither, seeking medical relief.

At Jandiála, more than eight thousand suffering sisters frequent the tiny Dispensary served by Mrs. Parthinkar. Easter Day, 1896, saw the baptism of old Mai Lachmi and her grandson. This woman, who all her life had been seeking GOD from shrine to shrine and from river to river, now rests in peace and joy in Jesus. The story of another Punjábi patient is even more interesting. With her son and many other pilgrims, she came up to the great Festival of Lights at Amritsar. Whilst they were in the crowd round the tank of the Golden Temple, her son was pushed in and drowned. In desperation she threw herself in, but was rescued. Sad and weary, bereft of all that made life dear, and sick in body, she wandered all the twelve long miles to Jandiálá. At the Dis-

pensary gate she was found, taken in, healed, and taught of Christ. Her soul found peace in Him; she broke her caste, and was, at her own request, prepared for baptism.

It is now ten years since we entered Nárowál in Christ's name to set up a 'Shifákháná,' as a dispensary is often called in this part of India. The Medical Mission was first begun in a side-room of the ladies' dwelling-house; six months later a small house in the town was hired for it; the next year it was moved to a Mission-house, and five years ago it came to a block of buildings erected for it on a corner of the C.E.Z. compound. It was the devoted Miss Catchpool, taken Home in 1897, who, from the first, watched over this Mission with untiring devotion and energy. Miss Reuther, her valued fellow-labourer, now assisted by a fully trained nurse and dispenser, is carrying on the two-fold ministry among as many as 11,000 in a year. One would fain describe more fully each Medical Mission centre, each home of healing among the villages, but here is a pretty peep into St. Mary's Hospital, Taran Táran, given us by Miss Vines:

"Half-past ten o'clock a.m., but the big ward—the Hospital itself—is empty. A long, narrow room, rather dark, for as much as possible of the Indian sun must be shut out, with a row of neat beds, whose bright quilts and painted names above tell of many loving hearts in England who are caring for the poor women out here. But where are the patients?

"Into the bright sunshine we go to find a courtyard full of people. Beds are arranged in groups out in the sun, patients are lying or squatting about, and such chatter is going on! Those in the long, pink, English-made gowns, have come for treatment, but the others are friends and relatives. It seems a strange custom to us, but the women would never come in alone, and we are glad, as it increases the number of those who hear the Gospel daily, and see the work and lives of our Christian women in their own homes.

"That fat baby-girl, surrounded by a little group of women, has had her eye operated upon, and is busy pulling the bandage about. The young woman in trousers is her mother, the short little woman her grandmother, and, as to the other women, it is hopeless to find out the degrees of relationship existing between them! They have walked nine miles to come here.

"Just now there is an influx of new patients. If you had come last week, they would have sung you a hymn, repeated texts, and answered simple questions. But those people have gone back to their homes, and next year, when their villages are visited, the old patients will be the first to greet the English ladies. And thus the work is interlinked—the Mission makes the Hospital possible, the Hospital makes friends of the women, suspicion is disarmed, and hatred changed to love.

"Three little mites are sleeping soundly in the yard, and the school matron sits sewing near them; little Yakub, who, for a wonder, is still; baby Maryam, a motherless infant given to us by her father (a leper); and the last new-comer, a baby-girl of nine months, a poor, starved, nameless little creature found in a ditch."

In this little Hospital the seed has not been sown in vain. In one instance, though the woman was taken away to her home, her mother and sister afterwards came with her dying message to the missionary in charge: "Go, tell her, deep down in my heart I have remembered all she has taught me, and I believe in Jesus." She refused to have any of the Hindu ceremonies for the dying performed on her. In another case, as the end drew near, a patient's relatives wished to take her away, but she utterly refused to go. "Do not send me away, my sister; I wish to die here," she pleaded, looking wistfully at the nurse. On being asked whether she were afraid, she replied happily, "No, Jesus is close to me; I am going to Him!"

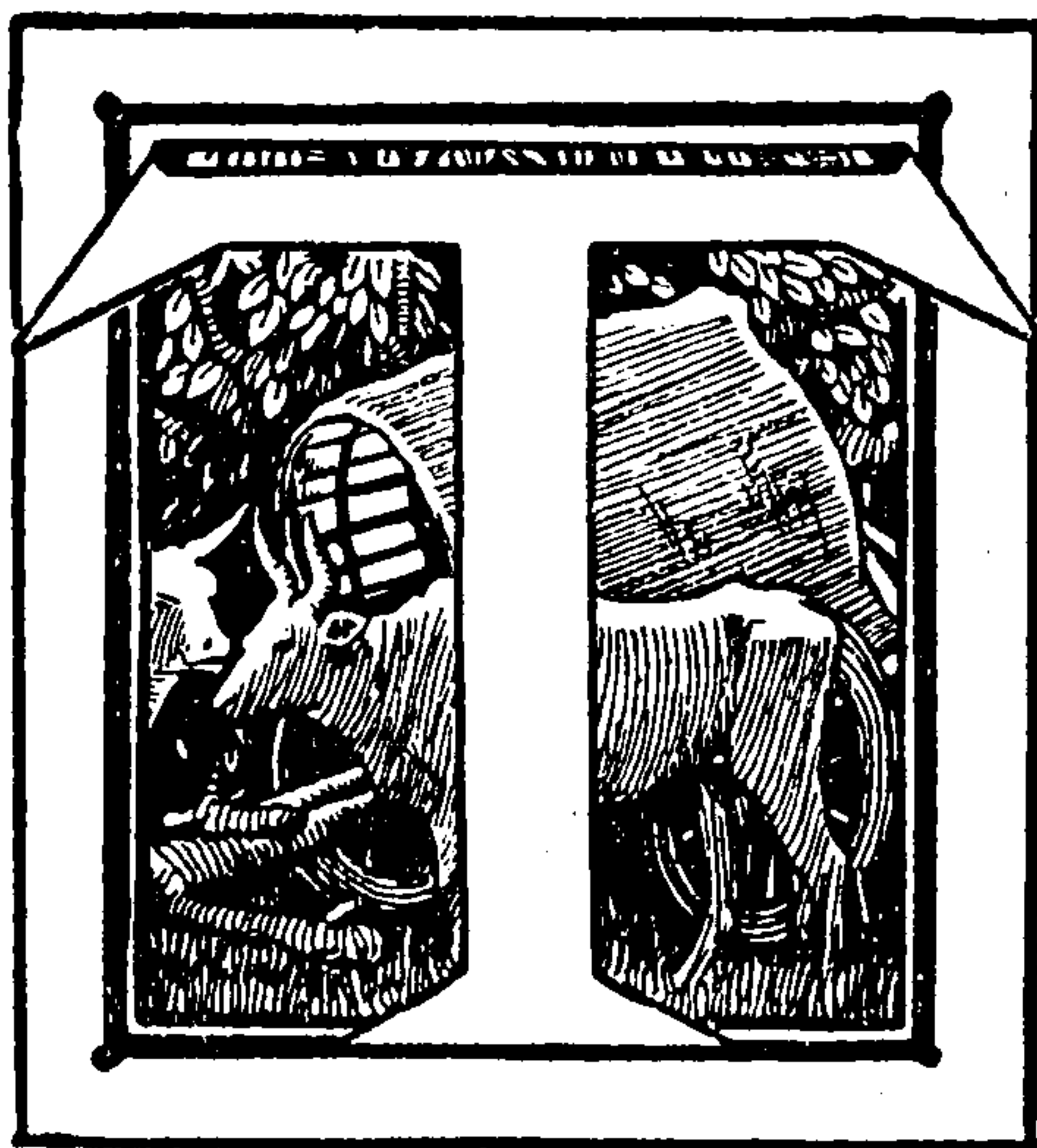
S STAND ON THE

CHAPTER XI

Our Suffering Sisters behind the Pardah—II

"Draw back many a shadowing curtain of despair, or shame, or sin;
Speak sweet messages of mercy, let the rosy daylight in;
Go and soothe away the anguish, go and kiss away the tears;
In the radiance of your smiling let sad hearts forget their fears."

— *C. Pennefather.*



HE visits of our trained nurses and other workers to the homes of the people reveal numberless instances of heathen cruelty and folly. Here, a poor child will undergo the miserable ceremony of exorcising the "evil spirit"; which is, in reality, the delirium caused by high fever. One of our missionaries at Ajnála witnessed this distressing scene:

"Hearing the noise of a drum, I asked what it was, and the women told me it was a 'girl playing.' It seems she had been very ill for two months, and as all remedies had failed, the hakím (doctor) said she must be under the power of an evil spirit. The 'magicians' were sent for to exorcise the demon. In a small, hot room, was a crowd of men, women, and children; in the middle the two 'wizards'—leering men, with faces sodden with good living and evil doing. One beat a drum, the other thumped with brass pokers on a metal

instrument. At intervals they recited incantations. The patient was lying on the ground before them, while a woman ironed her with a hot brick. 'Lift her up,' said one of the 'wizards.' This was done, and then began a most sickening sight. She writhed backwards and forwards, like a snake being charmed, the movements getting quicker and quicker as the drum beat louder; then she knocked her head and long black hair upon the ground. I spoke to the mother, but it was of no use, and the evil-looking men beat the drum more furiously than ever. In such places Satan's seat is firm."

Sometimes, it is a father who refuses to give his child quinine because she is "only a girl," and had better die, as he cannot afford to get her married. In another house, a woman dies, simply because the native doctor thinks that starvation is the best remedy for fever and its after-effects! Many a life might be saved if only the lady medical missionary were called in at once; but the usual thing is to try all their own medicines, and then, when they obtain no benefit, to come to the Miss Sahiba. Or, again, a Hindu patient absolutely refuses to take milk—she is forbidden by her religion to drink soup—because she believes that if any one who has fever takes milk and dies, her soul goes into a snake.

The greatest care must be taken to offend no prejudices, and to avoid alarming the patient by an unwary display of even the simplest implement—a towel, provided for washing hands, being regarded, sometimes, with the greatest suspicion, and the patient insisting on having it opened out to prove that it is not concealing something that cuts or pricks. While clamouring for orders as to what may be eaten, etc., an objection is made to every proposal; and yet, if told anything and everything may be taken, the relatives will at once conclude that a doctor who is not particular about diet knows nothing at all! The medicine, they insist, must relieve pain, give

appetite, produce sleep, secure strength, etc., but it must *not* be bitter or sour, strong or heating. The Doctor Miss Sahiba, having received these injunctions many times over, is urged to come again and to make the patient well quickly. Probably, the next day she finds that nothing has been attended to, the medicine has been voted by the friends "unsuitable," and the patient is as bad, or worse.

But prayer and patience have their reward, even in such disappointing cases, and confidence is won.

In one rich Bráhman house the women were so bigoted that, although they had called Miss Phailbus, of Krishnagar, they would not allow her to do anything for the patient at first. They called on their gods continually, at one time telling her to move away from the door, as the goddess Panchu was coming in to visit the patient. The poor sick woman had to eat things that had been offered to the idol, smell roots, look at the leaf of a banyan tree covered with 'mantras,' *i.e.*, prayers, and listen all the time to her friends and relatives shouting out, "Oh, Durgá, save us! Oh, Durgá, save us!" The threshold of her door was covered with offerings to the goddess. That day, Miss Phailbus could do nothing, but, the following morning, after a successful operation had been performed, she was told, "We do not believe in the goddess Panchu any longer; and if the priestess appear again, we will send her to court." The third day, all the women being in a much calmer frame of mind, they listened to the Words of Life and to the singing of a hymn, "No salvation apart from Jesus." The following week Miss Mackenzie visited them, and found them much softened and ready for regular teaching.

Space fails us for more than a passing glimpse at Dera Ismáil Khán, where Miss Rose Johnson, a trained nurse, until the autumn of 1896, held the Medical Mission fort alone for ten years. Yet how deeply interesting is her testimony!

"I have been looking through my diary of 1885, with the following result: Patients seen in first four months, 2,083; visits, twenty-two in four months. In those days, patients were beaten for coming to me; others had to go down to the river to wash off the defilement of my having felt their pulse. This year, in the first four months, number of patients, 3,275; of visits, 275. Three or four times every week I have to refuse work and visits. Instead of fearing me, the people like me to stay as long as I can; and if only people could hear how they grumble at me for not visiting them oftener, I should be pitied!"

The Duchess of Connaught Hospital (C.M.S.), standing to-day in the heart of that fanatical city, Pesháwar, is a testimony to what GOD hath wrought within a modern Jericho. This very Oriental city of 80,000 souls, at one time surrounded by high walls, with sixteen gates, closed at nightfall, is being captured for the Lord of Hosts. The only Europeans living within its walls have been the ladies of the C.E.Z.M.S. Gradually the barriers are being demolished; for the wave of progress passing over India has reached even Pesháwar. GOD grant that the walls of bigotry and false faith may likewise soon totter to their downfall!

Standing on the north-western frontier of India, Pesháwar city is the thoroughfare for caravans, which bring representatives from all parts of Central Asia to trade in its busy streets. In the heart of the city there are large houses, the existence of which few would suspect, which conceal women, whose retirement is even more complete. When illness enters such homes, it is a fearful time for the hapless women-sufferers, dependent on the care of ignorant "nurses"—the term sounds like a mockery to any one who has witnessed their medical treatment.

In 1884, one small Dispensary was opened by our workers. But, at first, the patients feared to come inside, and anxiously

peered into the room, to make sure that no man was secreted there. A medical *woman* was beyond their ken. Very gradually their confidence was gained.

"They came to us from long distances," says Miss Mitcheson. "One woman, who lived in Khorassan, travelled for seven days to see me. She seemed to be dying. I saw that an operation was necessary, and asked her to let me send for the surgeon. She answered, 'No, I would rather die,' and begged me to help her. I did what was necessary, and she stayed with us for some time, and recovered. Every day I talked with her of Christ. Since she has returned to her own country, cured, she has sent many of her own countrywomen to us."

In 1888, the Duchess of Connaught graciously allowed the tiny Hospital, that had been opened and enlarged already, to be named after her; and to-day, this has been replaced by a beautifully planned building holding thirty patients.

In 1895, on returning from furlough as a fully qualified lady-doctor, Miss Mitcheson thankfully contrasted the bright new Hospital, with its Barwise Memorial block for women, with "the few empty, small, dark store-rooms" which in 1886 were altered and adapted to serve as Hospital wards. "Now, in nine years' time, there is a fine, roomy, well-ventilated ward, containing twenty-one beds, and four small rooms for private nursing." Opposition, at one time so rife, so bitter in Peshá-war, is dying down, and the women come freely to the Hospital.

Of Dr. Charlotte Wheeler's labours at Quetta, many thrilling stories might be told. In the spring of 1895, the pleasant little Hospital at Quetta—long an urgent need—was opened, and since then a stream of patients has steadily flowed through it. During the time that the plague surrounded, though it did not attack, Quetta, in 1897, in spite of terrible stories going about to the effect that people coming for treatment to

the Hospital would be carried off and poisoned, and that the bodies of the children of the plague-stricken would be covered with oil and burnt, out-patients came daily, and our workers stood bravely to their posts.

Some of the patients' own descriptions of their illnesses are amusing and original. Even the untaught, unread women are so accustomed to metaphor, that their use of it becomes a fertile cause of difficulty to beginners in the language. Dr. Wheeler tells us of one woman coming to the Dispensary for medicine, complaining of fever and a cough; she, however, spoke of the fever as a snake, and the cough it had left behind as the trail of the snake!

The fact that eight languages are spoken by the women around adds considerably to the difficulty of Medical Mission work in Quetta. The value of Christian native helpers is nowhere more realised than in the mission work of the Dispensary. At every station, during the Dispensary hours, the group of waiting patients, attentively listening to their countrywoman fluently expounding the Gospel message in their own tongue and dialect, is a glad and stirring sight. At Quetta, Mrs. Hasrat Ali, the daughter of Padre Imám Sháh, of Pesháwar, acts as nurse and Bible-woman in turn; while the daughter of the Haidarábád catechist is dispenser and patients' dresser.

Special visitations of sickness bring special opportunities to our medical workers, of which they eagerly and often heroically take advantage. Early in 1897, when the terrible plague began to ravage the Sind province, the Hindu Panchayat (Council) of Haidarábád opened a temporary hospital for their people, and the managers sent a request that a C.E.Z.M.S. lady would kindly come to their help. For many weeks, Miss Piggott was enabled to accept the onerous post of superintendent and nurse, and by GOD'S mercy was kept in perfect health. "It was quite touching," she wrote, "to see

THE DUCHESS OF CONNAUGHT HOSPITAL, PESHAWAR.

the faith that the sick placed in us. The mothers would ask me just to put my hands on their sons, and one boy, for more than a week, would take nothing except from me. Only one woman appeared to remember that she was a Hindu and I a Christian. One patient, a former mission school boy, died confessing Christ quite boldly."

In Karáchi, although, owing to this fell disease, the streets (red with carbolic by Government provision) were deserted, shops were closed, and few houses escaped the visitation, no fear of contagion kept our missionaries from their work. Every precaution was taken to avoid carrying infection: any day that a worker felt below par she wisely refrained from exposing herself to it; but they trusted God and were kept from harm. One of the terrible features of the plague was the rapidity of its course. A man walking in the streets at three p.m. would have passed away before six o'clock that same afternoon. No wonder that our missionaries felt that then, more than ever, they were needed in those houses of sorrow!

MOTHER AND SICK SON.

Writing at the end of March, 1897, Miss Brook says:

"The plague has suddenly begun with rapid strides in Sukkur. It is so sad to go through the streets and from house to house where we have taught and not find one man, woman, or child. On many doors, a large red cross and little red mark of sealing-wax over the lock means that the plague has been in the house. Going into one little 'ghitli' (*i.e.*, alley) where I had been a few days before, I found every house

but one closed and bolted. One door was standing open and I entered. All the walls, inside and out, were whitewashed; not a sound was to be heard. But, in the perfectly silent room, I saw a cot, and on it a woman covered with thick clothes, while, at the head of the bed, knelt a young man. I said, 'Is she ill?' and, coming nearer, found it was a dear little friend of mine, 'Rochi.' A short time ago she had taken me into her house, and many women had gathered around to listen to the Message. After that, I had met her by the river side, and she had said, 'I wish you would teach me alone. I want to learn, but when you come to my house, so many others crowd in. I want to have just you alone with me so that I can learn.'

"She was so pleased to see me, and I squatted on the ground beside her. She showed me her mouth and other swellings on her body, and then she said, 'Shall I die?' I said, 'Rochi, I cannot give you false comfort; I think you will.' She began to cry. I said, 'You need not cry nor be afraid, and I will just tell you why.' Then she was quiet, and I told her of Jesus and His love, and said, 'If you trust Him, tell Him so.' She said slowly but quite clearly, 'LORD Jesus, I trust Thee!' Then I prayed again, and said, 'When you are afraid' (she immediately broke in 'No, I am not afraid') or when you have pain, say "LORD Jesus." He will know, He will help you.' She put out her hand and took hold of my face. She was hot with fever, and must have been suffering much. All the time until I left she continued to say at intervals 'LORD Jesus.'

"She begged me to come again. When I went this morning, her husband was there, weeping: Rochi had just passed away."

The history of our Kashmír Mission has been singularly eventful, and the scene of devotion which must ever give it a sacred interest. As in the case of St. Catherine's Hospital, so here, only a fragmentary sketch of Christlike labours abundant

can be given. No more splendid opening for the work of the Double Healer can be found than in the Vale of Kashmir—the Switzerland of the East. And because comparatively little is known of this wonderful country, perhaps the most beautiful in the world, and because, too, our generous artists have chosen so many subjects from it for their brush and pen, we may be pardoned for lingering longer over the story of our station there.

Kashmír, as large as England without Wales, the most important outpost of India, and a great centre leading to many countries of the world, should be a highway of the Gospel. No fewer than thirteen languages are spoken within its boundaries, the principal one of which, Kashmírí, has a different dialect every few miles throughout the valley. The Vale of Kashmír, about eighty miles long, containing some 4,606 villages, is entirely surrounded by vast snowy mountains rising into sublime peaks, 20,000 feet high. The river Jhelum (whose curving course first suggested the well-known pine-shaped pattern of the renowed Kashmir shawls) winds its way through emerald meadows, and beside gardens, groves, and orchards, or spreads itself out into a clear lake, reflecting vine-

festooned poplars and hoary heights on its bright bosom, until it gains the wilder scenery beyond "the Happy Valley," and rushes boisterously and with booming roar on its way to the plains of the Punjáb. Nearly every English fruit and vegetable grows luxuriant in an almost Italian climate. Gulmarg, the vale of flowers, is a veritable fairy-land of blossoms, where the rose and jasmine, marigold and autumn crocus, with a thousand others, weave rich veils of many colours for acres of its fertile soil to wear.

The history of Kashmír is as interesting as its scenery. But on this we may not dwell. Enough for us to realise that the snowy circle of mountains embraces half a million who know not God. The story of the patient working and waiting of pioneer missionaries for forty years ere mission work of any kind could be begun, must also be passed by, in order that we may tell of suffering Kashmírí women and their needs in and around Srinagar.

The city of Srinagar, the principal town of Kashmír, has been called the Venice of the East. It is extremely picturesque, with its wooden houses, rather of the Swiss châlet type, built on both sides of the river, which, until the recent floods, was spanned by seven wooden bridges. Boats, the principal mode of conveyance, are the homes of a large population from birth till death. These river-craft are generally roofed with matting and propelled with spade-like oars.

But, in spite of its network of water highways, Srinagar continues to be one of the dirtiest cities in the world. From the almost stagnant canals over which its crowded houses hang, women, from day to day, fill their vessels of drinking water with the foul green slime! The wonder is, not that pestilence visits Srinagar, but that it ever leaves it. In 1892, during an awful visitation of cholera, 2,542 deaths were registered. During one week alone, 1,600 were swept away. Our missionaries stood between the living and the dead.

Only those who live and labour there can possibly realise what dirt, squalor, and disease, what awful ignorance and gross superstition crowd the Kashmiri's home. When the late Colonel Martin and the Rev. Robert Clark first visited Kashmír to endeavour to establish a mission there, it was the late Maharájá Guleb Singh who, in giving his consent, said that the Kashmiris were so bad that he was quite sure that the missionaries could do them no harm!

A KASHMÍRÍ GIRL.

The people, men and women, dress in 'pherans,' a grey-coloured, loose, long-sleeved gown, with a tuck near the knees. In winter, two or three of these are worn at once; and amongst the poor, the outer garment is only one of several generations of pherans inside. These, as a rule, are neither washed nor changed till the ruin falls to pieces of itself.

The women, who are fair and often extremely handsome, wear a red cap with a cloth thrown over it and hanging behind, the hair being either loose or dressed in numberless tiny plaits descending over back and shoulders, and joined together at the extreme ends by ropes of black string.

Few women can read, and their ignorance is equalled only by their want of cleanliness. "Dear Kashmírí women!" exclaimed one of our missionaries in despair, as they crowded round her on a hot summer afternoon, "why won't you wash?" And the answer was, "We have been oppressed too long to care to be clean."

It was the lamented Dr. Fanny Butler, transferred from medical work at Bhágulpur, who, together with her devoted colleague, Miss Hull, in 1888, inaugurated Medical Mission work amongst the Kashmírí women, by opening a Dispensary and tiny Hospital in a hired native house near the Third Bridge, in the very heart of the city of Srinagar.

(THE LATE) DR. FANNY BUTLER AT WORK.

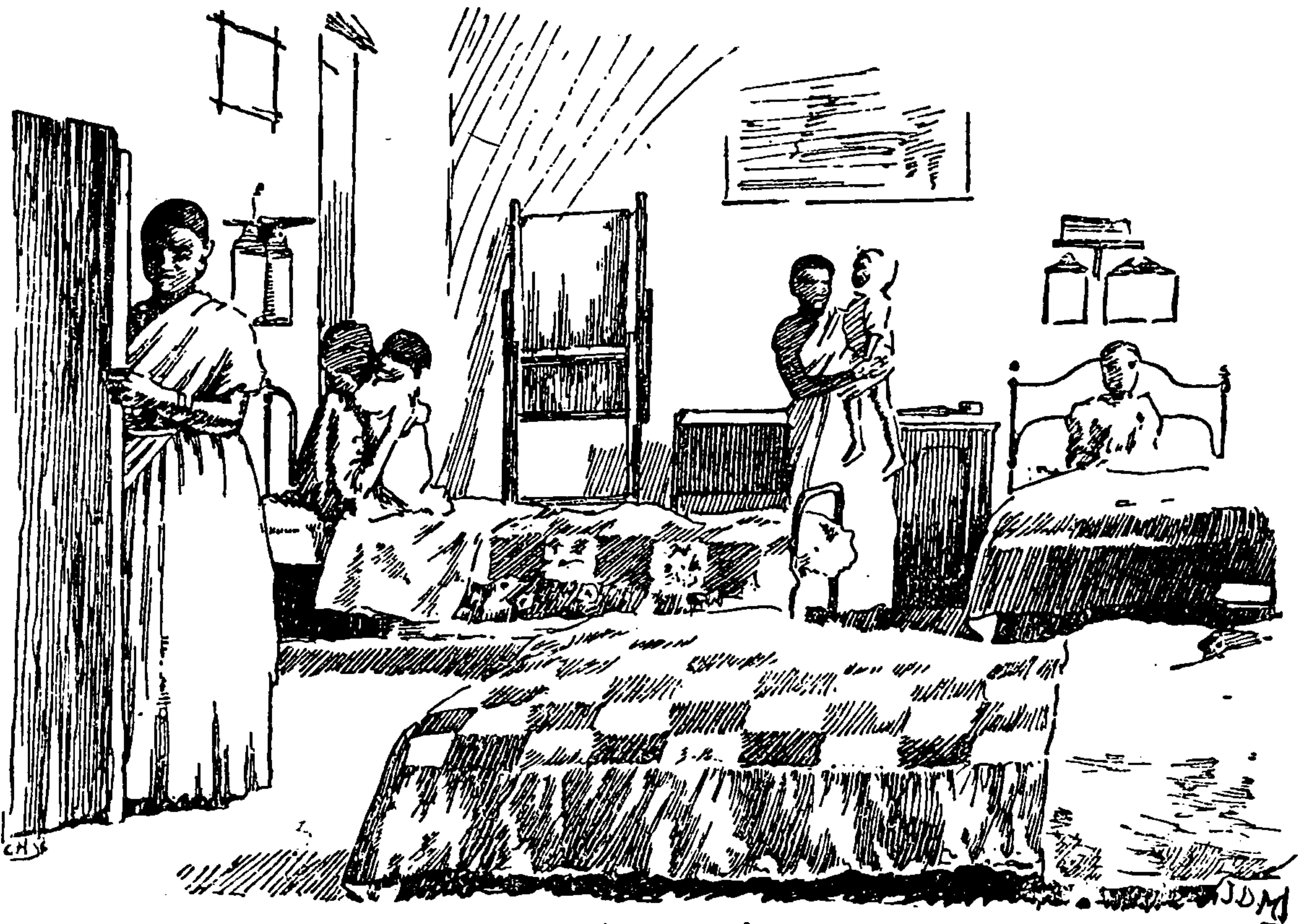
Later on, they were reinforced by the arrival of Miss Rainsford and Miss Newman (a trained nurse), and by the end of the year there had been 5,000 attendances, and 2,000 women had heard the Glad Tidings. Residence in the city was, however, forbidden the missionaries. Living at four miles' distance, it was impossible to think of hospital work except on the most limited scale. Permission to reside in the city must be gained. It was Dr. Fanny Butler's privilege and honour to be the instrument in overcoming the resistance of the native Government. Mrs. Bishop (*née* Bird, the authoress and traveller), visiting Kashmír gave the necessary sum for building a

Dispensary, and Women's Hospital to accommodate sixty patients, in memory of her husband, Dr. John Bishop, of Edinburgh. But, it was only a fortnight after the foundations of the new building were laid that the brave pioneer herself, Dr. Butler, after a few days' illness, was called Home to God. The same little boat and boatmen which had so often taken her to her work in the Hospital, bore her quietly down the river to her last resting-place. The native servants begged the honour of bearing her from the boat to the grave. "They had eaten her salt, and no one else must carry her."

Since that memorable time, our C.E.Z.M.S. work in Kashmír has undergone many severe vicissitudes. A succession of brave and skilled lady workers and nurses have carried on the ministry of healing, with the ever ready and valuable help and advice of Drs. A. and E. Neve, of the C.M.S. Hospital, and as many as 10,000 patients have been medically treated by them in a single year. But, in 1891, a terrible flood rendered the new Memorial building uninhabitable, and our missionaries had to resort to temporary premises. Almost immediately afterwards, a fire, by which 9,000 houses were destroyed, and the visitation of cholera to which we have already referred, caused a heavy strain on the sympathies and strength of our workers, at a time when the medical staff was in sore need of re-inforcements. For a time it seemed as if this needy field must be left without a separate C.E.Z.M.S. Medical Mission work among the women; but, thank God, to-day we have not only Miss Newnham in charge of the female ward of the C.M.S. Hospital, but Miss B. Foy has been appointed to open medical work in connection with Miss Hull's Kashmír Mission. Miss Foy and her sister, Miss L. Foy, who now works the Ajnála medical branch, were country-born English girls, trained at St. Catherine's, Amritsar.

At Bangalore, the Gasha Hospital for Muhammadan women, who are kept in strict seclusion ('gasha,' the South Indian term

for pardah system), is a singularly interesting branch of medical mission work. Under the care of Miss Amy Lillingston, Miss Walker, a trained nurse, and three Christian native women in training, more than seventy in-patients were tenderly nursed during the first few months of 1897. The Muhammadans are gaining confidence, and are leaving their women more trustfully to the Christian missionaries' care, since they find that they will be "really gasha," and therefore safe!



INSIDE THE 'GASHA' HOSPITAL.

"Jena Bi and Sherifa Bi are typical patients," says Miss Lillingston, "both gasha women. Jena Bi had acute rheumatism, and was suffering much when she came. From the day of her marriage she had never left her Zenána home until she entered the hospital. Sherifa Bi is a little wife of sixteen or seventeen, with a very pretty child-like face. She has listened very little to the teaching, being chiefly concerned with her sufferings, poor little girl. The patients almost invariably bring a relative with them; and Jena Bi and her friend have

been much interested in the large picture of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, which hangs at one end of the ward.

"We very much need to be remembered in prayer. The work here, with all its gladness, has so much of grave and solemn responsibility. If we had time and strength, every patient who leaves the Hospital should be visited regularly, at least for a few weeks. We cannot allow the nurses to visit alone, even two together, as it would be considered most improper for young Indian women to be without an escort.

"A certain proportion of our patients are native Christians; and as we have learnt more of the state of the native Church, we gladly welcome them, knowing how sorely they need to be taught the difference between *nominal* and *real* Christianity. In many cases their lives sadly dishonour their profession, and they scarcely know more than the name of Christ, and have a vague belief that, in some mysterious way, they are saved by believing that He is GOD, and by calling on Him just as the Heathen call on Krishna or Ram. Thank GOD, there are some bright exceptions; but when friends at home pray for the work among Hindus and Muhammadans, will they also specially remember the hundreds of nominal Christians in Bangalore?"

In 1885, we sent a trained nurse, Miss Graham, to Dummagudem—a far-away outpost—to join the C.M.S. missionaries, the Rev. J. and Mrs. Cain, in order to tend and teach the suffering women of the Kois. These people are the remnant of a timid and dying-out race belonging to the hills above the Godávari River. Their responsiveness to Miss Graham's sympathy and care were well shown on one occasion, after her first well-earned furlough. All, Christian and Heathen alike, vied with each other to welcome her back. The merchants had decorated the bázár with strings of leaves and small flags. The chief people came to escort the lady missionary, and most loving addresses in Telugu were read.

To Miss Graham's work the following testimony is borne by Mrs. Morley, wife of the Bishop of Tinnevelly, and member of the C.E.Z. Madras Corresponding Committee, in an account of a visit paid by her to this outpost in December, 1895:

"Evangelistic work is going on daily in the Dispensary, where Miss Graham, a devoted C.E.Z. missionary, attends between 800 and 900 patients a month. Her helper at present is a young caste man, who had to leave his home three years ago, when he gave up his old habit of opium eating and 'ganjai.' He preaches to the people who wait for treatment."

Yet in spite of the welcome given to messengers of Christ, so strong a grip does Hinduism maintain of this very place that as recently as 1895, on the visit of an important Hindu guru (priest), the shops were closed, the caste people, in great excitement, flocked to him with large sums of money, some of them prostrating themselves before him, or pouring on their heads the water in which his feet had been bathed!

In our hurried glance at these varied fields of labour, each with its own peculiar interest, we may not attempt to portray the devoted labours of our nurses at Kummamett and Palamcottah, or the Hospital for Sick Children, which, through the exertions of Miss Askwith and Miss Swainson, has been added to the Sarah Tucker Institution, and which the Governor of Madras describes in the visitors' book as "a little gem." But, for a moment, we must pause before two places of healing which we claim in our Travancore and Cochin Mission. In the Fern Hill Dispensary for Women and Children at Trevandrum, Miss Lena Beaumont, a fully qualified apothecary from Madras, is ministering to the needs of more than a thousand sufferers in a month; and at Trichur, the capital of Cochin, the Misses Coleman have been dispensing the twofold gift of healing for body and soul unremittingly since 1881. Their valuable and devoted labours are, perhaps, little known, since they write seldom, and do not come to England. Yet this

Medical Mission is not only one of the oldest of the C.E.Z.M.S. centres, but one of the richest in the best results. In 1893, at a time when sorrow and sickness were rife at Trichur, the workers bravely remained at their posts, taking advantage of every new opportunity of carrying the message of GOD's love in Christ to the stricken people. Of the Bible-women at this time Miss Coleman wrote:

"Without fear, they have been going into houses where three or four persons in one room were laid down with cholera. This has brought us into closer touch with all castes, from the highest downwards, and has made friends of some who, before, were enemies of the Truth."

* * * * *

Our story of India's suffering womanhood is ended. But the half has not been told. Listen for one moment longer.

"Shall I feel it, mother, when you burn me?[1] Oh, mother, I shall be all alone, no one will be with me there." Such were the agonised words that burst from the lips of a young woman in India as she lay dying. They told the deep anguish of a soul about to pass into Eternity without Christ, without hope. "No one will be with me there"—it is the despairing thought of millions of India's daughters to-day as they are passing away. Dying—dying so fast—for want of a sister's care! Dying in countless numbers—dying in the dark—for want of a sister's hand to hold out the torch of the Light of Life!

If we do not hasten to them **now**, how shall we face that once yearning, suffering throng in the great Hereafter? Will not their pleading, pitiful cry, now sounding in our ears, "Come over and heal us," haunt us through the long ages of Eternity?

Shall we listen to the King's sorrowful, soul-thrilling reproach—"I was sick and ye visited ME NOT"—*only when the opportunity is* GONE FOR EVER?

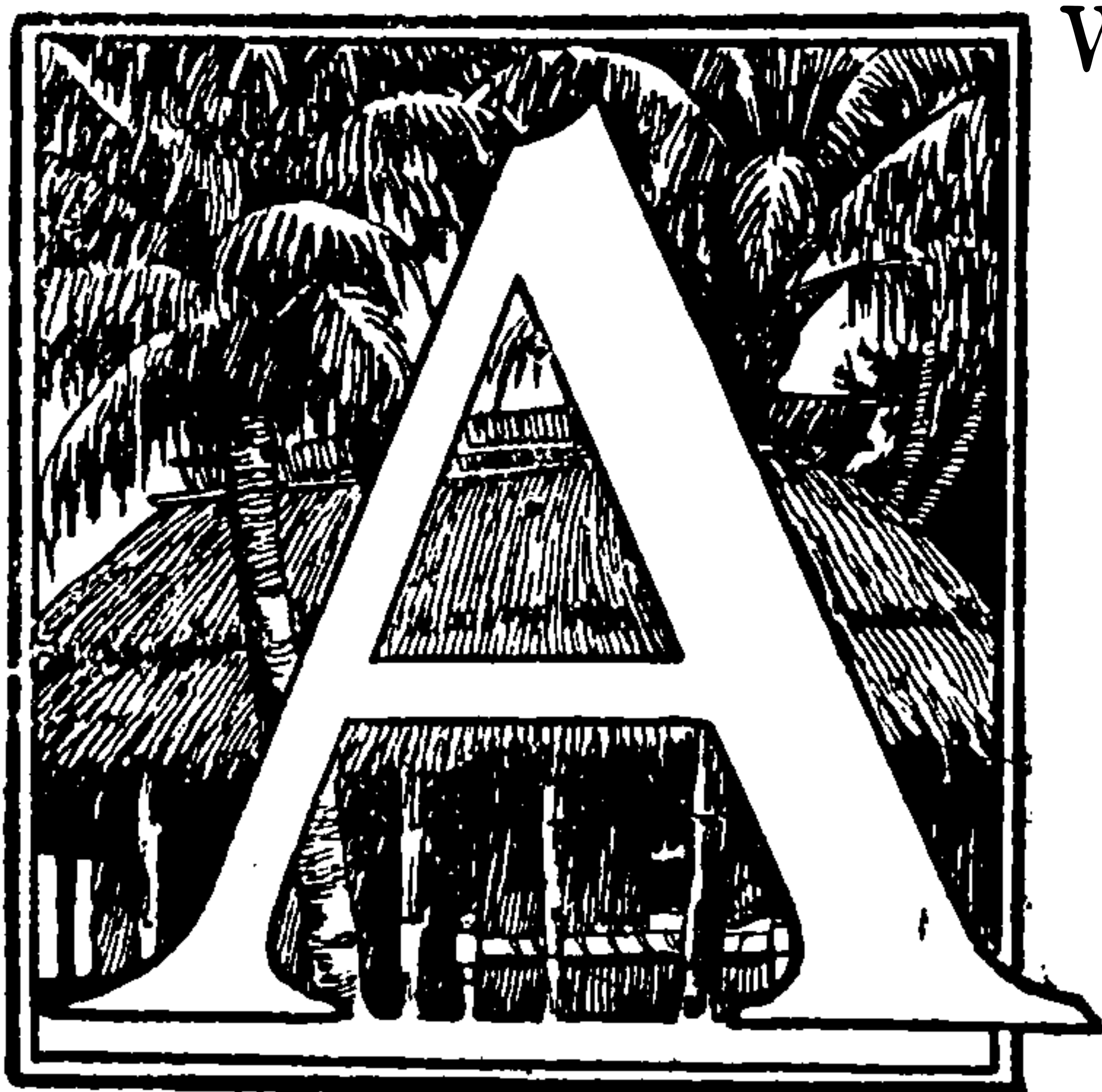
[1] Referring to the Hindu custom of burning their dead.

CHAPTER XII

The Daughters of Islam

"Islám is nothing but a corpse, and the souls enthralled in it are dead souls—blind and cold and stiff in death as no Heathen are. But we who love them see the possibilities of sacrifice, of endurance, of enthusiasm, of *life*, not yet effaced. If you could see them to-day, the grave intelligent men, the women with their native brightness struggling through the fetters of generations of ignorance and bondage, the sweet, brown-skinned, dark-eyed children, as lovable, as full of possibilities as our boys and girls at home, you would not say that anything short of Christ was 'good enough' for them."

—From "A Challenge to Faith," by I. Lilias Trotter.



A WEARY, suffering Moslem woman is fast dying of consumption. Beside her sits her Zenána missionary-friend, telling in soft winning accents the Old, Old Story, so full of comfort, light, and love for a soul on the threshold of Eternity. But as soon as she begins, other daughters of Islám who crowd the sick room chatter noisily, interrupt with loud interrogations, and forbid the sick woman to listen by menacing signs. Left alone for a few seconds, the sufferer looks up with a face full of yearning pain. "Miss Sahiba," she whispers hoarsely, "they will not bury me when I die, if they think I like listening to you." But the precious seed has been sown. "My Word shall not return to Me void."

The scene changes. The 'Miss Sahiba' is seated under the shadow of a mosque, and the 'Muzzin' is shouting out the call to prayer from one of its minarets. She is paying a first visit to the house of the 'maulvi,' or priest. The women are very bigoted, they argue fiercely, and, having exhausted all the arguments that they know, they despatch a little boy to fetch one of the men. He comes in, and the war is continued with greater vehemence. A scene like this rouses enthusiasm, the missionary feels heedless of consequences. Never again, probably, will she be admitted into this house, and she dares anything in telling them this once "the truth as it is in Jesus."

Let us pass out from the oppressive atmosphere of the Moslem city—"steeped in the power of Satan"—into the Muhammadan 'para' (quarter) of the village, and take up the diary of an itinerating missionary, Miss G. Hetherington, in the Punjáb.

"*Gagga.* Here are two 'lambardars,' *i.e.*, headmen, and I proceed to the house of the first; but the village barber is in the field before me, and although I manage to get a 'manji' (bedstead) to sit on in a sheltered corner, the barber evidently excites the more interest of the two. The noise is great, and the women begin to ply me with questions in very high-pitched voices, although I assure them that I am not deaf. Would they like to hear a hymn 'to the praise of GOD'? No, even that has no effect, for though the noise is subdued a little during the singing, it breaks out with double force as soon as it is over; so I take my way to house No. 2. These are not noisy women, but on the defensive. 'We say our 'namaz' (prayers), fast, repeat GOD's Name, read the 'Kalima' (Muhammadan confession of faith), and therefore are *sure* to go to heaven.' 'But is that enough? What of the lying and bad language even while you are, as you say, doing GOD's work?' 'Oh, but we are married, and have our worldly work to do, and who could do that without telling lies, and how

could we pass the day without backbiting? You' (this in a very superior tone) 'of course have *nothing* to do; *you* do not sew and spin.' On assuring them to the contrary, a woman produces a spinning wheel, and setting it on the manji beside me says, 'Then do it, and show us!' But even the novelty of seeing a Miss Sahiba spin does not last long, and very soon the old arguments come up. No, they are quite satisfied. Awful thought!

"*Phulpur.* One woman is cleaning cotton. 'I have come to see you after a long time, sister; won't you let me sit down?' A prolonged stare—'Jam, jam khalo' (you are very welcome to stand!). It is not encouraging, so I go round the corner and find a woman sewing a 'kurta.' I ask her to let me help, and much to my joy others come, and as long as I sew they listen nicely; but alas! one of the noisy ones from another house finds me out, and the quiet is at an end."

Yet, though the shadows of Moslem bigotry and fanaticism are so deep, all is not darkness. In the solid phalanx of enmity to the cross of Christ on the Muhammadan battlefield there are breaches in the ranks which, thank GOD, are widening surely and perceptibly day by day. But for "the spell of unbelief upon us," there would be more than a quavering in the strong line of battle array. Let us strengthen our faith by glancing at encouragements that have lit up the hearts of those of our workers who, perhaps, are bearing the heaviest cross for the sake of Christ in the hottest part of the field.

"I think," says Miss Ling, of Ootacamund, "that the Muhammadans are the section of the lost sheep who are the hardest to seek. They set their faces like a flint against every effort made to help them. But even among these, the light is penetrating. To one woman I was reading the sacred story of the Crucifixion. On hearing of the veil being rent, she said, 'Yes, I know that means that the way to GOD has been opened.' Many Moslem families, who formerly raised cries of blasphemy

every time the Name of the Son of GOD was mentioned, listen quietly with interest to the Gospel story."

Muhammadan women, if they are pious, pray five times a day, standing or bowing on their praying mat, with their faces towards Mecca. They fast diligently during Ramazan and weep themselves blind during Moharram, special mourning services being held in the houses; but they seldom go to the mosques. Muhammadan women are compelled by their religion to read the Korán; and because it is unlawful that it should be translated from the original Arabic, Muhammadan children have to commit to memory that most difficult character. Yet, since a woman may not have the Korán explained to her, she does not understand the meaning of one word, but reads it only as a sort of charm or an act of merit. But still, many of these women, brought up strictly in the Moslem faith from babyhood, are able to defend their religion and to argue in a way that is at first very surprising, although, of course, their arguments are often childish in the extreme.

Muhammadan work in Calcutta is beset with peculiar difficulties. The followers of the False Prophet are strongly prejudiced against Western ideas. Miss Sophia L. Mulvany, since 1881, has laboured with prayerful, hopeful and tactful energy among the Moslem women, and to-day there are no fewer than six centres around Calcutta, and a staff of nineteen workers.

In 1886, she was able to speak of 105 Zenána pupils and "ever-increasing openings." So vigorously has the work developed that in 1891, the tenth year only of organised work, there were six schools, with five native Christian and two Muhammadan teachers, and an attendance of more than 150 children. Mátyá Burj school had become a model practising ground for the teachers; and there had been one baptism which had greatly cheered the hearts of the workers, as the woman who thus confessed Christ was largely influenced

by the consistent life of Jehángir and his wife, the firstfruits of the Mission, of whose conversion, baptism, confirmation and subsequent evangelistic work, much that is deeply interesting might be told.

Perhaps, of all the encouragements received by our devoted workers among the daughters of Islám in Calcutta, none has been so great and remarkable as that of the conversion of Sirdár Begam, a Zenána pupil for whom Miss S. Mulvany wrestled in prayer, night and day, for many years, and over whom she is now rejoicing. Her husband, a bigoted old man

A CLASS OF MOSLEM GIRLS.

of wealth and position, subjected her to much petty persecution in the early days of her seeking after God, and after a time gave up supporting her, declaring that he had married her only for six months—a kind of marriage legal among Muhammadans.

The father, furious with the man, as well he might be, and angry at the increasing influence of Christian teaching over his daughter, forced her into re-marriage with a man (already married) from Bhágulpur, who immediately quarrelled with his new relatives and left her!

In a journal written by Miss Bostock we find this entry, dated March 1st, 1895:

"I have seen many interesting sights during my winter visit to India, but the most heart-moving is that which I have witnessed this morning at the church in the Christian village of Muirabad. There were four baptisms. The converts were a dear Moslem woman, her two wee children and her father, a remarkably fine-looking old man. Miss S. Mulvany was made the instrument in GOD'S hand of bringing her out of the cold, false religion of Muhammadanism into the soul-saving doctrine of the LORD Jesus Christ. For twelve years she was visited and prayed for perseveringly, and at last had courage to come forward and confess her faith in Christ. Her husband was a bad man, and after a law-suit, the magistrates had handed her over to her parents to be taken care of, with her children. She was much beloved by her father and mother, both very strict Muhammadans, and while with them, she was made a blessing to her father. Her gentle life won him to read the Word of GOD, which was so precious to his daughter in the time of her affliction. The family were then living at Patna, and Miss Abraham (Z.B.M.M.) watered the good seed sown by the daughter, until her father, as well as she, was anxious for baptism, and they were brought to Allahábád as a safer place in which to hold the service than one where they were known. The whole family came, and we were astonished and rejoiced to see the mother, who still remains in her false religion, in church this morning at the baptism. The old man took the name of 'Abraham' (after Miss Abraham), and his daughter that of 'Ruth'; the little boy, two-and-a-half years old, was named 'Gulam Mashi,' *i.e.*, the slave of Christ, and the baby, 'Shirin,' *i.e.*, sweetness. It was a most touching sight. Never can I forget dear Ruth's sweet face with its expression of 'peace, perfect peace.' In very delicate health, she had to be carried in a chair from the carriage, and was not able to stand during the service. Yet there she sat, unmoved by the pain she was suffering,

or by the fact that the church was crowded with men and women—this woman who had lived in pardah all her life—her thoughts, as she said afterwards, 'in heaven,' while she was 'praising GOD for answering prayer in making her high-spirited little boy so quiet and good during the baptism.'"

For ten years Mír Ibraham had prevented his daughter from confessing Christ by baptism, yet, though unaware of it at the time, he was restrained from forbidding her to read the Bible, even when most opposed to her learning English. He now acknowledges, with tears of repentance and gratitude, that it was GOD's power alone that held him back.

Miss Abraham remarks in a letter home that one of her greatest grounds of confidence in Sirdár Begam's conversion has been the beautiful spirit of forgiveness she has evinced towards her husband, who had been so cruel to her. And, indeed, her own letters show this.

In a touching letter from "Ruth," written recently to Miss S. Mulvany (which we quote *verbatim*), she says:

"Offer this prayer also with me, that my husband, loving the LORD Jesus, may believe on Him, that his sins may be forgiven; also that we may be brought together again. In fact, pray for all my people to be brought to Christ."

And again:

"RESPECTED MOTHER,

"I always remember you in my prayers, and ask the LORD Jesus to pour down His blessing upon you. My father goes with the Rev. Nihal Singh to the city to preach, and I give GOD thousand thanks that now He has given him such a mind that he is ready to do His work. I am hoping to GOD that one day my husband will confess the LORD Jesus Christ. Will you kindly give my many, many saláms and love to all the ladies who are praying for me . . . and to your sister (Miss E. F. Mulvany, of Bardwán). I daily remember her in

my prayers. May the LORD Jesus Christ, the Saviour of us all, be with you in all you do, and give you both spiritual power and bodily strength, and when you return to India, I and you and all will rejoice and sing the hymns of the LORD Jesus and praise Him. . . .

"I am your true disciple,

"RUTH SIRDAR BEGAM

"(with my own special pen)."

Side by side with the life-story of this singularly interesting daughter of Islám, now among her Christian missionary friends, runs that of Sultáni Begam, another Muhammadan lady, also a true convert. Brought to Christ at Mátyá Burj through Miss Roseboom's influence, she was baptised on New Year's Day, 1894. It was Sirdár Begam who, years before, had introduced her to our workers in Calcutta. Esther Sultáni Begam is now at work among the Moslem Zenánas of Allahábád (under the Z.B.M.M.), and of her Miss S. Mulvany says, "She so earnestly longs to bring her 'quamwalli,' *i.e.*, women of her own nation, to Christ, that I believe He has great purposes of blessing for those to whom He may send her." The Sultáni herself remarked not long since, "I always used to wonder why my Miss Sahiba and other Christians were so keen about every one coming to Christ, but now I know, for I long for this myself."

In December, 1896, Miss S. Mulvany visited Allahábád, and said:

"It has been a delight to see the converts from Mátyá Burj, Maryam Begam, Esther Sultáni Begam, Ruth Sirdár Begam, and Mír Ibraham, and to have had special prayer with them for that place. The earnest prayer which Esther Sultáni Begam offered for me in returning to the work seemed as much a dismissal from His faithful servants as a dismissal meeting at home.

"It is a joy to find Ruth Sirdár Begam and her father in the outward fold of Christ's church, and so evidently in Him experimentally and spiritually. Her mother's prejudice is beginning to lessen, and all are expecting and claiming by faith that she will soon experience a real change of heart.

"Maryam Begam, a Saidani, *i.e.*, direct descendant of Muhammad, was the first case with which I was connected of a Moslem lady coming out as a Christian. First brought to the LORD by Miss Hadden, of Lucknow, she was baptised by the Rev. Jani Alli while staying in the Palace of the King of Oude, at Mátyá Burj, in 1878, and I have always felt that her baptism was an earnest of blessing on the work of the Calcutta Muhammadan Mission which I began two years later. Maryam helped me much when, in 1888, she joined me as a Zenána teacher in Calcutta. We are planning that now as a matured Christian (the Matron of the Z.B.M.M. Converts' Home, Allahábád) she should visit Mátyá Burj as a missioner."

Truly the daughters of Islám will soon be won for Christ when they thus become their own evangelists!

Writing home from Calcutta in 1896, Miss Bardsley said: "One very gentle Muhammadan lady, who often used to say to me, 'I love you and you love me,' was most anxious for us to begin work in Tally Gange, about six miles out of Calcutta. We were trying to open a little school, but it was very difficult, as we could only gather the children together once a week. One day this lady said to me, 'If the children come every day, I will teach them for you.' The next week she said, 'I have taught the children every day, but I could not teach them GOD's Word; I have not got your Book.'

"I gave her a Bible. She not only taught it to the children, but read it regularly herself with her own children. It was always placed carefully on a table. Not very long after this, I went away to the hills, and when I came back I found that

my dear Begam had died quite suddenly. I feel sure that she had learnt to love Jesus Christ as her Saviour. She had only a few opportunities, but, I believe, had acted up to the light given to her."

In about the space of six months from the opening of Mission work in Tally Gange, over 300 women had been taught, and of these more than 250 had never before heard of Jesus. The Muhammadan village women are more secluded than their Hindu sisters, so that only one or two, and at the most six or eight at a time, can be reached by the missionary. But "I cannot tell you," says Miss Bardsley, "how grateful these women are to us for visiting them."

A very real contest for the children has commenced in many a stronghold of Islám: and sometimes for a while the enemy triumphs. In a little school, one of ten hidden away in the nooks and corners of Amritsar, where children can most easily reach them, a short time ago, about thirty Afghán children might have been seen, dressed in the brightest silks, gauzes, and gold brocade, rejoicing in having "passed" their "Infant Standard" examination. A few days later where were they? All but one swept into a Muhammadan school opened for the very purpose of closing this one. And, meanwhile, the opposition "Zenána Society" disclosed its motives for vigorous action thus:

"This Society is imperatively needed in this city, Amritsar, where, *in every hole and corner*, *lane and court*, missionaries have their nets ready spread. It should be known that, thanks to the efforts of this Society, hitherto missionaries have been hampered and weakened in their work. This Society has established several girls' schools to supplant mission agencies. If our honourable and energetic Muhammadans do not look to it, we prophesy, with all the strength of which we are capable, that after this, Ahl-i-Islám in this city will never again have a ghost of a chance of escaping from the

missionary flood which has come on it and is sweeping over it."

Yet the fight continues, and victory is sure, for "greater is He that is with us than he that is with them." One little incident, a mere "straw" in itself, will show in which direction the tide is setting. In one school for Moslem children a woman entered as a pupil, whom the Mullahs had sent as a spy to report what the children were being taught. When remonstrating one day with the Christian teacher about the Divinity of our LORD, her exclamations of aversion, "Tauba! Tauba!" were interrupted by one of her class-mates, usually a very quiet child, who, turning round upon her, said, "Don't you know that the 'Ruh-Allah' (the title given by Muhammadans to Christ, meaning the Spirit of GOD) must be greater than the 'Rasul-Allah?' (messenger of GOD, or Muhammad). How can you be so ignorant?" The woman, dumbfoundered by the remark, could say nothing in reply, and soon afterwards disappeared from the school.

And so in Calcutta and its suburbs, in Pesháwar and its environs, and throughout India wherever GOD has enabled us to plant His banner, Muhammadan school work is going on in spite of all the enemy's wrath, and will, until hundreds of little 'Ayeshas,' and 'Mariyams' and 'Fatimas' are brought into the fold of Christ. Witness the little Moslems of Bardwán bringing their thankoffering of ten 'pice' for being allowed to return to their beloved Mission School. Can girls be called Muhammadans who voluntarily unite in daily prayer for the persecuted Christians in China, entreating GOD for Christ's sake to turn the hearts of the persecutors?

Incident after incident might be given to prove that the stony rock of Islám is breaking under the hammer of GOD'S Word. One of our missionaries tells of a woman who, on determining to follow Christ, was so cruelly beaten and imprisoned that she will suffer all her life from its effects, but

who is now a true witness for the LORD Jesus, and in charge of a hostel for hospital out-patients in the same bigoted Muhammadan city, where, years ago, she suffered persecution. Another, a Moslem lady of high family and great wealth, has lately left everything, including her only child, for Christ. Thoroughly acquainted with her own religion, and most strict in all its observances and ceremonies, she was won to GOD by the teaching of a Bible woman, herself a convert from Muhammadanism.

In the Zenánas there are many instances of secret believers, and of those who are "almost persuaded." "Among these," says Miss Tuting, of the Punjáb Mission, "are three women in one house—wife, mother-in-law (a widow), and widowed aunt of the wife. They have great faith in Christian prayer, since the eyesight of one of them was restored after special prayer had been offered by our workers. Whatever trouble occurs in their family, they immediately desire us to pray about it, and have also asked to have a written prayer for light and salvation which they may use daily. A bigoted youth in the household erased the name of Christ with which it closed, and inserted 'Muhammad'; but the women say that they, nevertheless, always use it in the Name of Christ. As two of them cannot read yet, they have learnt the prayer by heart!"

Tokens of hopefulness, perhaps shown in ways only to be appreciated by those who witness them, stand out in bold relief against the dark wall of bigotry and superstition behind them. At Háripur, in the Hazara district—so thickly populated, so sparsely evangelised—Miss Condon says that "no fewer than ten or twelve maulvis, *i.e.*, Muhammadan priests, are now reading the Bible, and one was so impressed that he came to ask if we would teach him."

At Ootacamund there is a complete dying down of all opposition to Bible teaching among the Muhammadans;

while Miss Symonds of Ellore speaks of a dying Muhammadan who *asked* for prayer when visited by her.

The awful wickedness of Muhammadan homes is, perhaps, realised only by the missionary worker among the daughters of Islám. "Some people will talk," says Miss Hewlett, of Amritsar, "of the beauty of the creed of Islám. I can only say that I have to shield the young workers under my care from knowing the wickedness of the Muhammadans amongst whom they are longing to go and work. The evils that abound remind us who are older that we dwell where Satan's seat is. It is the Muhammadan religion which maintains the pardah, and the pardah does not protect the women, but hides from the public outside the wickedness of the Muhammadan homes. We cannot tear it down. It must be done in the same way as all GOD's works are done—by unfailing faith and prayer, in dependence upon Him Who said, 'Little by little I will drive them out before thee.' It is of no use to give Indian women liberty unless we give them the 'liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free.'"

Miss Phillips, of Peshâwar, says:

"The Kabuli women often pray that we may become Muhammadans. On one occasion, being in a particularly bigoted house, I was telling a woman that we were going to Háripur the next day because the people there wanted to hear about Christ, instead of shutting their ears like the Pesháwaris. 'May GOD keep them from listening!' she exclaimed, and on our return she informed me that they had been praying to that effect. It is not an uncommon thing for the family Mullah to pray, or to read the Korán in an outside room during the whole of one's visit, hoping thereby to avert all evil consequences!"

In a sketch of a tour among South Indian villages, one of our missionaries tells of her visits to the Muhammadan Zenána pupils.

"On Monday morning I ride through the mud for three miles to a large village, where a Muhammadan kindly lends us a little one-roomed house in a cocoanut grove, that I may have a little refreshment in the midst of my work. The village is divided into 'this side' and 'that side' of the river. Most ot my pupils on both sides are Tamil-speaking Muhammadans. They *do* know how to talk, and, having no fear, like the Hindus, of caste pollution, they crowd around me, wanting to know all about me and my relatives! They are fasting;

A FAMILY CONVEYANCE!

therefore they say they cannot learn thoroughly. But they are very friendly, so we have plenty of talk about the Christian way of salvation. The last house of all is the most noisy. Boys throng in, and, if shut out, thump at the doors. Behind me a woman, a devotee, is telling her beads, and prostrating herself with groans on the ground again and again. Yet in the midst of all this confusion, lessons are said brightly and well."

The Muhammadan ladies of South India are very strictly secluded, and are proud of it. They look upon it as a mark

of respectful care, and are very contemptuous of women who are not taken care of in the same way.

Miss E. L. Oxley, who has long worked among the daughters of Islám in Madras and its neighbourhood, contributes the following description of their characteristics:

"The Moslem women and children are most interesting and pleasing. As a rule, in appearance they are of fair complexion, tall and graceful. They are all very anxious to be fair skinned and to have black hair and eyes. They take great pains to look well, and paint their eyes and eyebrows black, and even decorate their tiny babies in the same way. Their dress is extremely picturesque, a petticoat of rich coloured soft silk, striped horizontally, a short tight-fitting jacket with short sleeves, and, over all, the graceful sári or chaddar, with one end drawn prettily over the head. Numerous jewels are worn, according to the wealth of the owner: nose-rings—either the small closely-fitting jewel or the large ring of fine gold wire—rings and toe-rings, and a large number of gold or coloured glass bangles.

"WAITING SEEMS TO BE THEIR NORMAL CONDITION."

"The lives of the Muhammadan ladies are often extremely dreary, and would be altogether intolerable to women brought up differently, and belonging to a more energetic race. South Indian Moslems are greatly wanting in energy and seem to

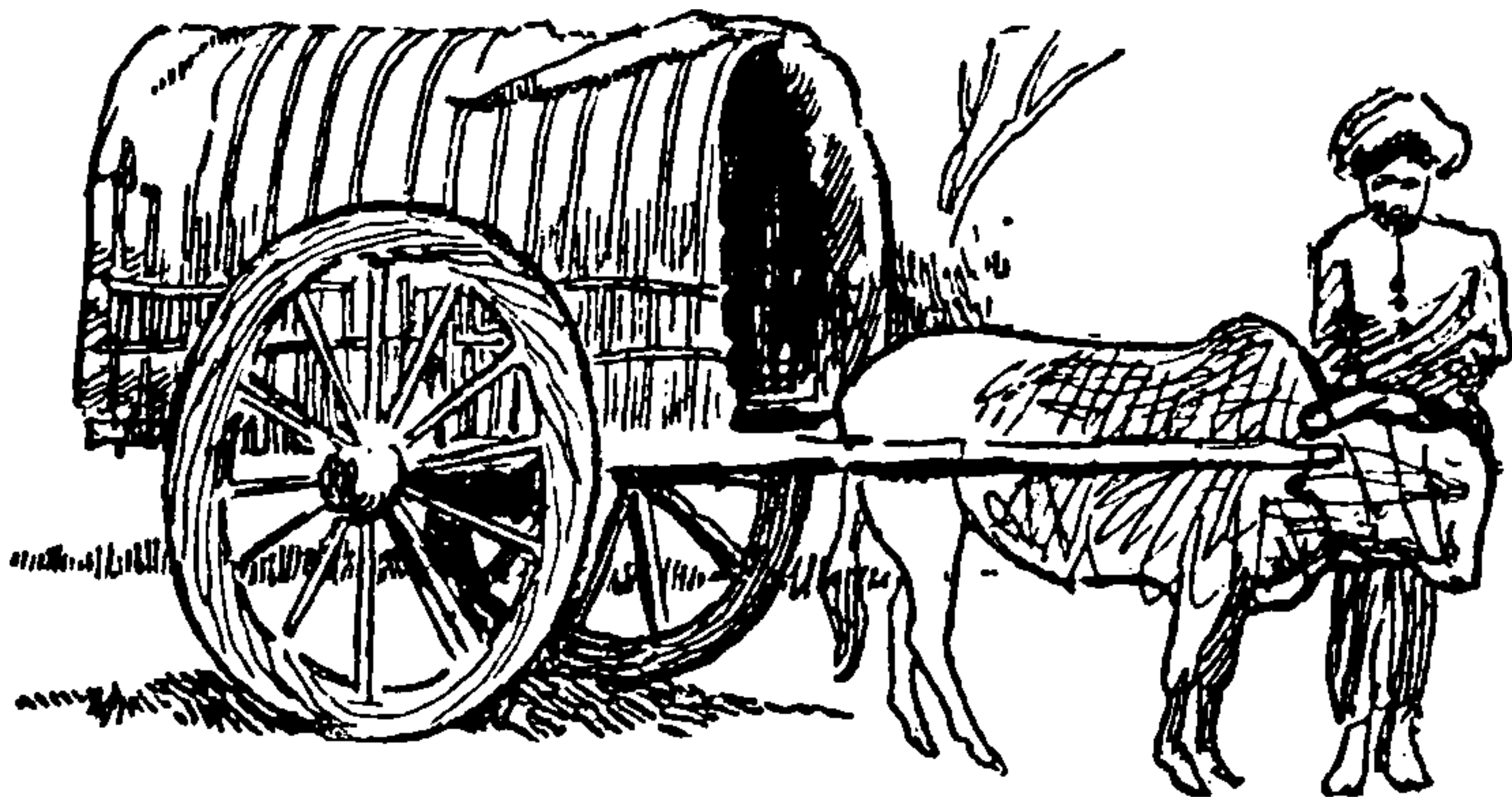
enjoy doing nothing in a way that is very surprising to English people. It is not unusual to find them quite willing to put off indefinitely, to a future time, something in which they appear to be really interested, and which we, in their place, should wish to continue and finish at once. Any little obstacle is sufficient to interrupt their small occupations, and they placidly sit down to wait. Waiting seems to be their normal condition.

"The poor Muhammadans live in very small and dreary houses—if such they can be called. Whole streets are occupied by them, and they consist generally of a small enclosure surrounded by mud walls. A wooden door in the wall covered by a hanging pardah,—a curtain of coarse sacking,—gives admittance to the courtyard, at one side of which is the dwelling-place proper, a slightly raised platform of mud covered with a thatched or tiled roof, and again a screened entrance, so that the women may be 'gasha,' *i.e.*, in pardah. A few mats, earthen pots, and a low bed form the furniture. The smallest of the children are generally to be found lying in an old sheet tied up in a most ingenious way and suspended from the rafters—a very satisfactory cradle, as it can be easily kept in motion by an occasional push.

"Amongst the poor—and the majority of the Moslem population is composed of these—there are very many of good, or even high birth, who are now reduced to great but, generally, uncomplaining poverty. As time goes on, the pensions which the English Government undertook to pay the Muhammadan princes in years gone by, when the land passed out of their hands, have been so divided and subdivided among the families that they have now become merely nominal, and the recipients of the present day suffer accordingly. Uneducated as they mostly are, they look upon the loss of money as injustice, and, as a rule, are too proud and unwilling to work. Yet there are many exceptions. The Government offers great inducements by scholarships, etc., to young Muhammadans,

and, during the last few years, the schools and colleges have been filled with students; while numbers of ladies of gentle birth are evincing a desire for employment in their own homes, and are occupied with silk embroidery, in the sale of which they receive nearly all the profit. Many are exceedingly grateful for an employment which can be taken up privately, in concession to their rank.

"It is a remarkable step forward that, of late years, Muhammadan parents in Madras have been willing to send their daughters to school. Twenty years ago such a thing was almost, if not entirely, unknown. Education of the most meagre kind at home from ignorant teachers was all that was desired. Now, very many little girls attend Mission schools daily, and make wonderful progress in their studies; nearly all the poorer ones hoping to qualify, in time, as teachers. It naturally follows that, as they become educated, they grow dissatisfied with their unhealthy homes and dull lives, and try to make them brighter and better. It is a pitiful thing to see the efforts of the children in their own homes to hide the discomfort and want of cleanliness from the eyes of visitors, and their sad and ashamed faces when their older and more ignorant relatives say and do things which they know to be vulgar and barbarous. They take their school books home with them, and spend much time in studying them. Much less opposition than formerly is now made to the Bible lessons, but still it is often serious and bitter. The parents appear to ignore the fact that the Bible is taught systematically in the



THE BULLOCK CART WHICH BRINGS THE 'GASHA' GIRLS TO SCHOOL.

schools; yet whenever a special case comes before them of their children being in danger of "perversion" to Christianity they are angry, and will sometimes remove them. But as time goes on, and these children become in turn the heads of homes, we cannot but believe that great changes will be found to take place, and certainly less opposition will be raised."

Perhaps the most eloquent testimony to the worth and reality of Mission school work was unintentionally given by a Muhammadan in a vigorously written tract as long ago as 1885. In a veritable trumpet-call to Moslem parents which commences: "Believers! save your children and descendants from hell-fire!" he says: "What do we see? Wherever we go we find Mission schools filled with Muhammadan children! There is scarcely a lane, a street, a house, where the effect of these schools is not seen. Where is the girl who has had the good luck to escape the teaching of the New Testament? Is there a child in the Mission schools who is not thoroughly grounded in the Christian faith, and at the same time taught to believe that her own religion is vain? The missionaries, who pour like a flood into this country, are striking deadly blows at the *root* of our faith. Have you no pity on your children? Countrymen, shall we not try to save our children from a disease which, in a few years, will be incurable? If we let missionaries work unmolested, if we allow English women to undermine our faith, in a few years (if indeed one Musalmán remain in India) our knees will be feeble indeed, our heart faint, our religion gone!"

To a stranger from the north of India, the Pettah, or native town of Bangalore, with its fort and streets overshadowed by the graceful cocoanut palms, has a peculiar interest; for here the high-caste Hindu women freely walk about, unveiled, and with nothing on their heads save an ornamental pin run through their glossy black hair. But let us glance at their closely secluded Moslem sisters, amongst whom are many

hungering souls. "There is no comfort found in our religion," said one, not long ago. "Our book tells us to fast, pray, give alms, that we may obtain salvation. When we do all this, it is still put down as sin."

Nevertheless, for some months, attempts at Zenána work in Bangalore failed over and over again, so strong was the counter-influence exerted by the bigoted heads of houses. At last a worker could report: "New houses are opening every day, and a real hungering for the Bread of Life has arisen."

In 1888, Miss Thom wrote, "The more one knows of Mission work the greater seem the disadvantages at which foreigners must ever remain in carrying the Gospel to those whose modes of thought, habits and speech must be, at best, only imperfectly acquired. Therefore, from the first, our prayer was that God would send us some native Christian helpers, filled with His Spirit!

"The only Muhammadan convert to Christianity, I believe, in this part of South India, is the widow of a Pathán, a 'havilda,' and formerly a man of good means. This widow was brought to Christ through Miss Reade, of Panrúti. Since her baptism, nine years ago, she has been a brave witness, through much suffering, for her Saviour. In order to get an entrance amongst her own people, who had utterly cast her out, she has taken her diploma as trained nurse in the Madras Hospital. There she was at once offered remunerative employment with merely the proviso that she must not proselytise. But, her heart was loyal to her Saviour; she declined Government work and returned to her village. About six or eight months ago, Qadir Bi got possession, for the first time since her own baptism, of her youngest child, who had been hitherto with her Muhammadan relatives. It was, however, necessary that Qadir Bi should leave her own part of the country if she were to keep the child with her. She had, besides, a little grandchild and an adopted girl of seven or

eight years old. Work in our Mission at Bangalore exactly met her case.

"Many who knew the hatred felt by the Muhammadans to an apostate from their faith, feared serious opposition in the houses. Instead of this, GOD has given her great favour. Her rare qualities of firmness and gentleness, united to a strong faith, open her way amongst her former co-religionists in Bangalore. Her powers as 'hakim,' or native doctor, prove an '*Open, sesamë!*' to houses otherwise barred against her, and these powers once tested, together with her winning ways, rapidly make friends, whom her Christian faithfulness seldom loses.

"Qadir Bi's little house in our compound is often a pleasant sight to see, filled with sixteen to twenty Muhammadan women guests, listening with deep interest to the Scripture lesson given by their hostess. After the Bible lesson comes an entertainment of coffee, bread and fruits, served in the house of the 'Bábu Mem,' as Qadir Bi is respectfully called. These provisions they will take if prepared by her, but are too suspicious of the presence of pork or bacon in our kitchen to take anything directly from us. So strong an influence has Qadir Bi gained over some of these women, that we cannot but hope that the LORD is drawing them to Himself."

When, after eighteen months, Qadir Bi was recalled to

Panrúti, and her ministry in Bangalore came to an end, many a Muhammadan house mourned the loss of a warm friend, and more than one soul thanked God for the message of salvation first heard from her lips.

Muhammadan work at Bangalore has passed through sore vicissitudes. Although one worker after another was raised up to carry it on, out of five from England only one remained at the end of four years. To Miss Anna Smith, who has now laboured for ten years in the Moslem Zenánas of Bangalore, the loss by removal, ill-health, or death of so many fellow-workers from home has emphasised a purpose, always near her heart, of drawing into the work as many young Christians as possible—Europeans and Eurasians—born and brought up in India—for such obviously have special advantages for Mission work. A Training Home for these young missionaries at Bangalore would mean a centre of influence and blessing such as can be scarcely overrated. No wonder that its inauguration is the subject of prayerful consideration.

The Word of God has free course now in the Moslem houses of Bangalore, and, thank God, about twelve workers, including those who have joined on the spot, are sowing the good seed of the Kingdom, where a few years since there was not one. Bangalore, however, is but a starting-point for the numerous Muhammadan towns and villages of the region beyond. Mysore city, the capital of the state, has been entered, and a girls' school established.

"We never heard this before; we must tell others about it!" cried the women in a Zenána one day, as Miss Anna Smith read of the death of Christ. "Do come soon again. These words about God," they continued, almost in David's words, "are better than food to us—better than 'pilau,' etc.," naming other favourite dishes. Alas! how can so few amongst so many, "come *soon* again" to any one house, or repeat the story *often* to these eager listeners?

One daughter of Islám asked her missionary friend why she went from house to house in the burning sun, reading the 'Injil' (Gospel) to every one. Her visitor turned to St. Matthew xxviii. 19, 20, and told her that it was our Master's command. She said, "This, then, is your Prophet's command. Why do not *all* your caste obey it? Out of so many Christians, only *you* come here *once a week* to read to us. Oh! they will receive a very great punishment! How is it?"

And as we turn our eyes from the daughters of Islám to the daughters of Christ, we echo that question, "How is it?"

* * * * *

Thus we have glanced at the Indian woman of town and village, hill and plain. Whether as Hindu or Moslem, child or girl, wife or widow, we have witnessed her unutterable need and woe. Has the passing glimpse moved our souls to a pity that can no longer be passive?

True, a few among the millions of India's women are happy—in the sense in which animals may be happy. Life brings less sorrow and pain to some than to others, even in the land of the pardah. But the woman of India has no abiding joy. She knows no healing water that can satisfy the craving of the soul. She has heard of the fœtid well of Manikarnika at Benares, with its "sweat of Vishnu," and its supposed power to cleanse from sin. But she yearns, not for a fresh incarnation of Vishnu, but for the true, tender story of the incarnation of the Redeeming Son of God.

And who shall tell her?

Though it should cost time, strength, wealth, will not YOU? Although it means that you must go yourself, or send some living, loving treasure still more dear, will not YOU?

For your Indian sister behind a fourfold pardah of ignorance, sin, suffering, and despair is waiting for the fourfold message of Light, Life, Love, and Liberty from YOUR lips.

Shall she wait in vain?

The Story of C.E.Z.M.S. Work in India

OUR STATIONS AND STAFF FROM 1880 TO 1897

THE following brief chronological record of our past history in India may be interesting to those who have read BEHIND THE PARDAH. Necessarily, within the very limited space at our disposal, it must be the merest outline of labours in which hundreds of C.E.Z.M.S. missionaries have engaged during seventeen eventful years. For the same reason also, it is impossible to mention each by name. A list of our workers now on the field will be found in the little handbook (revised annually), PURPOSE, PRINCIPLES, PROGRESS, issued *gratis* to friends of the Society.

Readers of INDIA'S WOMEN AND CHINA'S DAUGHTERS, the interesting and illustrated monthly organ of C.E.Z.M.S., are, moreover, kept so well informed, that our aim is, rather, to sketch the growth and expansion than to tell again the already well-told story of every particular station.

It has been impossible in this small volume to record the labours of C.E.Z.M.S. in any other field than India.[1] Yet an

[1] The story of C.E.Z.M.S. work in CHINA has been already told in BEHIND THE GREAT WALL. The work which, from 1888 to 1891, we were carrying on in JAPAN was, in the latter year, transferred to the C.M.S.

equally important and noble work, though less extensive, has been and is being carried on by our devoted missionaries in Ceylon. In 1889, for the first time, Kandy was reckoned among our stations. A Girls' Boarding School for high-class Buddhist children was opened by Miss Bellerby and Miss James, and a prospectus of the school bore the names of three Kandyan chiefs. To the Rev. J. and Mrs. Ireland Jones, C.M.S., this fresh venture was entirely due, and the institution was called the Clarence Memorial School in memory of their little son, early taken home to GOD. No more interesting sight can be found than these bright-faced, intelligent Buddhist children at school, "living like Christians and calling themselves Jesus' little lambs." In 1892 Miss Malden and Miss Scovell were welcomed by Miss Denyer (Hon. C.M.S.), the first lady to begin village work. During that year three of the oldest pupils in the school were confirmed. In 1893 Miss Scovell wrote of the "thousands of hill villages around Kandy where there are only three workers of any Christian Society," and pleaded for pioneer missionaries.

In 1894, two Kandyan day schools had joined the Scripture Union, a Sunday school was flourishing, and a class for Buddhist women was "held twice a week at the women's special request." A Bible-woman was now an earnest and valued helper. Early in 1895, Miss Scovell welcomed Miss Karney as her long-hoped-for colleague. A house was secured for them at Gampola, a convenient centre for village work in the very populous district south of Kandy, about thirty-six miles long by thirty-four broad, which was assigned to our Society as its sphere of work. The Clarence Memorial School had so increased in numbers that enlargement was necessary in order to provide room for thirty girls. In 1896 Miss A. Naish joined Miss Bellerby in school work, and in visiting some of the Kandyan ladies, who were beginning to wish to be taught to read. A small house was built near Kotmalee, as another

village centre in addition to Gampola, where a Dispensary is now opened twice a week for the benefit of the neglected sick in seventy-two villages around.

Of the Origin and Organisation of C.E.Z.M.S. we have already spoken. See *Introductory*. Our sketch of its Stations and Staff, therefore, begins from the year **1880**.

From the Normal School, Calcutta, established twenty-eight years previously, eighty-four trained teachers and assistant missionaries had already gone forth, and the report of the Principal, Miss Condon, was again full of encouragement; while, in the city itself, Miss Mary Highton and her sister were teaching in several schools and visiting one hundred Zenánas. At Barrackpore, Miss Good, after seven years' successful work, had just established her Converts' Industrial Home. In Krishnagar, always a promising field, nearly five hundred children were attending C.E.Z. Schools. The Zenána visits paid by Miss Raikes at Chinsura, Miss Branch at Jabalpur, and Miss Hœrnle at Mirat were growing in interest. At Amritsar, the Alexandra School, C.M.S., superintended for eight years by Miss Henderson, C.E.Z.M.S., was earning high encomiums from both the Bishop of Lahore and the Rev. Robert Clark—always the warm friend of our work. Miss Hewlett was receiving, already, the gratitude of those who had benefited by her skilful and prayerful care in the Hospital. From Batala, Miss Tucker (A.L.O.E.) was writing deeply interesting narratives of God's work in her hands. Miss Clay, the greatest pioneer of Village Missions, at work as an honorary missionary since 1876, was joined at Jandiála by a native Christian lady, Miss Ellen Lakshmi Goreh; while Mrs. Scott, our honorary missionary at Pesháwar, was being welcomed by the Afghán nobility and their secluded wives. An invitation from C.M.S. missionaries at Karáchi was accepted by two sisters, the Misses Thom.

In South India the Misses Oxley were labouring in Madras,

one among Hindus, the other among Muhammadans. In Miss E. L. Oxley's two schools there were 118 Moslem children. The great advantage which native ladies as missionaries have over their European sisters was being demonstrated by the vigorous work carried on by Mrs. Satthianadhan,[1] her daughters and niece, at the Napier Park Hindu Girls' Schools and in the Madras Zenánas. Miss Brandon, at Masulipatam, was joyfully witnessing and responding to the anxiety of Moslem parents that their girls should be taught. At Palamcottah, our veteran missionary, Mrs. Lewis, was reaching hundreds of women for the first time, while fifteen Bible-women were carrying the Gospel message to the surrounding towns and villages. Miss Gehrich was ably superintending the Sarah Tucker Training Institution, C.M.S., just opened. In Trevandrum, Miss Blandford, who had faithfully worked for nearly twenty years, was visiting one hundred Zenánas and teaching one hundred girls in the Fort School, among whom were daughters of the Prime Minister of Travancore. In the royal palace itself, the Maharájá's wife and the princesses were enrolled as pupils, and were being influenced for Christ.

The first Annual Report might well commence with thanksgiving and conclude with the confident assertion, "We stand on the margin of grand operations of Divine grace."

In **1881** several important stations were taken up. From Calcutta the interesting news came that a conference of sixty *native* Christian teachers had been held, and that, in spite of violent opposition, a widow had been baptised in the Bengali church, and had proved her sincerity by selling some of her property so that she might support herself apart from the Mission. In spite of the well-known bigotry of the Muhammadans, Miss S. Mulvany had begun her successful labours

[1] Hon. Lady Superintendent, wife of the Rev. W. T. Satthianadhan, C.M.S.

among the Moslem women in the city. Five pupils had passed out of the Normal School as trained teachers during the year, and were witnessing for Christ in their new spheres of work. Miss Good, now assisted by the Hon. E. Sugden and Miss Pantin, and a small staff of assistants and teachers, was dividing her time between Schools and Zenánas, while still superintending the Converts' Home, where four baptisms had taken place. In spite of violent opposition from some of the Bábus, and a terrible epidemic of fever, Miss Collisson could still speak of steady growth in the schools at Krishnagar. The large city of Agra, with hundreds of surrounding villages, had become the centre of itinerating effort by the Misses Daeuble, who accompanied their father, the Rev. C. M. Daeuble, C.M.S., from place to place; while Bhágalpur was opened as a Zenána station by Miss Haitz. At Jabalpur and Mirat work was prospering.

So rapidly was the village-to-village Mission extending in the Punjáb that Miss Clay, during the cold season, visited 176 villages—some twice and even three times—besides numerous towns; while A.L.O.E. was sending home thrilling descriptions of her itinerating journeys around Batala. During the fearful epidemic of cholera in the previous autumn at Amritsar, Miss Smith and Miss Hewlett heroically succoured the suffering Hindus, Moslems, and Christians, and had the joy of seeing eight baptisms. Work was commenced this year at Jalandar by Miss Thom and her sister.

The Madras schools were flourishing, forty-three out of forty-six pupils had passed the Government examination, and the girls were receiving a practical Scriptural and spiritual training under Mrs. Satthianadhan's wise care. While the Misses Oxley were closely following up Zenána visiting among Hindus and Moslems in Madras, the Misses Brandon at Masulipatam were as successful. Work among women and girls was opening out in all directions in South India. Mrs.

Kearns, an excellent Tamil scholar and missionary of twenty years' experience, was enrolled upon our staff, and began Zenána work in Sachieapuram, North Tinnevelly; while, in response to a request from Dr. Speechly, then Bishop of Travancore, Miss Coleman, a medical missionary, and her sister were sent to Trichur on the confines of Cochin.

The year **1882** opened with fifty-two missionaries upon our staff. The group of stations in Calcutta and neighbourhood were revisited by the late Mrs. Broadbent, formerly Lady Superintendent of the Normal School in Calcutta, who found abundant cause for encouragement in the way in which the work was by this time expanding. Even the Muhammadan work was not without fruit. Miss S. Mulvany could report "the great joy of hearing the confession of faith of a very dear pupil." The baptism of a Bráhman lady and her children at Barrackpore excited great interest, and deeply impressed even a high-caste Hindu priest who was present, and who remarked, "I wish that many Hindus had been present to see what I have seen to-day." An earnest appeal for reinforcements at Krishnagar, where the work was becoming more urgent and important, and a promising field for training native women teachers, taken from its Christian community of 6,000 souls, was presenting itself. For the first time the question of employment for widows attracted the attention of Government, and the idea of a Widows' Training Class at Kapashdanga was considered by our Committee. On her return to India, Miss Editha Mulvany took up work at Bardwán, whilst Miss Fanny Butler, who had been studying the language at Jabalpur, commenced medical work at Bhágulpur, and the Misses Daeuble were transferred from Agra to Jabalpur. News of the work at Amritsar and Batala called loudly for reinforcements. A second centre of village work in the Punjáb was formed at Ajnála. Sixteen workers were assisting Miss Clay by this time, and 260 villages were visited. Miss Nor-

man, our first missionary sent direct to Pesháwar, arrived to take up the work begun at this important frontier station.

While the work in Madras was growing in depth and interest, the caste Hindu and Moslem girls' schools at Ellore came into our hands, and a feature of great interest both here and at Masulipatam was the arrival of three ladies from Australia to assist in Zenána work. The expenses of outfit and voyage were met by friends in the colony, and in a very touching letter, Mr. Macartney, son of the Dean of Melbourne, expressed the hope that they might be able also to remit £200 a year towards their maintenance. From North Tinnevelly, Palamcottah, Trichur, and Trevandrum, cheering accounts were received, and this at a most critical period in the history of Zenána work. Whilst on the one hand the President of the Government Education Commission was declaring, "*We have received much evidence tending to show that Zenána Missions are at present the only effective agency for the education of women in India*"; on the other hand the "Indian Association" had entered the field with us, and was beginning to send non-religious teachers into the Zenánas of South India. It was therefore a matter of necessity for us to pre-occupy the ground as far as possible in the name of the LORD Jesus Christ. And with peculiar thankfulness the C.E.Z.M.S. found, at the close of its third year of organisation, that its staff had exactly doubled!

During **1883**, a glad tale of fresh blessing and fresh opportunity came from every one of the thirty-one stations in the foreign field. Miss Hunt was now in charge of the great Central Institution—the Normal School, Calcutta—a training ground for future workers, and the Central School with 118 Bengali girls was becoming in itself an important missionary agency. The Misses Highton, by their village school work around the city, were scattering the good Seed far and wide; whilst Parsí as well as Moslem Zenánas were welcoming Miss

S. Mulvany. A third Central Institution was this year opened at Barrackpore by the formation of a Training Class for Widows who should become missionaries. At Krishnagar, Miss Dawe, who had now joined Miss Collisson, was asked by Rev. A. Clifford, C.M.S., to superintend Zenána work at Santipur amongst a population of 30,000. At Bardwán, a high-class school for the daughters of Bengali gentlemen officially connected with Government was opened; and Miss E. Mulvany was cheered by a visit from the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, who afterwards sent her a donation of Rs. 100. Our Missions at Bhágulpur, Jabalpur, and Mirat were also full of encouragement. At Amritsar, Miss Wauton, though her hands were already full with Zenána and school work, this year established a Converts' Home on the same lines as that at Barrackpore, and a Hindu Widows' Industrial Class. The Alexandra School, under Miss Swainson's care, was reported as "never more hopeful than now"; whilst St. Catherine's Hospital was spoken of by the Lieut.-Governor as the most remarkable of all the institutions he had seen in Amritsar. Miss M. Hœrnle and Miss Krapf had now joined Miss Tucker in the new Mission-house "Sonnenschein" at Batala, and were opening up school work also at Fathgarh. At Ajnála, also through the special generosity of friends, a Mission-house for our busy workers had been erected; whilst a site for a small bungalow had been selected at Nárowál and a new out-station opened at Taran Táran. A little School for the Blind was begun at Jalandar, Dr. Moon, of Brighton, generously supplying books in Urdu, Hindi, and Panjábi. Medical work was beginning at Pesháwar, and at Karáchi Mrs. Ball had been offered a house free of rent, by a well-known Hindu gentleman, for a second Sindi school.

Meanwhile, in South India, rarely a month passed without admission being gained for the first time into one or more Zenánas in Madras, and at Masulipatam there was joy over

the baptism of a young woman, "a widow since she was six." Mrs. Ellington was now happily established as House Mother to our young workers among the children at Ellore. A deep shadow was thrown over Tinnevelly this year by the sudden home-call of the saintly Mrs. Lewis, our veteran missionary: She had opened the Home of Rest, and had seen the commencement of Miss Ling's High School. Twenty-two Bible-women whom she had trained mourned her loss.

The Misses Coleman were rejoicing over the first fruits of our Trichur Mission, "three precious souls baptised into Christ's Church below," and a Dispensary was being built close to the Mission bungalow. New work at Ootacamund was opened out by Mrs. S. Satthianadhan, who had studied medicine at Madras University. During this year the British and Foreign Bible Society gave a grant to the C.E.Z.M.S. for the support of Bible-women in our Missions.

1884 was distinctly a year of progress. The number in the Training Class of the Normal School, Calcutta, doubled; the Fergusson Memorial Library was founded for the use of the pupils, and Zenána work, both among Hindus and Muhammadans, though beset with difficulties, was prospering. From the Barrackpore Home some of the converts had now returned to their own villages, and were carrying on real missionary work. Whilst Miss Dawe was single handed this year at Krishnagar, Miss Sugden had been transferred from Agurparah to Kapashdanga in order to open the Nuddea Village Mission, and the Widows' Training Class came into being under Mrs. Parsons at Chapra. Another school in the Bardwán Mission was opened at Royan, where a Bábu gave a building for a schoolhouse rent free for three years. Miss Butler's dispensary at Bhágulpur was reaching 1,500 patients a quarter; work among Mahráttá ladies had begun at Jabalpur, and four schools at Mirat were prospering. At Amritsar, the interest of a fund raised in memory of the late Mrs. F. H. Baring was

set apart for rewarding proficiency in Scripture among women and girls in the Punjáb. All our institutions in and around Amritsar were recording marked answers to prayer and successful effort. Taran Táran Dispensary was solemnly dedicated by the Bishop of Lahore. Miss Tucker reported a new branch of work among the much-despised Mihtars, or sweepers. The Punjáb Village Mission during this year, owing to Miss Clay's illness, was under the charge of Miss Catchpool, and a Mission party of seven missionaries and seventeen native helpers was at work among 500 out of the 1,500 villages in the four 'tehsils.' Over Jalandar and Peshávar heavy shadows fell; work at the former place was relinquished[1] owing to the return to England of the Misses Thom in ill-health; and our promising young missionary at Peshávar, Miss Norman, was called to her rest. Yet the work on this frontier under Miss Phillips and Miss Mitcheson was "ever increasing."

From Miss Oxley news came of the baptism of one of our school teachers, and also of the wife and child of a Rájput convert. The Governor of Madras and Mrs. Grant Duff this year entertained the ladies of the Zenána Missions, their pupils and friends, at the largest gathering of the kind ever held in India.

Work at Masulipatam, Ellore, Tinnevelly and Trevandrum received many tokens of GOD'S presence and approval; while at Trichur, in answer to the special petition "that the LORD would bring in the heathen by families," four heathen *families* were brought under instruction.

If 1884 had been marked as an era of progress, **1885** was still more signalised by 'tokens for good.' The area of work in its threefold sphere—educational, evangelistic, and medical—had now become so extensive that, without attempting to refer to each station, we can only briefly name a few special

[1] The American Presbyterian Synod of Ludhiána (who cordially invited us to continue our Mission at Jalandar), had long been virtually in possession of the field.

points of interest connected with this one short year. A noteworthy event was the baptism at Barrackpore, *after ten years' instruction*, of a woman of good caste, who, in spite of all opposition, was able to return after the service to her own home and resume her place in the household—a most unusual circumstance. The increasing power of the WORD of GOD was shown by "a wave of blessing" passing over Trichur, when many nominal Christians and Heathen—Nairs, Chogans, and Pulayens—were emboldened to confess Christ in baptism, even though it cost them their all. A like movement at Fathgarh resulted in more than 100 baptisms among the Sweeper class. Of this Miss Tucker wrote: "It has generally been one sheaf at a time; never till this week have we been blessed with such a wain-load." Caste prejudice was breaking down. In one case a Hindu father's name was registered as a witness of his adult daughter's baptism, while Hindu school girls looked on from behind a *pardah*. The newly-formed Widows' Class at Chapra was taken out for ten days' itinerating experience in actual evangelistic work; as many as 200 women would assemble as eager listeners, and it was found, to quote the words of our Calcutta Committee at the time, that "it is possible for us to do easily now, what twenty years ago seemed an almost hopelessly difficult task." Despite the difficulties of Muhammadan work, Miss S. Mulvany had 105 Zenána pupils under instruction, and a school opened at Mátyá Burj was steadily growing in numbers and influence. To the Nuddea Village Mission, Miss Valpy, herself a missionary's daughter, went this year to join Miss Sugden, who, with Miss Gore, had been "out in camp" with one very happy result. The wife of a fákir, a somewhat remarkable man, since he possessed skill in medicine and poetry, was influenced for Christ, so that at length she and her husband, their son and his wife, were baptised, and the father's poetic talent was now exercised in composing Christian hymns. The conversion of this family

was a potent illustration of the value of *women* evangelists. Although the Arya Samáj, on the one hand, were doing their utmost to oppose Christian teaching at Amritsar, and enticing many children away from the Mission school, and, on the other, a league of influential Muhammadans was formed to shut our missionaries out of the Zenánas in that place, there was no retreat, but, according to the Moslems themselves, the very streets and lanes of the city were echoing "hymns in praise of Christ," sung by the children. Jalandar was again occupied by two of our staff; Miss Rose Johnson's work at Dera Ismáil Khán was taken over by our Committee; a lady missionary had gone to Sind, and Bible-women were appointed to C.M.S. stations at Kangra, Klárkabad, and Dera Gházi Khán. In the autumn, a trained nurse in the person of Miss Graham, from Edinburgh, was sent to assist Mrs. Cain (C.M.S.) in medical work at Dummagudem. School and other work had also opened out at Poonamalee, Jaggipett, Bezwáda, Amalapur, and Rajamundry.

The year next under review, **1886**, was the Sabbatical year of the Society. In the seven years since the C.E.Z.M.S. was established the number of our staff had grown from thirty to ninety, and the number of our stations had increased from thirteen to forty-one. Briefly surveying the work of the year, we find that, in Calcutta, the desire of non-Christian parents that their children should receive Christian teaching was growing remarkably. A Bráhmo Samáj father, in sending his daughter to the Central School, enjoined Miss Hunt, "Your religion is very good; teach my little girl all you can of it." After eleven years' devoted service in the Bengali work, Miss Highton was removed from our staff, although as Mrs. Lowis her influence and sympathies continued with C.E.Z.M.S. Her sister, Miss E. Highton, could speak of many "secret disciples," but pointed out what a terrible hindrance to our work is the system of child-marriage, under which a girl, it may be of only eleven

years, whose heart has been touched by the Message, is, by no will of her own, allied to an unbeliever or a Bráhmo. Two baptisms of Moslems were reported as firstfruits of the Muhammadan Mission. The convert Shoshi's husband was baptised at Barrackpore—won by his wife's prayers and consistent life; and Miss Dawe, at Krishnagar, told of two Muhammadan women patiently bearing persecution for Christ's sake. Bible Classes and Mothers' Meetings among the native Christians of the Nuddea Village Mission had been organised by Miss Sugden and Miss Valpy. School work among the Jains[1] at Bhágulpur was a new feature of the work at this important station; while many new doors were opening at Jabalpur and Mirat. At Amritsar, a belt of villages lying within a six miles' radius of the city had been evangelised by our workers, in addition to their labours in the six departments of the Mission.

The Alexandra School, now under Miss Bowles' superintendence and fostering care, was prospering greatly; and during the year a chapel had been opened in connection with St. Catherine's Hospital. From Ajnála, news came from Miss Hanbury that the Mihtars, on all sides, were asking for baptism; and at the Central Station itself Miss Clay was enabled to build, independently of the Society's funds, a dispensary, parsonage, and servants' houses. One of these buildings soon became the nucleus of a Converts' Home. Eight flourishing schools were now established in Jalandar and its neighbourhood, and the twofold work—Zenana and Medical—at Peshá-war was strengthened by the opening of a hospital containing six beds, dedicated by the Rev. Worthington Jukes. Many new families, cast out of Cabul, had fled to Pesháwar, and several had requested teaching. The work at Karáchi was personally inspected by General Haig, then Chairman of C.E.Z.M.S. Committee, who was particularly struck with the

[1] A Vegetarian sect of the Buddhists.

hearty welcome Miss Carey was receiving on her visits to the women, and the spirit of prayerfulness and unity pervading the Mission. Twenty Muhammadan Zenánas also had opened to Miss Bloomer at Háiderábad.

Of the schools at Madras, Mr. Goldsmith, who examined the children in Scripture, said: "If our friends at home could inspect such bright scholars, I feel sure that their hearts would be filled with hope for the next generation of India's women." Our new work in Mysore, among its 100,000 Moslem women (which owed its origin to Miss Edith Goldsmith), was full of promise. Miss Wallinger and Miss Synge joined the Ootacamund Mission this year, and a Bible-woman commenced working in Coonoor, about thirteen miles off. Real blessing was being vouchsafed, although the special difficulties of the work at this station were great and threefold—the frequent rains, the migratory population, and the curse of drink, "prevalent among all classes." The Misses Brandon, at Masulipatam, now joined by Miss Bassöe and Miss Ainslie, were undertaking the care of the work at Jaggipett, ninety miles away—so widespread as well as onerous had the oversight of this important station become. At Dummagudem, one little child, taught in the Girls' School, had won both her parents to Christ, and all three were baptised together. Miss Macdonald had the joy of reporting many baptisms at Palamcottah, yet she wrote: "Often I feel overwhelmed when I think what a *wee speck* we occupy. Think of a town, population 11,580, with twenty women learning from one Bible-woman, and our visit once in three months only!" At the Sarah Tucker Institution 300 pupils this year joined the Daily Prayer Union for the Holy Spirit. Our Canadian friends were sending special help to Mrs. Kearns, at her lonely but interesting post in North Tinnevelly; at Trevandrum, Miss Blandford was carrying on her work in three different languages; and at Cottayam, Mrs. Neve, C.M.S., kindly superintending our work,

characterised it as "very hopeful," in spite of all the efforts of a society for the "Revival of Hinduism," and the opening of a rival Hindu school close to our own.

Two dark shadows of bereavement swept across our Indian Mission field during the year 1887. The name of Mrs. Weitbrecht was known all over England, and, with her, to be known was to be loved. Her heart's affections and her life's work were for India. The Master's call came for her to rest with Him; and Miss Bowles, after only eighteen months' devoted service at the Alexandra School, was also taken home to God. Amongst the North India stations the most striking events to record, perhaps, were the commencement of the Weitbrecht Memorial House for our workers at Bardwán; a visit from the members of the Winter Mission, resulting in much blessing, at Krishnagar; and Dr. Fanny Butler's transference from Medical Mission work at Bhágulpur to begin similar labours among the women of Kashmír. In the Punjáb, Miss L. E. Cooper, unselfishly resigning the village work to which she first gave herself, assumed the care of the Alexandra School; Miss Sharp was instituting special instruction for the Blind; Miss Bose was visiting the Leper settlement near Taran Táran; and Miss Hewlett was sighing for more helpers in the grandly growing work of the Hospital at Amritsar. Miss Dixie had opened her Dispensary at Batala. The Punjáb Village Mission was still lengthening its cords; and at Peshá-war, our two missionaries, now reinforced with another medically trained lady, Miss Werthmüller, had obtained entrance into the very highest Zenánas. Meanwhile Miss Margaret Smith had been making most energetic and successful attempts to reach the women of the Hazara, visiting Haripur and villages around. Of Abbottabad, her headquarters, she remarked that it was "as pardah a place as could be found in India; nowhere, it seems to me, such a cruel, prison-like system as here. Surrounded by beautiful scenery and air, numbers of women

are crowded together in tiny spaces, and not allowed even to put their heads outside the door." It was this year that Miss Compton entered upon her work at Háiderábad.

In Madras, in addition to her increasing school work, Miss E. L. Oxley was holding a Sunday Class, attended by 130 beggar-women and children ; at Masulipatam and Ellore, caste and prejudice were breaking down in a very marked manner through the prayerful tact of our workers. Miss A. M. Smith, taking Miss E. Lillingston with her, had gone to reinforce Bangalore, now becoming an important station. The opening of a Muhammadan Girls' School in the Ootacamund Bázár was regarded by Miss Wallinger and Miss Ling as a signal answer to prayer. The Winter Mission was a source of stirring up and blessing to the large staff of native Christian workers in Tinnevelly. With unwearied diligence the work at Trevandrum and Trichur was being carried on, and a new grant was made for a school to be established at Alleppey, at the instance of the Rev. W. J. Richards, C.M.S.

The following year, **1888**, was signalised by the first of a series of Annual Conferences of the Bengal Missionaries of the C.E.Z.M.S., held in Calcutta ; by the occupation of Taran Táran and Sukkur as new centres ; by the acceptance of calls to open a Normal School for Female Teachers at Amritsar, and a Boarding School for Village Girls in the Krishnagar district. The far-reaching nature of the work in Calcutta was well illustrated by the varying character of two schools undertaken during the year ; one, formerly conducted by the American Unitarian Mission in Dhurrumtollah, for chiefly high-caste girls ; the other, a school for Sweepers' children, begun in a small mud-hut. The Andúl School, of chequered history, had now 117 pupils on the rolls, as reported by Miss Rainsford Hannay. It was at this time that GOD graciously gave our missionaries entrance into the palace of the late ex-King of Oude, one of the many tokens for good which

Miss C. Harding, in a deeply-interesting report, was able to record. Two widows from the Chapra Training Class were now engaged at Bardwán, in connection with the village school at Kanjanagar. A Bible Searching Almanack, in Bengali, which Miss Dawe had now published for two consecutive years, was proving a blessing far beyond the limits of the district. The bungalow occupied by our two devoted workers at Mirat—a city of more than 80,000 inhabitants—was specially interesting, as being the scene of the outbreak of the Mutiny thirty years before. During the year under review the first Muhammadan Girls' School in that place was opened—an important step, since half the population are Moslems. In one-half, also, of the Zenánas visited, no secular instruction was desired; but Miss Stroelin was occupied entirely with the Word of GOD and singing. Two new enterprises begun at Pesháwar showed, on the part of our missionaries, "a holy ingenuity." One was a weekly visit to the graveyards, to speak to the Muhammadan women, who, in large numbers, resort to the tombs of saints or relatives every Thursday. Another was the *Hujra*, or Women's Guest House, on the Mission premises, which was visited in nine months by 150 guests, and where a Bible-woman read and prayed with the women night and morning.

In the South, Miss Oxley told of eighty new Zenána pupils, and her sister of a school for rich Moslem families, well attended. At Ellore a school, commenced with twenty-two Bráhmaṇ children, taught by a Bráhman widow, was increasing daily, promising to become the principal girls' school in the town. Six schools, now established, were almost entirely supported by Australian money. The Maharájá and his *Dewan* (prime minister) were continuing their aid to, and interest in, Miss Blandford's work at Trevandrum; and the new house for Bible-women, erected in her compound as a mark of the confidence of the Committee in a missionary who had

completed twenty-five years of service, was opened in the autumn.

The Rev. Gilbert Karney, then C.E.Z. Clerical Secretary, visited the majority of our stations and staff this year, and filled the hearts of all friends of the Society with encouragement by cheering reports of what he had witnessed.

In a full and able review of the Missions of the C.M.S. and C.E.Z.M.S. in the Punjáb and Sind, written in **1889**, the veteran missionary, Rev. R. Clark, bore testimony to the "wonders" which, in a very short time, God had wrought by means of the two Societies. "Establishing themselves," he says, "in three well-chosen positions in the cities of Amritsar and Pesháwar, and in many villages where no European pro-ection is available, our lady missionaries have manifested a heroism and devotion, and faith and love and self-denial, which are not often witnessed."

At the Normal School this year (1889) one of the pupils came out "second in all Calcutta" at the Government examination—"only beaten by a boy," as she laughingly exclaimed—and went at once to the medical work at Sind. Nine of the native girls from the Training Class passed out to take work in schools—the largest number ever dismissed at one time. Our Bengali school roll reached nearly 1,000. One bright episode of the year's work in Calcutta among the Moslems was "a happy little visit" paid by the Misses Mulvany to a Muhammadan country laird's house, where they had "grand opportunities of speaking to the whole of his large clan," whose cry, "Come over and help us," was very urgent, and who were willing to meet our missionaries with money and influence. A small but very encouraging beginning in the way of a Medical Mission in the Krishnagar district was made; the native workers, twenty-one in number, this year joined the Scripture Union, and entered with hearty interest into the daily Bible reading which Miss Collisson instituted

for them. Although in the Nuddea Village Mission, uneasiness at the growing influence of Christianity caused difficulties in the way of access to the Zenánas; though the story of the Widows' Training Class was not altogether bright this year; and from the Bengali schools at Bhágulpur some children were withdrawn, and a few Zenánas closed, through fear of the result of Christian teaching, yet the prospects of the work widened. Miss Wauton, returning from furlough and taking a glance over the Amritsar field, remarked: "I see female education—secular, non-Christian, and, I may say, anti-Christian too—increasing on every side. This narrows the sphere of Mission education within the city walls, and calls for an advance *outside* of them. The villages around us are as dark as night." At St. Catherine's Hospital, the Refuge opened for outcast women and girls had afforded shelter to forty inmates. From the Punjáb Mission, Miss Clay wrote of 199 houses being visited in forty-five villages around Saurian and its new out-stations, Thoba and Goga. Miss Reuther had commenced medical work at Nárowál, where, in a small Hospital just erected, both physical relief and Bible teaching were being given to the village women who came for treatment. Another Hospital, with twelve beds, was also built and opened at Taran Táran. Our workers at Peshávar, owing to the bitter opposition of the Moslems and Hindus, underwent a severe test of faith and courage at this time. Determined attempts to do away with both schools and Zenána visiting gathered strength as the year wore away, and our ladies were "met with insults at every turn." Our sisters in Kashmír were bowed down under the weight of a heavy, unexpected sorrow in the death of our devoted medical missionary, Dr. Fanny Butler, at a time when the prospects of the Mission were unusually bright. Without dwelling on the steady growth of work in the other stations, we may mention, among the encouragements of the year, a three days' gathering of all the

C.M.S. and C.E.Z.M.S. missionaries in Sind for united prayer and praise. Cheering testimony was borne to the effect of the teaching in the lives of some who, through the evil custom of child-marriage, had early ceased to attend school.

In South India, the Madras schools were increasing in interest. Kummamett, a new station near Masulipatam, was occupied by Miss Turnbull, in succession to Miss Penny, obliged to resign on account of ill-health. The Telugu Zenánas of Ellore were opening to Miss Digby and Miss Alexander. Miss Symonds, from Australia, joined the Mission in order to labour there among the daughters of Islám. Work among the Todas began this year. Mrs. Finnimore, wife of Rev. A. K. Finnimore, C.M.S., continued to superintend our work in North Tinnevelly, and pleaded very earnestly at this time with Christian women in England for personal service in the Mission field. At Trevandrum Miss Blandford, now aided by her niece, Miss Collins, was still eagerly waiting for open confession of Christ among her pupils. She drew our attention to the monstrous system, sanctioned by religion and defended by the parents, of allying Nair girls to Bráhmans for the sake of gain—a system involving evils far worse than even the miseries of widowhood.

Rapidly scanning the work of the year **1890**, we glance only at principal events. H.R.H. the Duchess of Connaught graciously consented to give her name as patroness of the Society. An Australian auxiliary was formed, and undertook to be responsible for the Zenána ladies and about thirty native workers, hitherto supported by special funds. The John Bishop Memorial Hospital was opened at Srinagar. Mrs. Satthianadhan having been called to her rest, the work she so devotedly carried on was taken up by her daughters, Mrs. Hensman and Mrs. Clarke. Three new stations in Bengal were occupied: Howrah, as an outpost of the Bengáli Mission in Calcutta, Nyehatti and Ranighát standing in the same rela-

tion, respectively, to Barrackpore and Krishnagar. Month by month, almost week by week, tidings reached us of one and another publicly confessing Christ's Name in baptism. The Converts' Home at Barrackpore was now quite full. At Calcutta, one openly avowed her faith who had first been drawn to Christ twenty years before at Benares. The first-fruits of medical work at Krishnagar had been gathered in; and after twenty-nine years of patient sowing in Trevandrum, Miss Blandford at last had the joy of seeing one and another come forward for baptism.

The pressure of financial difficulties, which was a trial of faith throughout **1891**, not only gave fresh proof of the faithfulness of our God, but showed the spirit of our workers abroad. Their answer to the inquiry most reluctantly sent to each station in India, "How can saving be effected with least injury to the work?" was practically this: "Not by dismissing one Bible-woman—not by closing one school; we will draw less ourselves." It is almost needless to add that a week of prayer on behalf of the funds was soon succeeded by a week of praise. It was in 1891 that the long-talked-of C.M.S. Boarding School for Christian Girls at Krishnagar was opened, and, under Miss A. Sampson's care, began at once to make encouraging progress. The conveyance of the site for the new Hospital at Peshâwar was completed; but just at this time came grievous tidings of the damage done by an overflow of the river to the newly-erected John Bishop Memorial Hospital at Srinagar. A generous gift to the Society by an unknown donor of a valuable house at Abbottabad, was recognised as a call from God to resume work in the Hazâra district.

In **1892** our total force of European workers in Home connection in India had risen to 130. Twenty new missionaries had gone from England, one of whom, an honorary worker, Dr. Charlotte Wheeler, was a fully qualified lady-doctor. The work at Jalandar, hitherto maintained almost entirely at the

expense of Miss Tylor, who was now obliged to resign her post, was taken over by the American missionaries. In Kashmír, owing to the impossibility of finding a site for re-erecting the Memorial Hospital, medical work was, for the present, confined to a Dispensary in the city, and the support of a nurse to work under Dr. Neve in the female ward of the C.M.S. Hospital. A house was taken at Baranagore as a centre for our missionaries itinerating in the suburbs of Calcutta. A small Converts' Home, added to the buildings of our Mission at Krishnagar, bore witness to GOD'S blessing on the testimony of His servants there. In response to urgent and repeated appeals on behalf of Mavelikara in Travancore, and Dera Gházi Khán, a frontier station of the Punjáb, a worker was appointed to each of these places. The hearts of our missionaries in many of the stations were gladdened this year by the baptisms of converts. Twenty-four men, twenty women, and twenty-four children were received at one time into the visible Church of Christ in a Tinnevelly village—an instance of GOD'S blessing on the teaching of one Bible-woman. This year Miss Ling, in addition to her Hindustani work, passed an examination in Toda, reduced to writing, and began to translate, portions of GOD'S Word into *this hitherto unwritten* language. Miss Dawe had been accompanied on her itinerating tours in Nuddea by Miss Monro, who gave valuable aid; for Ranighát, which as a Mission station had to be given up because a suitable house could not be found, had been chosen by Mr. Monro, late Chief Commissioner of Police in London, as a centre from which he and his family would work independently as missionaries. A carefully prepared list of no fewer than thirty former pupils of the Alexandra School, who were now doing service in India as medical missionaries, hospital assistants, and teachers in Zenánas and Mission schools, bore witness to GOD'S blessing upon the faithful labours of those in charge of this important institution. Miss Edgley was now its

valued Principal, her labours being lovingly and efficiently shared by Miss Lucy Cooper. The unasked testimony of a native gentleman to the influence of our work at Karáchi may be quoted here. Referring to the 'Holi,' that most horrid of all heathen festivals, he said, "The quietest part of the city was that in which your school is, and where you visit; the women and girls there took little or no part in the old way of keeping this feast." Of troubles in Kashmír and Trichur in 1892, we have already spoken in BEHIND THE PARDAH.

Heavy shadows of bereavement fell upon the C.E.Z.M.S. workers in **1893**. The Punjáb mourned the loss of Miss Tucker (A.L.O.E.), while it praised GOD and will ever be the richer for the example and influence of her eighteen years of faithful labour and ready sympathy at Batala. North India was not allowed to welcome back Miss Pinniger to her loved work at Bhágulpur, and Miss Wallinger, who for eight years had freely given personal service and substance to the work among the Tamil-speaking women and the Todas of the Nilgiris and the Wynaad, was suddenly called home to GOD. Cholera had bereaved us also of Miss Clara Ward, who at the end of 1892 came from Australia to join our Mission at Ellore. Causes for thankfulness, on the other hand, were the opening of a Training Home for Assistant Missionaries at Baranagore; the laying of the foundation stone of a *Gasha* Hospital for Muhammadan women by the Bishop of Madras; while that of the Duchess of Connaught Hospital was laid by the Commissioner of Pesháwar. The reports of our missionaries this year breathed a spirit of cheerful and courageous faith. The chief cause of discouragement then, in 1893, was the same as it is now in 1897—the physical impossibility of overtaking with a small band of labourers the unevangelised villages and of entering the many open doors. The chief event of the year in Nuddea was the opening of a much-needed Dispensary at Bollobhpur. At Amritsar, altogether about 400

classes for Bible instruction were held during the year, and Miss Hewlett noticed that in writing out a list of those to be confirmed and giving their histories in brief, the delightful fact had to be recorded in four instances out of twelve, "the spiritual daughter of so-and-so," another convert.

It is impossible to specify all the movement and progress in our Indian Mission field during 1894; yet, the conviction was borne home upon the hearts of all interested in it that, as yet, only the fringe of the work had been touched. After nineteen years of devoted labour Miss Clay was obliged, through failing health, to resign the superintendence of the Punjáb Village Mission. Miss Barthorp—a representative of the Keswick Convention—went to occupy the new centre at Khútrain, where Miss Clay had erected a house and Mission buildings. In Calcutta our missionaries endeavoured to take advantage of some openings for work among Jewesses for the first time. A combined "school and rest house" was completed and taken into possession at Gurha, a village adjacent to Jabalpur, and weekly Bible classes with crowded attendances were being held in its verandah by Emma Page, an assistant whom the British and Foreign Bible Society were partially providing for us. A more spacious house, much needed for the workers at Mirat, was provided through the self-denial and generosity of "a young lady who dedicated her savings to the building fund." Thirteen women at Fathgarh, where Miss Brannan and Miss Key were labouring, expressed a desire for confirmation, and eleven went to Batala for the laying on of hands. At Jandiála the C.M.S. Henry Francis Wright Memorial Hospital was opened, and whilst the Dispensary and the Barwise Memorial Ward of Pesháwar were being completed, a small room at Háiderabád was set apart for the glory of GOD and for the reception of patients from a distance; for, during this winter, the energies of our medical workers were taxed to the utmost owing to a severe outbreak of sickness in that city. The Sarah

Tucker Institution, growing in importance every year, now had a network of thirty-seven schools in more distant parts of the district, where its trained teachers were in charge; and these were being visited and supervised by our ladies from head-quarters at regular intervals.

The year **1895** proved a very memorable one in the history of the C.E.Z.M.S. For the first time it received the honour of the martyr's crown, when, on August 1st, at Hwa-sang, five of our brave missionary sisters in the Fuh-Kien Province, China, were put to death by the "Vegetarians."

The story of that never-to-be-forgotten time is fully told in BEHIND THE GREAT WALL.

This trial of faith was not alone in the record of the year. Miss May Davies-Colley, after only a few months of missionary sojourn at Mirat, was suddenly called Home; Miss Mary Turner, also one of two sisters on the field, fell asleep after a brief illness at the isolated centre of Sachiepuram, and, a few months later, the wife of the Rev. E. S. Carr, for three years one of our missionaries in Bangalore, "was not, for GOD took her."

Of great importance in its bearing on the Society's work was the adoption of resolutions adjusting the relations between the CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY and our own Society. Briefly stated, the following agreement was made: That the C.E.Z.M.S. retain its independence as a distinct organisation, and that while, on its part, it will give frank recognition and open sympathy to the women's work of the C.M.S. in Africa, Palestine, Persia, Japan, China, and Ceylon, and to the development of women's work at home in behalf of the Society as a whole, the C.M.S. will, on its part, continue to regard the C.E.Z.M.S. as the chief agency for women's work in the C.M.S. fields in India, and will render it definite and vigorous help in a strong and earnest effort to enlist and send forth a large number of additional missionaries, both by

publicly advocating the needs of India and the claims of C.E.Z.M.S., and by encouraging to the utmost, offers of service and contributions for India in connection with C.E.Z.M.S.

In the foreign field were many signs of progress. Reports of Village Itineration in various parts of North India and the Punjáb, spoke of eager listeners. Interesting accounts of baptisms reached us from several stations, notably that of a Muhammadan Begam, whose story is told in Ch. xii., *The Daughters of Islám.* In Taran Táran, the coming-out of a young woman was made the occasion by the Arya Samáj for a fierce outbreak of hostility; while, on the other hand, at Peshawár, opposition was dying down, and the substantially built hospitals here and at Bangalore were solemnly dedicated and placed under the charge of fully qualified lady-doctors. At Batala, the great event of the year was the opening of the "Star" Dispensary. Mankar, in the Bardwan district, became a new Village Centre. A Medical Mission was happily started at Quetta, under Dr. Charlotte Wheeler, and another important step was taken in securing a house in the city for a small hospital, which a few months later was opened; the need of a Matron being supplied by the daughter of the Rev. Imam Shah, the native pastor of Peshawár, who volunteered her help. Pioneer work amongst women and children was in progress also at the following widely scattered points: Ultadunga, Dhah-Keti, Belghoria, Shitie, Ram Krisnapur, Sibpur, Salkiah, Akra, Kankuli, Mona, Rayah, Gaggar Bhana, Tatta, Doddalarapur, and Olesha.

At the beginning of 1897, when taking a review of the whole field—India, China, and Ceylon—in 1896, we were able to say that our staff now consisted of 203 missionaries in Home connection, and that in the previous autumn twenty-seven new workers—a larger contingent than ever before—had sailed for the foreign field. A special cause for thanks-

giving was the fact that these reinforcements included *four* fully qualified lady doctors. Miss Von Himpe was appointed to Ratnapur, Nuddea; Miss Vines succeeded Mrs. Guilford at Taran Táran; Miss Adams was prepared to open a Hospital at Dera Ismáil Khán; and Miss Holst joined Miss A. G. Lillingston at the *Gasha* Hospital at Bangalore. More than 6,300 houses were open to Zenána visitation; more than 9,000 children were in attendance at 211 Schools; 983 in-patients and 177,000 out-patients were being treated at our Hospitals and Dispensaries in the course of a single year. The whole medical staff on the field might be said to number fifty-two; since, in addition to seven fully qualified doctors, the Society has, either in home or local connection, twenty-five recognised medical workers and twenty qualified as nurses and dispensers for important but less responsible work.[1]

At Baranagore, where the number of schools has been raised to ten by the opening of a new one at Ereda at the request of the inhabitants, a Converts' Industrial Home, under Miss A. Ghosh's care, has sprung into existence. Four poor widows are trying to support themselves by needlework, string-making, and metal work.

At Majitha, near Amritsar, a new centre of village work is opened, and Mavelikara, a station reluctantly given up for a time through the serious illness of the lady in charge, is now reoccupied. In BEHIND THE PARDAH we have spoken of the severe visitations of famine in the Central and N.W. Provinces and of the plague in Sind, which have made the winter of 1896 and spring of 1897 sadly memorable. In the neighbourhood of Jabalpur, our workers were brought into daily contact with cases of extreme destitution. Special gifts (amounting to more than £664) were forwarded through C.E.Z.M.S., week by week, to India, to be placed at the disposal of those

[1] Two other fully qualified lady-doctors, Miss F. Cooper and Miss M. Sharp, sail for India this year (1897).

who were ministering to the starving and the orphans, some of whom, previously, were tasting food once in three days only. Early in 1897, a telegram from Nárowál told with startling suddenness that our beloved and faithful missionary, Miss Catchpool, had succumbed to an attack of small-pox. To her the oldest Christian in the place bore this touching testimony, "Our mother has been taken away." At the Sarah Tucker College—now affiliated to the Madras University—a chapel, capable of seating 400, to be used for daily prayers and frequent meetings, has been erected, the children themselves helping to raise the funds by self-denial offerings. Of twenty adults baptised during the last twelve months in Trichur and Kunnankulam, thirteen have been led to Christ through the instrumentality of our ladies.

Such is a brief and necessarily imperfect survey of seventeen years' C.E.Z.M.S. work for GOD in India. Much more might be recorded did space allow. But if this Story of our Stations and Staff suffice to show, "not that there is no harvest to reap, but rather that the harvest is spoiling for want of reapers," it will not have been told in vain. Far and wide we are making known our resolve as a Society, that, GOD helping us, we will send out "sixty more missionaries to our Heathen sisters as a thank-offering to GOD for countless blessings granted during the sixty years' reign of our beloved Queen Empress." Meanwhile, by the calls which reach us with every Indian mail, the LORD of the Harvest field is speaking in clearest tones to you —to me

"Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and GO THOU AFTER THEM."

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[*This Index is arranged especially for the use of C.E.Z.M.S. workers and others in preparing missionary addresses. All books, unless otherwise stated, may be obtained from C.E.Z.M.S., 9, Salisbury Square, E.C.*]

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Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.