

Daughters of the King



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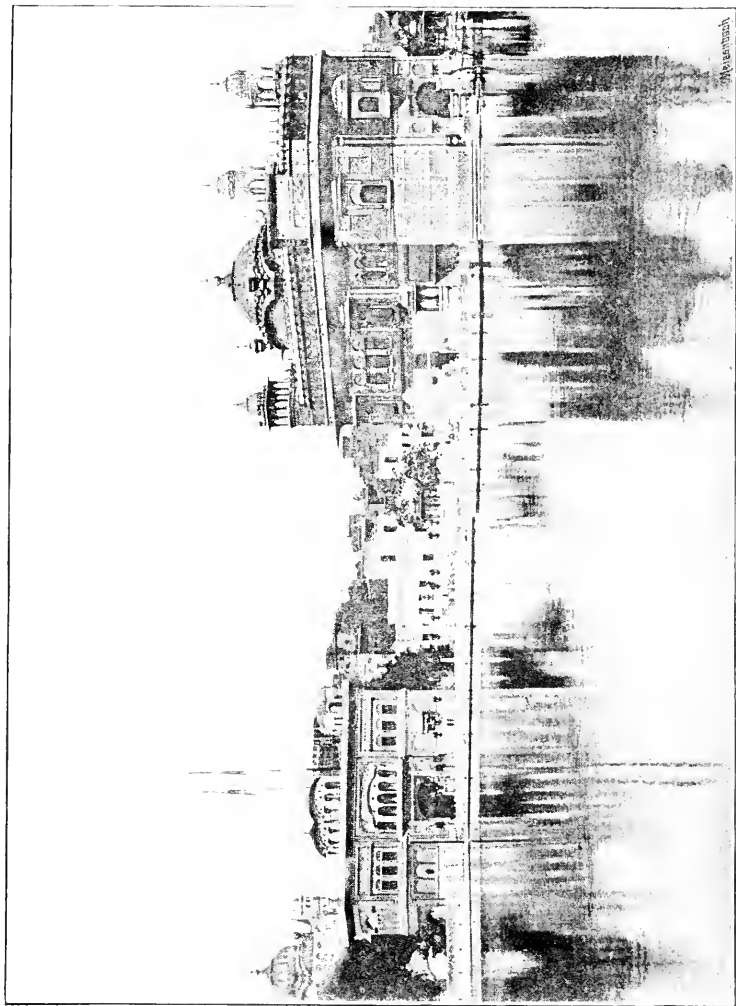
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ADWAY.

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

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GOLDEN TEMPLE, AMRITSAR

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

BY

S. S. HEWLETT

OF SAINT CATHERINE'S HOSPITAL, AMRITSAR, PANJÁB; MISSIONARY OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ZENÁNA MISSIONARY SOCIETY

WITH A PREFACE BY

THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF LAHORE

'BRING MY SONS FROM FAR, MY DAUGHTERS FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH'

LONDON

Church of England Zenana Missionary Society

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Preface.



HE more that our Missionary brethren are precluded by Hindu law and usage from fulfilling their office, and carrying their message of the Kingdom of God and the Gospel of Christ beyond the outer precincts of the Indian home to the inner home circle, where one-half—Woman's half—of this branch of the great Aryan family lives an enslaved, suppressed, and partly disinherited life—so much the more prayerful and loving must be the sympathy with which they regard the crossing of the long untrodden threshold by English ladies, whether of the educational, medical, or itinerating and evangelistic departments of labour, their feet 'shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.'

Christ has stood and knocked everywhere—at the city gate, at the school door, at the door of the temple

and of the mosque—but not till lately at the door of the home. Now at length, however, in the person of

‘KING’S DAUGHTERS,’

who have ‘forsaken their own people and their father’s house,’ He stands and knocks at the door of the Indian home; and now that character for love and devotion—which made the Suttees of India the *admiration* of the world when the sacrifice was spontaneous, and the world’s *horror* when it sprang of constraint, and was the product of fraud, greed, and frantic fanaticism—is beginning to give proof of its inviolate fidelity and its capacity for high resolve and persistent self-surrender, in some typical Daughters of India, whom we might almost venture to call the ‘Suttees of Christ,’ and its ability and readiness to exhibit that form of devotion which could never be more perfectly expressed than in those holy words, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word.’

The labours of Christian women in India are attracting so much attention, and so many very young ladies are among those bound on these ventures of faith, that I cannot but anticipate thankfully the appearance of this work, to which the author has most kindly requested me to attach a short Preface. To call it commendatory would be out of place, as inviting attention to a work

which the Lord Himself commends, and ripening fruits of experience attest.

I doubt not the treatise will render good service by setting forth clearly the chief motives and purposes, the methods and principles of action, which determine and inspire the movement; and this for the sake (1) of outsiders and the uninitiated; (2) of those helpers at home who desire to circulate information in a compact and comprehensive form; and still more (3) for the sake of the younger and less practised recruits in the band of Zenána workers. We shall find summarised, I doubt not, rather in terms of depreciation than exaggeration, the results under God attained hitherto, and the promises and prospects of the future. It is on the whole well, too, that fathers, husbands, and brothers, to whom belong the proprietorship and rule of the Zenánas, should learn that there is no such great mystery in it after all, but openness and straightforwardness, candour and purity of intention: that no other desire animates the handmaids of Christ but to add to the secrecy and sanctity of the Zenánas—which deserve respect, except when purchased by the degradation and incarceration (if not immolation) of the inmates—the happiness and enlightenment, the culture, elevated and refined, of the English home; the expansion of what is cramped and dwarfed—not the *feet*, as of the Chinese ladies,—but the best instincts and purest aspirations, long stifled

and stunted, in the mind's workings and the heart's affections. None of us would press for rash and unseasonable haste; but an expansion on national lines, gradual, gentle, and legitimate, after settling and grounding the untutored child-mothers in those highest and purest principles of Christian morals, which alone could justify and render innocuous the gathering of the ripe fruits of Christian Freedom. India waits—the Church of Christ waits—not in vain, we are persuaded,—for the forth-flow from the Indian hearth and home of those blessed and holy influences of female piety which even now are being fostered there; the exercise of that supreme mission of Christian womanhood, whereby there steals forth from 'life's stillest shades,' and its lowliest self-concealments, the fragrance of that which is pure, lovely, and of good report, and which is constantly devising solaces and healing balms and self-sacrificing ministries of love and sympathy.

Must we not, then, heartily congratulate our sisters in Christ to whom is given this commission to have and to hold from our Lord and His Church; and who are deputed by the Lord to fulfil for Him this His threefold office: *'The Lord looseth the prisoners; the Lord openeth the eyes of the blind; the Lord raiseth up them that are bowed down.'*

For those who are doing such a work I cannot pray

better than that the four lessons which our Lord exemplified in His walk and work on earth, and in which His fellow-workers are taught and trained by Him—as St. Paul tells us—may be both their strength and their reward, viz.—

HIS FAITHFULNESS, Hebrews iii.

HIS RESTFULNESS, Hebrews iv.

HIS OBEDIENCE, LEARNED BY SUFFERING, Hebrews v.

HIS FRUITFULNESS AND HOPEFULNESS, . Hebrews vi.

and that these things may have real effect by being, as the same Apostle teaches, bound into a bundle by the clasp of Divine love.

It has been a momentous epoch in more ways than I can say in the history of our Missions in this country of late; and why should we not believe that now in the Panjáb, as in many serious crises in the ancient Church of God in Old and New Testament days, it has pleased God to call the *Women* of His choice to meet the present grave needs of India's Women; to help in righting their ancient wrong; to come 'to the help of the Lord against the mighty;' to respond to that 'exceeding great and bitter cry,' which, immured as they are behind stronger than iron gratings, India's Women have contrived at last to utter, fully and loudly enough for their English sisters to hear?

The best Preface to such a work as this must be the

labours which have gone before, and which are still being steadily sustained.

Still, as having the oversight appointed me of that branch of the Church in whose behalf they have offered themselves as Christ's fellow-labourers, I cannot withhold this prefatory word to express my thankful and hopeful recognition of the work of these our 'helpers in Christ Jesus,' accompanied by the best blessings which a chief Pastor of the Flock is privileged to offer.

THOS. V. LAHORE.





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Daughters of the King.

INTRODUCTION.



INDIA! At the mention of the name, what thoughts crowd into the mind!—‘Thoughts,’ as has been ably said, ‘of what England has done *well*, thoughts of what England has done *amiss*, thoughts of what England has *left undone*.’¹ India has a claim upon every *English subject*, because so many of her people own the sway of the British Sovereign; India has a claim upon every *woman* who lives in light and liberty, because so many of her women are prisoners, and in darkness; India has a claim upon every *Christian*, because so many of her children are living without the knowledge of the only way of salvation.

Christian women may find in India employment among millions of women, who are their fellow-subjects, whose lives are so sad, so terrible, that, in attempting to ‘lift the purdah,’ and tell of the sorrows of Hindu and Mohamedan ladies, we feel that our story may sound

¹ See a Sermon on behalf of the Church of England Zenana Mission, by his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, on Ascension Day, 1885.

almost like a romance beyond belief. 'What is a *Zenána*?' is a question which it might fairly be hoped one had heard for the last time; but again and again, even by those who have had relatives and interests in India, the question is put; and now and then, even in these days, it is followed by a guess as to whether a tribe in Africa, or a wild animal in the prairies of America, or a large district 'somewhere in India,' is designated by the name *Zenána*! The word itself simply means *woman*, and it has come to be applied to that part of the house where the women live. Among the friends and supporters of *Zenána* Missions, the word has generally come to mean only a house where women of the upper classes are secluded. This narrows very unfairly the field of the *Zenána* Missionaries' work, which is really among *India's Women*, be they the high caste Hindus, the rich Mohamedans, or the poor and outcast, the degraded and homeless; for *Zenána* is simply *woman*, and it is even common in some parts of India to be told that a 'Zenáni' is waiting to see you.

Concerning these 'Zenánis' not a few mistakes are made by people who have had no opportunity of seeing them for themselves. It is supposed, because the woman of India is often secluded and kept in a state of ignorance and darkness, that, therefore, she has no power or influence. The very opposite is the fact. The women have really great power in their families. Young men have a profound respect for the opinions of their mothers; and husbands rarely do anything contrary to the known wishes of their wives, especially of wives who are

mothers of children. In these days of advanced education, many a young man, grown too well-informed to hold any longer to the absurdities of a heathen creed, would cast in his lot with Christians, but for the fear so often expressed in the words—‘It would break my mother’s heart.’ It has been well said, ‘The empire is at the fireside;’ it is not more true of any country in the world than it is of India. Even the despised little girl often gets her own way, and is allowed to give opinions on the conduct of her parents and others. The writer met only the other day with a case in which a woman was herself most anxious to be treated in a Mission Hospital, but said she must first ask her daughter’s advice; that daughter was about six years of age! This child’s opinion was against the move, and so the idea had to be given up, and the patient had to be treated at home.

It is sometimes supposed that the women of the Zenánas are wanting in mental power and intellect; this again is a mistake. If we imagine what the bright promising children one often meets with in England would become, if left entirely to themselves without tutor or governess, until they were twenty years of age, and if we realise that they would be simply children still, we have then a fair idea of the state of many a lady in her Zenána home in India; she may be a mother—nay, a grandmother—and yet be as a child among the children of the family, not from lack of intellectual power, but from lack of teaching and training. One old lady, the mother of a large family, asked a Zenána missionary whether a certain little doll, given to one of the children, would

grow, and how much it would grow in a week! Another bright, interesting-looking woman, in the same house, pleaded that she too might have a gift of a doll; and when her visitor said she had not just then one to give, she eagerly replied, 'But *do* bring me one, and I will give you my baby instead!' It is scarcely necessary to add that had this proposal been accepted, that young mother would soon have cried to have her baby back. But in spite of all this, which seems so childish, once let these prisoners (for such thousands of them really are) be given a fair chance of learning, once let a good teacher and a few books be placed at their disposal, and it is wonderful with what rapidity they will master alphabets and 'first readers,' and, almost before one is aware, be reading and eagerly entering into the meaning of some more advanced book. Those who really understand these interesting women, and can converse freely with them in their own language, generally find them anything but stupid or wanting in intelligence, and reckon the time spent with them most pleasantly and happily employed.

Again, it is sometimes fancied that because India is not a Christian country, its people are like savages; and probably very many of those who have never seen India would be extremely surprised if they could be introduced into a *Zenána* belonging to some gentleman of good social position; they would be astonished to find among women who have never been out (and who therefore can know nothing of the ways of the world), refinement, gentle manners, and politeness; and they would also

be unprepared to find *themselves* feeling awkward and embarrassed, and continually in danger of making some serious mistake in etiquette, either by mentioning the name of the husband of one of the ladies, or by inquiring something concerning her nose-ring or toe-rings,¹ or by neglecting to touch the sweetmeats or other offerings brought for their acceptance, or by rising to go without politely asking permission to do so!

Another mistake is to imagine that the women of India are irreligious. The fact is, that they are often very religious indeed, and in the observance of all duties connected with their various forms of faith are most punctilious; not seldom indeed in this particular, and in their ready defence of what they believe, they would put to shame some English Christians!

It is in the hope of preventing mistakes concerning these our Indian sisters, and enabling the many who in various ways work in order to send blessing and help to them, to understand, and consequently to sympathise with them better, that the following chapters are offered especially to *Zenána Mission Working Parties*, with the earnest prayer that yet deeper interest may be excited in these women, who may become the divinely adopted

Daughters of the King!

and that every year an increasing number of women from Christian lands may go forth to help to gather in India's Women into the Kingdom of our adorable Redeemer—
'to the praise of the glory of His grace!'

¹ A great insult to the husband.



CHAPTER I.

Influence.

*'Thy Kingdom come, O God ;
Thy reign, O Christ, begin :
Break with Thine iron rod
The tyrannies of sin.*

*O'er heathen lands afar,
Thick darkness broodeth yet ;
Arise, O Morning Star,
Arise, and never set !'*



ONE of the most subtle agencies in the world is influence; in every country, among all races, we know it is silently but surely at work.

In so large a country as India, there must of necessity be a vast number of influences, some opposing others, some acting together, and their effects seen in different ways in the conditions of the great multitudes of people of various races living there. We may think of the influence, for example, of heathenism and idolatry. Idolatry is *degrading*; we know from many passages of God's Word written, that it must be so—that it is not

alone because it is so dishonouring to Himself, but also because it is so degrading to man, that God utterly condemns and forbids every form of idolatry.

‘As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth.’¹

I. In the early development of *Hinduism*, idolatry was comparatively uncommon, and in those times many of the customs which we truly designate ‘degrading’ were unknown, a proof that the increase of idolatry has been the cause of the increase of all which has lowered the race.

With the gradually firmer and yet firmer hold which idolatry gained among Hindus, there was a steady deterioration in customs and in morals. Doubtless, in the very early ages, they worshipped God through nature, and next they deified the many objects they saw in nature, and so continued until they worshipped no longer Himself, but the things which He had made. Whereas in the earliest Hindu writings there is much that is lofty in aspiration and pure in sentiment, in the later stories, as, for instance, the recitals of the incarnations of Vishnu, the most shameless and wicked things are said, and these are repeated by men and women, and taught to little children, without the least hesitation; indeed, the details of acts ascribed to heathen deities are often so abominable that women, recounting them with

¹ Jeremiah ii. 26, 27.

delight to each other and to their tiny children, will suddenly stop, and put their fingers on their lips as a sign to each other to be silent, if an English lady comes unexpectedly among them; and, when asked to tell her the subject of their conversation, will say, 'It is not fit for *your* ears.' It is unnecessary to add that, with a list of about thirty-three millions of objects of worship, with all the principal ones of which there are such grossly immoral stories connected, the stream of Hinduism is deeply polluted; whatever good there was in it, whatever high moral tone might once have been claimed for it, is gone—swept away by an overwhelming wave of *idolatry*. In the Golden Temple at Benares, the follower of the holy Jesus will turn sick at heart, as he sees man degrading himself below the level of the beasts which perish, grovelling on the ground in the filth of animals considered sacred, and receiving himself from other poor degraded sinners homage and reverence, because of his devotion to this service; and while he presents offerings of rice, flowers, etc., for them, before round black balls placed upon pillars here and there in the midst of the dirt and disorder, he details to them, and presumably firmly believes in himself, tales whose moral filth is but feebly portrayed by the condition of the whole place where these miserable fanatics spend their weary lives.

It was not the original custom of Hindus to keep their women ignorant, and it seems most probable that in early times they went freely about paying social visits, and so on, without restriction. But gradually, as the standard of morality brought in by idolatry gained

ground, woman's condition became worse and worse ; she was married in infancy, and therefore could have no choice of her own, as we know Hindu women used to have in better times ; she was disgraced directly she became a widow, and considered a blighted and accursed thing, being stripped of her fine clothing and jewels, allowed only one coarse cloth to wear, and only one meal in a day of the commonest kind of food, and compelled to fast entirely once every fortnight, and her life frequently became one of open or secret sin and shame. This state of things continues among Hindus to the present day.

Caste exerts its baneful influence among all Hindus. Concerning the highest and lowest of the four castes, it is a fact that ¹‘you may behold a Brahman as poor as a church mouse going along the road ; approaching him is a portly, well-dressed, well-to-do Sudrá. You may see that Sudrá, with an air of abject reverence, come up to the feet of the Brahman, then, taking off his turban, prostrate himself, and put his forehead in the dust, whilst the Brahman gives his benediction by placing his foot on the head of the prostrate man. You may see another Sudrá rush up to the Brahman with a dish of water in his hand ; into this the Brahman dips his foot, and forthwith the other devoutly drinks the holy draught. In the native army you may see a Sudrá captain drilling his company, which contains, perhaps, several Brahmans. Whilst on parade the Brahman private, of course, obeys and salutes the Sudrá captain ; but wait until drill is

¹ *The Trident, the Crescent, and the Cross*, by Rev. J. Vaughan, page 21, note.

over, and you may behold the Sudrá captain throw himself at the feet of the man who, though his military subordinate, is *religiously* to him a god.' The low caste man in India is reckoned an unclean being, whose very touch is polluting. We have seen a Brahman—a poor one too—cast away all his breakfast because accidentally the shadow of a Christian fell upon it. It is held impossible for a person of low caste to be anything but degraded and degrading; he can never be other than utterly separate from the favoured classes above him, he has no part or lot in any matter of theirs.

The Brahmans or priests are said to have come from the mouth of Brahma; the Kshatryás, or soldiers, from his arm; the Vaisyás, or cultivators of the soil, from his thigh; and the Sudrás, or slaves, from his feet; these last were probably the aborigines, who (for purposes of convenience to the other castes) were made part, though but the lowest part, of the social system of the Hindus.

The Brahman is really counted a divinity, and it matters not to how lowly a trade or office circumstances may drive him, he is never to be regarded as degraded, for that is impossible to him on account of his being in his very nature a god. One great result of the caste system is intense hard-heartedness. Whereas among Mohamedan women we see many acts of kindness shown to the sick and dying, even though they be only poor outcasts, among the Hindus there is really no active benevolent giving or doing for the afflicted and sad. It is said that on the way to shrines where Hindus go for worship, hundreds of bodies may sometimes

be seen of those who have fallen down by the way, sick or weary, and who have died without help or comfort, just because to offer a drink of water, or any kind of assistance to a man of low caste, or of unknown caste, would be a defiling act to a Hindu ; and it is added by an eye-witness : ‘ We do not remember, in connection with such distressing scenes, ever seeing a sign or hearing a word of pity expressed by the passers-by. This may appear still more unaccountable, for we could conceive of a religious dread of pollution deterring a person from actively aiding the sufferer, though he really felt for his sufferings. Here, however, another consideration comes in to complete, so to speak, the *ossification* of the feelings—the doctrine of transmigration teaches that all our sufferings and enjoyments in the present life are merely the natural and necessary consequences of our good or evil doings in a previous life. Hence the Hindu reasons : “ That poor wretch is only suffering the due recompense of his former misdeeds. Fate decrees it. Why should I interfere with fate in giving him his just desert ? ” ’¹

It needs but little consideration to realise the unwomanising effect all this must have upon women and girls. If it is terrible to see a man pass by his fellow-creature in his time of suffering, and leave him unpitied and unhelped, how much more does it shock the feelings to know that women, whose very characteristics should be love and tender kindness, should become so hardened by the requirements of caste as to utterly refuse kind-

¹ *The Trident, the Crescent, and the Cross*, by Rev. J. Vaughan, page 32, note.

ness or assistance to a sister-woman in her hour of distress and anguish, or even in death? The *woman* in such beings is destroyed; the tender love, implanted by God Himself, which constrains a woman to take into her arms the suffering or weary child, or her degraded outcast sister, and minister to any and every need as long as her ministrations can avail to lengthen life or relieve pain, this love is extinguished by the cold, stern hand of *caste*. The same inexorable slave-driver would probably incite the sick or dying woman (if she were of high caste) to inquire of any one who might be kind enough to bend over her with the view of comforting her, 'Of what caste are you?' and unless she could prove herself equal or superior, she might receive 'hands off' instead of thanks, the sense of gratitude being in such cases entirely overcome by the tyranny of *caste*!

Cases such as are presented by the following fact must be familiar to every Zenána medical missionary:—A Hindu gentleman of good caste desired a lady doctor to see his wife in consultation with the family doctor, who was also a Hindu gentleman. This doctor had, of course, not seen the patient, as the purdah custom prevented that, but he had been working, as it were, in the dark, and he desired a full and careful account of the case from the lady doctor. Having completed her interview with the patient, this lady represented that great care must be taken to protect the patient from cold, and that bathing must be prohibited, and the services of a trained nurse were necessary, also a

medicine was needed which was, it happened, prepared only as a tincture. Upon this three difficulties arose. With regard to the medicine, it could not be given, as it was impossible to make sure of any liquid being pure unless it was known to come out of the well of a Hindu of good caste.¹

With regard to the trained nurse, the only ones who could be offered were either Christians or Mussalmánis, and their touch would be pollution (albeit no Hindu woman of really good caste would offer herself to be trained for such work, and so difficulty meets difficulty); and when the missionary lady, making an attempt to solve the problem, said, 'But you have allowed me to touch the patient, and I am a Christian,' the husband replied (with some hesitation, for he *was* a gentleman), 'Yes, because we are helplessly obliged to let you touch her, but we shall consequently have to give her a bath the moment you are gone.' Thus the strict orders against the bath had also to be disregarded. Yes, *caste* does not care for saving life or adding to the comforts of the sick and needy; its one grand object seems to be to divide man from man, and to foster selfishness, coldness, unkindness, where the beneficent Creator intended there should be mutual comfort and love. As an instance of this among the Sikhs, who are a sect of Hindus, the following fact is interesting: There are three sisters; the eldest married a Rájah, the second a Munshi, and the

¹ In the event of such a well getting polluted by a Mussalmán or Christian, or low caste person using it, the excretions of a cow would be cast in to purify it, and all would be right again!

third a Sardár's son. Now, the wife of the Munshi is at liberty to visit her sisters, but neither the wife of the Rájah nor the wife of the Sardár can ever visit each other, each being too grand to leave her own house. This results in a life-long separation between the sisters, who, until the time of their marriages, lived very happily together, the elder being in fact as a mother to the younger, both being orphans.

II. The influence of *Mohamedanism* upon the women of India has next to be considered. Mohamedanism won its way in India, as elsewhere, by the sword. It has effected, however, no substantial changes in all these eleven hundred years in Hindu customs, and certainly none at all in the Hindu religion and the question of caste.

It seems probable that to the example of Mohamedans we may trace the beginning of the custom of keeping Hindu ladies in purdah; for prior to the invasion of the false prophet's followers no word of their strict seclusion is to be found in any Hindu writings.

Still, in some parts of the country, they *are* free to go out, even though they be of good caste; while all Mohamedan women of any position must be most carefully kept in purdah, and in many places a good proportion of Hindus follow this fashion. Among these prisoners we find many proofs of the powerful influence of Mohamedanism. One important point is that it is a religion which takes no cognisance of sin—original sin, heart sin, the Mohamedan ignores. Hence, when the

missionary who has gained an entrance into a Zenána is trying to impress upon some Mussalmáni the fact of God's readiness and power to forgive sins, she will not unfrequently be met by the startling assertion, 'But I have not sinned.' Anything like an attempt to argue the point, and show that we are all sinners, will simply result in the reiteration of this announcement, and in a difference of opinion as to what sin is.

Sometimes, when it seems hopeless to get a woman to believe that lying, theft, and murder are sins, it is possible to touch her by an appeal to what is certainly due to God, as love, reverence, worship, and so on, and by asking whether duty has been fulfilled in these particulars; but just as one hopes that there may be a confession of failure in some point, the scared conscience will fall back on its having been 'lachári se,' or not through any fault, simply because it could not be helped. What sin in that?

And the Mohamedan women are generally not well instructed in their own religion, though they will often try to argue hotly and loudly on any disputed point.

In some Mohamedan Zenánas they will ask a question on some subject, such, for instance, as the Christian method of fasting; and as soon as the answer is fairly commenced, but long before they have had time to hear the speaker out, especially if any reference is made to the Bible for corroboration, they will begin to clamour, and all call out at once, 'Hae! taubá, taubá.' (*Taubá* is repentance, and is a very common expression in case of

shocked feelings.) Doubtless the utter seclusion of the lives of these women conduces to their remaining in a state of ignorance ; for they have none of the knowledge which is gained from contact with the outside world, and, except in very rare instances, have not the resource of gaining knowledge from books, for they cannot read.

It is exceedingly difficult for those who have enjoyed freedom all their lives, to realise what it must be to live always in one set of rooms, especially when those rooms have no outside windows from which the streets can be seen. A lady missionary, who had spent a few months in England, and had of course been in almost innumerable scenes of interest, and seen many places and many people, was very forcibly struck on climbing the dark stair of a Mohamedan Zenána soon after her return to India, and looking up to the crowd of eager women waiting at the top to welcome her—by the thought : ‘ These women have not descended this stair or seen the outside world since I saw them nearly a year ago ; all the time I have been travelling and enjoying change and social intercourse, and interests of many kinds, these prisoners have been here in one ceaseless monotony.’ What a life ! And, in hundreds of cases, that one year may be many times multiplied, for Mohamedan ladies of good position have been known to say in quite advanced life, that they cannot remember ever having seen a tree or any out-of-doors sight. Do they not crave for something beyond their own doors ? Are they not like caged birds beating their wings against the bars of the cage, and pining for fresh air and liberty ? In the majority of cases,

no, or at least not as far as one can judge by any outward sign. Now and then there will be eager inquiries as to what something in the great world outside is like, and perhaps a sigh, as one describes a garden, or a building, or rivers, or railways; but in a moment it is suppressed, and the prisoner reminds herself that it is 'qismat' (fate). And even were means afforded for going out to see what is to be seen, and the consent of the gentlemen of the family gained to such a proposal, it is highly improbable that in a strict Mohamedan house, the women themselves would be willing to take advantage of such a permission; for when a Mission lady has offered to take some dame even of advanced years out for a drive in a carriage, to give her a peep of some public gardens through the carefully closed venetian blinds, it has only provoked the utterance of the inevitable 'Tauba, tauba!' The life-long captivity hardens the feelings, the women settle down into a state of not caring, and of being satisfied with the small gossip of their servants and poor dependants, and the usual round of weddings and other ceremonies within their own houses, as the only alleviation of the intense monotony of their lives, and so in this way we see another of the degrading influences of Mohamedanism.

And the Mohamedan notion of 'keeping purdah,' by no means corresponds with the Christian woman's idea of modesty. Little, if any, real modesty will be found in the closely secluded Zenána, where no one has learned what true womanhood is, and where those whom God intended to be companions and helpsmeet for man have become his degraded slaves. There are, doubtless, ex-

ceptions, but they are few and far between, and the picture of the ordinary Mohamedan Zenána it is scarcely possible to paint too darkly.

There is a large class of women whose husbands imitate the fashion of those in higher rank, and, though only in the grade of poor shopkeepers or servants, keep their wives and daughters in strict purdah.

We have seen many a woman of this class, living in a tiny house with only one room, and a little enclosure in front of the door like a porch of straw, with a fence on three sides, called a 'chhappar,' within which they manage to do their household duties, and outside of which they never come, except carefully enveloped from head to foot in a shroud-like dress called a 'burqá.'

If such women were asked to come out without this precaution, they would express the utmost horror at the idea; and great, and almost laughable, is the difficulty, if for any purpose—such, for example, as seeing a sick child—a gentleman has to visit the house. The child's mother will, in such a case, be hidden away in the corner, or will answer questions in a muffled voice from under a sheet thrown over her entire person. Her husband's annual income as a household servant may be £7, or a little more, but even in poverty the imitation of those in better circumstances must, if possible, be carried out.

III. Would that, in speaking of pernicious influences, we could pause at heathenism and Mohamedanism; but, alas! *Christians*, too, have sent some evil influences into Zenánas. What! it may be said, even into those secluded homes can evil from Christian lands penetrate? Surely

only those who desire to do good enter Zenánas as visitors? But let us remember that our influence goes where our bodily presence has never been known; and it is sadly true that some who in England 'profess and call themselves Christians,' have added something to the degradation and evil of Zenánas. How? The vile pictures of *scenes, of women*, supposed by the poor, ignorant Zenána lady to represent Christian England, have often brought the blush of shame to the face of the Zenána missionary, as, after some earnest effort to make her listeners understand something of the beauty and *purity* of our holy religion, she has been asked to explain such pictures, which *from the land whence the missionaries come*, have found their way into Indian bazaars, and thence have been carried home by Indian men to please the women of their Zenánas.

In the same direction, though presumably more innocent, is the influence of books of fashions, etc., which one not uncommonly meets with in Zenána homes. Thus every English woman and girl who resolutely sets her face against folly and vanity in dress, and against idle amusements, and the pandering in art-work to evil tastes, is doing something, perhaps unconsciously, towards hindering the progress of sin in heathen countries, which are more or less under the influence of English customs and manners; while the Christian woman who would fain do her part towards spreading abroad the Gospel, and sending help and blessing to heathen women, but yet allows herself to be in any degree drawn into fellowship with the world, may well tremble, lest she should be undoing with

one hand what she and many others have laboriously striven to do with the other.

IV. But, thank God! another influence is at work. *The Gospel is in India!* What a subject for Prayer is suggested by this thought. There are missionary homes in many parts of India, there are messengers of peace, carriers of good tidings to the women as well as to the men of that country, where heathenism and Mohamedanism have so long held many captive in the bondage of sin. Not alone by preaching; not merely—nay, not even chiefly, by word of mouth, but by *holy influence*, can missionaries hope to attain the end for which they have been sent. Thus it behoves those who have been instrumental in sending them, to ask and obtain for them in believing prayer, *the power of a Christ-like life!*

All God's children are watched by the scrutinising eye of an adverse world, and especially those who go forth as teachers of others must lay their account for having well-nigh every action criticised. One of the thousands of ways in which the devil tries to hinder the great cause of our Lord in India, is by persuading the workers to neglect their own souls, their own spiritual growth, and the right exercise of their own power and influence over others, in the urgency of their work, and the zeal and earnestness with which they strive to do it. Daughters of the King, who in the good providence of God, tarry at home! in no way can you more surely send the power of the King's Message into the homes and hearts of His daughters of India, than by beseeching Him to pour out His grace upon the messengers who have gone forth from

you to those your sisters, that their home-life, their every act and word, in work and in rest, may lead the many whom they can influence to know that 'the King's daughter is all-glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold.' Then will that great and gracious King himself be glorified, and then will be hastened the full answer to our constant prayer—

‘**Thy KINGDOM come!**’

Prayer.

HEAVENLY FATHER, we, Thine unworthy servants, humbly desire to praise Thee, and to yield Thee hearty thanks for Thine unspeakable mercy and love in making us to know that Thou art the Aid of all that need, the Helper of all that flee to Thee for succour, the Life of them that believe, and the Resurrection of the dead. We call upon Thee now for the millions of women who are living and dying under the *evil influences* of false religions.

Stretch forth Thine hand and help them; rescue them from ignorance, from captivity, from death. Let the message carried to them by Thy handmaids be to them 'the savour of life unto life.' And upon those Thy handmaids, pour out Thy HOLY SPIRIT; may they be so wholly under His gracious guidance and teaching, that their lives may be powerful, and *their influence* felt for great good, and for Thy glory, wherever they go.

And grant to us, and to them, and to Thy whole Church, a more fervent, earnest, faithful, expectant spirit of prayer, for the sake of our adorable Redeemer, JESUS CHRIST. Amen.





CHAPTER II.

The Cry of India's Women.

*'Far and wide, though all unknowing,
Pants for Thee each human breast,
Human tears for Thee are flowing,
Human hearts in Thee would rest.'*



HERE is something peculiarly delightful in the consideration of a gathering of Christian women for the purpose of using busy hands, in obedience to the dictates of loving hearts, for the aid of those in far-distant lands in circumstances of trial or need or ignorance. It is impossible not to recall the working parties in many homes in England; they may be homes of plenty, or homes where great care and economy must be practised in order to make this effort for the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they are generally homes where luxury and self-indulgence have no place. Periodically ladies with their friends and neighbours meet to devote time and industrious effort to needlework, the result being that the funds of a Missionary Society may be largely increased, and the time and strength of weary missionaries spared, because they are provided by this kindness with necessary gifts for school children, which they must

otherwise have made themselves. One has seen many delightful instances of this kind, and has felt constrained to thank God for all this warm-heartedness and love.

Or one thinks with joy and gratitude of 'Mothers' Meetings,' where poor women, after a hard day's toil, and with perhaps many little anxieties, many places 'where the shoe pinches,' many sorrows and cares which they often say are 'known only to God,' will diligently stitch away, it may be with really weary fingers, just to do their part towards helping in some way to send the Gospel to the heathen; and by many a young women's or servants' Bible-class, or by members of Christian Young Women's Associations, this good example is followed; and acts of self-denial with regard to money, time and work are seen by Him whose 'eyes are in every place,' and are accepted and owned in His service in the great Mission field. The work done by all these kind busy fingers may be sold, or it may go forth to India in the shape of children's garments, or school gifts, or beautiful counterpanes for some Mission Hospital. To the workers themselves it may *seem* very little, perhaps scarcely worth sending; but to the gracious Master for whom it is done, it is very precious, and precious also is the tear which will now and then fall unbidden upon the work, as the stitchers listen to some story of the sorrows of India's Women.

And with real pleasure, too, one's thoughts go to many a juvenile party, where merry little girls have come, leaving their play very willingly behind them, that they may have a share in work done to send the good news

of salvation to tiny girl brides and poor sorrowful little widows not yet in their teens!

The great charm about all these gatherings for work is the thought of these being *Christian women and girls*, the motive power in bringing them together being *the love of the Redeemer*. If this may not be truly said of every individual engaged in this service (and God grant that it may!), it must at least be acknowledged to be that which has operated in calling such organisations into existence at all; and it is undoubtedly true of every woman in Christian England that she lives surrounded by Gospel sounds, Gospel privileges, Gospel light, and liberty, and love, and it may be fairly assumed that the busy workers at the Mission working-party are animated by the thought of living 'not unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again.'

How deep, then, must be the gratitude with which we regard such gatherings of Christian women!

' For happy homes, for peaceful days,
For all the blessings earth displays,
We yield Thee thankfulness and praise,
Giver of all !'

And how grave is the responsibility of every woman who enjoys such privileges!

Let us lift the purdah, and in imagination go with the missionary behind it, and sit by the side of this bright, intelligent-looking Hindu lady. She has had no joys beyond those of a wedding, or feast, or other 'tamasha';¹ she has rarely left the narrow lane in which her husband's house stands, and knows nothing at all

¹ *Tamasha* means show or sight.



ZENÁNA LADY AND PUPIL.

of the great world outside. She has been listening to some passage from God's Word about the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, and has been attracted by the beauty of the promises of the Christians' *absent Friend*, and by the evident confidence felt by her teacher that all these promises will be fulfilled, and the 'King in His beauty' be seen by His expectant people; and at last, with a very eager look, she says—'Do you pray that your Master may come again?' And when she is assured, 'Yes, every day,' she most earnestly replies, 'Oh, then, go on praying for it—*pray more and more*, and ask Him to come while I live!' And when the surprised visitor asks why she should be so much in earnest about this, she answers, 'Because, if He comes, then all Hindus will be convinced, and our men will *let us believe!*'

Such incidents as these, happening every here and there in the darkness of this country of dark homes, startle us into a recognition of the fact that there is a cry from India's Women to women of more favoured lands—a piteous, yearning, helpless cry; a cry which we must either hear, or sin deeply against the pitiful, tender Father who loves us all; a cry which, hearing, we must *respond* to, lest hereafter it should be our bitter experience to hear the gracious Master Himself say, 'Ye did it not to Me.'

Let us imagine our readers asking some questions concerning this cry from India.

1. *As it is a mute appeal, how are we to hear it?*—in other words, *In what does it consist?* Answers to this

question at once crowd into the mind of one who has lived or travelled in India. We hear it in the astonishing facts of the *numbers* of India's Women. How wonderful it is to see the crowds of people everywhere, in every city, town, and village; in the narrow bázars your carriage must be carefully driven, for there are no pavements, and the people seem literally to swarm like bees; while out in the country, scores, nay hundreds, will soon gather round any stranger who stops by the large pipul-tree and chhappar which are so commonly to be seen at the entrance to a village. And among all these crowds one sees so many women and girls! Little girls may be seen going to school, carrying books and slate, looking eager about their business; but alas! in very much larger numbers they may be seen idly and often rudely playing in the streets. Sometimes one may see a poor mite, playing no longer, but, at the age of thirteen or fourteen, dragging about in her young arms a child which will soon be old enough to call her mother. And then one sees poor women, hurrying along to some work which will enable them to earn daily bread; better off women, heavily laden with jewels, carrying sometimes as much as fifty or a hundred pounds' worth on arms and feet, on ears, and nose, and head; and lost degraded women, scarcely realising that they have sinned against womanhood, for they have never been taught what a woman should be. Crowds of women, 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, so that one can

only feel astonishment, and exclaim, *Where do they come from?* And if we leave the bustle of the bázár, and turn into the narrower lanes and alleys, the same fact meets us—women and girls are everywhere! Are we visiting and trying to comfort a sufferer, there will be twenty-five or thirty women crowded into her little room: they are not relatives, perhaps not even acquaintances, and they have, we may suppose, no right to come into the house just because we have business there; but it is enough for them that a stranger is to be seen, and in they come, talking loudly without ceremony, and taking turns at smoking the hookha of the house without invitation! It has often reminded one of a flock of pigeons coming suddenly when grain is scattered, 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; for let one only do something for a sick person which looks as if it were giving relief or proving in any way successful, and often in a moment one will hear, ‘Shábásh!’ (which means ‘Well done!’) and, looking up, will find 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 or enclosed space where one may be sitting. Truly the women are everywhere; they literally swarm. Can it be that, over and above all these, there are thousands above thousands who never go out at all into the streets? Yes, for the number of India’s Women is about a hundred and thirty millions. It is impossible to be in the country, and realise the numbers of the female

population, and not hear the cry going up to God from all these millions. In a sense, India is 'stretching out her hands unto God.'

But we hear the cry again in the social position of these women. In India a woman seems to be defined as a thing made to be married. Of late years, indeed, education has been making way, and even women, not Christians, are entering the medical profession, and otherwise distinguishing themselves, so that it is evident that if this wave of progress does not recede, we shall soon have much better and brighter accounts to give of the social state of the Women of India, for what woman who had taken a B.A. or an M.D. degree would submit to the mere slavery which is now the lot of many thousands in India! It is clearly out of the question to be at once in a learned profession and a prisoner in a Zenana! There is no reason to anticipate that the wave will recede; the only point in which there is room for anxiety is lest Christianity should not keep pace with education and general advance, and the nation be given the *curse* of educated women, too sensible and well informed to hold their old faiths, but without a better hope—the case, alas! with many well educated *men* in the present day.

It may enable the reader to understand something of the life of a woman in India, if a description be given of the wedding customs of both Hindus and Mohamedans, with the reminder that nothing nobler or better worth living for than such ceremonies is known among the majority of the women; these are the only

things for which a girl is trained and instructed from her earliest infancy, and except in rare cases, nothing else is thought of than such 'tamáshas,' the simple slavery in which they end seeming forgotten in the childish joy of the ceremony, by these poor child-women!¹

Among the Mohamedans, the engagement is made for a girl to be married according to the sect to which she belongs, when she is either an infant or about twelve or thirteen years of age. The grand-parents or parents arrange it all, and even if the girl be old enough to choose her state, or to have a voice as to who her partner shall be, her consent is never asked, and for her to express any opinion in the matter would be considered most immodest. Very often, even among the poorer classes, whose women and girls are not in strict purdah, the bride-elect has never heard of the boy to whom she is formally engaged.

On the evening before the wedding, feasting and rejoicing begin, and all friends and neighbours are invited. The bridegroom is always dressed in yellow, and arrives at the bride's house at about four o'clock in the morning, the men of the house going out to meet him, and bringing him into *their* part of the house.

A *Mullah* is called, who reads the wedding service, according to Mohamedan rites, in the presence of the chief men of the family. When this is over, a cup of sherbet is brought, half of which the bridegroom drinks, and the other half is taken in and given to the bride.

¹ These are all customs of the *Panjab*.

As soon as she has drunk the sherbet, a gold nose-ring is put on, a sure sign that the wedding is complete. All the friends are again feasted, and have dancing, fireworks, and *music*¹ (if one does not belie the sweet name by giving it to the dreadful sounds of 'tum-tumming' which one hears on such occasions!) The next ceremony is called 'Rétán.' In this the girl, dressed in crimson clothes, worked over with gold or silver braid, and decked with all her jewels, is made to sit on a 'chárpaie,' or bedstead—commonly used instead of chairs—where she is covered over, and the boy comes in. Some spices are brought, which he and some of the young girls of the family grind to a very fine powder, of which he takes a little and puts it on the bride's forehead; and his new mother-in-law at the same time takes some and puts it on his forehead, and a gold ring on the third finger of his right hand. He then sits by the girl with a looking-glass in his hand, and a sheet is thrown over them both, and they look at each other (for the first time) in the looking-glass; then he gives her either a gold or silver ring. After that a bracelet made of silk is put on, and she is taken away in a doolie, the bridegroom riding on a horse. The next morning she returns to her mother, when that bracelet made of silk is thrown away, and, after remaining three days with her parents, she finally goes to her husband's house.

Among the Hindus, the richer a man is, or the higher he wishes to be thought in the social scale, the sooner

¹ A sad thing for any tired missionary who happens to live near, if this kind of thing takes places in the night!

must his daughter be engaged to be married, very often a few months after her birth, and very seldom later than the age of four or five years. The wedding takes place when the girl is about ten or eleven years of age. Three days before the marriage the girl's father sends a letter or a message by a Brahman to the boy's father, and fixes the day. With the letter he sends some sugar and one rupee, and afterwards twenty-one pieces of sugar and twenty-one rupees. Then some Brahmans are called, and a feast is given them, and sugar is distributed among friends and relatives. The boy and girl are made ready by being rubbed all over every day with a kind of ointment made of flour and spices. On the day of the wedding the bridegroom is dressed in yellow garments, and on his head is a tire of silver, with a fringe hanging over the face made of gold or silver threads or flowers. These ornaments are called 'sahrás;' they can be hired by the poor, who cannot afford to have them made, and very often rich people keep several, and lend them to their poorer neighbours.

At the time of the actual wedding, the family Brahman is called, who reads a kind of religious service called 'Shánti' (the word 'shánti' means *peace*), and, of course, the implied wish is that these young people may always have peace. Poor children! very little of it do they get in many cases. Some money is given to the Brahman who performs the ceremony, and the friends give money to the boy. This is called 'Tambol.'

The origin of this custom of giving money seems to be that the need of extra money is felt at this time of

great expense, and so the giving of presents was instituted as a way of meeting the need. However, the money is rather lent than given, for the names of all who give 'tambol' are written down, and whenever the people of the house get invited to the weddings of any of these their guests, they have to give twice as much as they received! After this, the boy is anointed with some oil, half of which is kept to anoint the girl. Between six and twelve in the evening the wedding procession arrives at the girl's house, the boy riding on a horse; there is a great deal of noise and music. When the boy starts from his own house his mother waves a jug of water over his head (a sign of great joy), and one of his sisters takes hold of his bridle, and does not let him start until he has given her a present. The bride's father meets the procession at his own door, and waves one or two rupees over the heads of the boy and his father, which money is distributed among the servants. A Brahman then calls out the names of both parties back to the third generation, for every one to hear.

Then they go in to an inner room, where the young girls of the family come to meet the bridegroom. One of them, who must be a married girl, and not a widow (as must be proved by her wearing jewels on her head, and having one corner of her chaddar tied to a portion of her husband's garment, which she keeps tucked under her arm), carries a plate, a small burning lamp, a few grains of rice, a piece of newly-woven thread, some betel nut, turmeric, saffron, and sugar, and a few small toys.

The bride is then brought, and stood in a vessel

containing a little milk and water (intended for a good omen of their always having plenty in the house). The boy stoops down and touches her feet, and lifts her out of the vessel; and she next touches his feet, a sign of mutual respect. Four posts are put into the ground in the open courtyard, between which posts are placed seats of wicker-work; on the one towards the right side the girl is seated, with her parents on her left side, and the Brahmans in front, with some fire and a little heap of saffron, spices, rice, flour, green leaves, thread, and nuts. In the centre a square pattern is drawn with seven colours, and on this are placed seventeen idols made of flour, which are then worshipped.

Next, the bride's parents take a little water in their hands, over which the Brahmans say some sentences, and give it to the boy-bridegroom, and his father-in-law gives him a gold ring, and he gives the chief Brahman a cow, some money, and clothes. Then the boy is made to lay his hand on the girl's, some incense is burnt, and they both walk three times round the fire, the chief Brahman all the time repeating something from the Shástras. A fourth time they go round the fire, and this time the hem of the boy's dress is tied to a corner of the girl's chaddar, and she walks in front of him. This promenade completes their wedding! The dowry being given, the bride is sent to the house of her mother-in-law, accompanied by her youngest brother and a servant. Just before she starts a bracelet made of silk is put on her arm; this bracelet contains an iron ring, which is removed when she arrives at her husband's house. After two or three days,

she returns to her parents' house, and there she remains, perhaps for several years, if she is only a little child at the time of the wedding. When she finally leaves her mother, her father-in-law brings presents for her, and fetches her away. If she does not become a mother, she is despised and hated, and after a time has a rival wife; and if she should have children, it is a joy peculiarly full of sorrow, for, as a Panjáb village woman pathetically said to a missionary, 'Girls are a curse; no mother desires them, and if she give them a place in her heart, what is the use?—she would have to tear them out of it to give them up to be married; and even boys are scarcely a blessing, because when they would begin to help and comfort their mothers they get wives, and are taken up with their own families. No, Miss Sahiba! there is no joy in the life of a Hindu woman; she is man's plaything, and a mere machine.'

We hear the cry of India's Women, again, in their mental ignorance. Just at this present time it seems as if a great deal were being done in the way of education, and a spirit of desire for learning seems to have been excited, but the masses remain unaffected by this; and, while apparently much is being accomplished, it is really only the few who are as yet brought under regular instruction—only about 130,000 out of 130,000,000; while all who are not taught at all are in a state of the darkest ignorance.

When the Zenána Missionary first visits native ladies, she does not find them like adults, but like children to talk to. They question her concerning

her dress, her income, the colour of her hair—is it dyed or not?—the age and occupation and income of her father and brothers, her own age, etc. etc.; and they seem to have *no ideas beyond*.

Perhaps at first sight this may seem almost laughable, but it is in reality one of the most sad and lamentable facts connected with the nation. Here are mothers ignorant, childish, unthinking, untrained as the children in their arms. What is to become of a nation whose mothers may be spoken of as almost nonentities? Wherever we go, among high and low, rich and poor, we see the urgent need for education; and in this need we hear again the cry, the mute appeal, from India's millions to England's favoured daughters, with all their privileges and possibilities in the way of education—'Come and teach us!' We hear the cry again whenever the fact of the moral depravity of India's homes is impressed upon us. As we tried to show in a former chapter, 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 noble and refining and pure; she is conversant with all that is the reverse. It needs the power of the Holy Spirit, and all the influences He graciously brings to bear upon any soul of fallen man, to make and to keep that soul pure and holy. Shall we then wonder that secluded Zenána homes, open to every evil influence, but unpenetrated by His divine power, 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 any foundation in fact, as frequently where *pardah* is most strictly kept the greatest immodesty and impropriety prevail behind the scenes. Christian teachers should strive to do away with a system so morally depraving, especially insisting on allowing no nominal Christian to 'keep *pardah*.'

We are again startled by the cry when we come to a knowledge of the facts connected with times of sickness among India's Women. Not exempt from any of the ills which flesh is heir to, and peculiarly liable to be affected by many of them on account of their unhealthy surroundings and unnatural lives, they are (in all ranks above the very low and degraded) denied the advantage of skilled surgical and medical aid.¹

The native *hakim* and *daie* (or midwife) not uncommonly carry on practices which might well lead their victims to cry for the favour of being left to die in peace; and although in these days there are many *hakims* who have studied something, and risen above the folly and wrongdoing of their predecessors, and many really good native civil surgeons and assistant surgeons, of whose abilities and painstaking efforts to excel in their profession one can scarcely speak too

¹ In common with other statements concerning so vast a country as India, exceptions may be quoted. For example, many princesses may see a man doctor, and in some of the large towns prejudice is giving way, and many ladies—as Parsees—never keep *pardah*; but exceptions prove rules.

highly, still the case of the Zenána lady is not bettered. If her husband be sensible enough to describe her illness to one of these well-educated men before he has allowed her to undergo every conceivable torture at the hands of the family daie, she has, it is true, a slightly better chance; but even then the doctor, however conscientious and skilled, must work in the dark, for he may not see his patient, and he may be utterly misled by the often ignorant and conflicting statements of her female relatives and friends, which of course can only reach him through the men of the family.

The women themselves know nothing of nursing, and hence many a sufferer drags out weary days and nights with no medical help, and with no proper nursing, and the miseries of such sufferers can be better imagined than described.

In England and other Christian lands at the present day, women—gentle, refined, educated women—are counting it a most honourable life-work to tend constantly the sick and suffering, to spend days and nights in hospital wards, or in the homes of the afflicted. Might not many of such consecrated lives be spent in India? Millions of women and girls in India send across the wide ocean the thrilling, heartrending cry, ‘When we are sick, no one tends us; we have *no one* to soothe, to comfort, to ease us!’ Oh that their voice of suffering may be heard and eagerly responded to! Oh that the gracious Master may say of many in Christian lands concerning their work for the women of India, ‘I was sick, and ye visited me!’

Once more we hear the cry of these helpless ones in their Christless religions.

We sit by sick-beds, we see wretchedness in many forms, we witness the sorrows of the dying and bereaved, and we feel our hearts bleeding with grief at the thought of all that the women of India have to endure; but the deepest depth is only reached when we remember that there is no knowledge whatever of any true comfort, no hope in sorrow and death, no light beyond the grave. Their religions bring them no rest or joy, because they are all without Christ. In favoured Christian lands, in happy homes, times of sickness, sorrow and death must come. God's own children often have to say, 'My flesh and my heart faileth.' So far, the women of India can join them, but beyond that *they* cannot go; *they* cannot mingle their voices in the glad song of triumph over sorrow, 'but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!' It rests with those who *can* sing that song to carry it in all its sweetness and power to those who cannot.

Yes, wherever we go in India, we hear the cry of the women. We believe it enters into the ears and into the heart of the Lord of the whole earth; let it enter also the ears and the hearts of His people!

But our readers may ask another question—

2. *Is it possible to reach and to elevate such as those who have been described?*

In these days the country can be reached in a way which seems simply marvellous, when we think of difficulties which existed only a few years ago; and if we

look back to the times of Carey and the other Serampore Missionaries, we cannot but be struck by the ease with which missionaries can now come to the country, and begin and carry on their work. Science has lent her powerful aid in every possible direction, and then we have the increasing love of learning among the men of the country, especially of learning *English*, which is a valuable help to those who are desiring to bring the Gospel to bear upon the people.

The fact that educated men are beginning to feel the desirability of having educated wives, is throwing open Zenáns in a way which would have delighted the hearts of missionaries of thirty years ago. Women can be reached by *thousands* where formerly they could not by *tens*. And in a deeper and more important sense they can be *reached*—their intelligence is good, they respond to teaching; their sympathies are quick, their hearts can be touched; yes, and, thank God, we can add from blessed experience, *their souls can be saved!*

A short history of one family, of which a younger member is now working as an assistant Zenána Medical Missionary, may suitably close this portion of the subject; and it is instructive as showing the wonderful way in which God causes men and women to be brought out of darkness into light, and from the slavery of Satan to joyful participation in His own service; often putting many strange links in the chain of His providence and grace. Koylash Chandra Mookerji, while studying in the Mission School at Mirzapore, was converted by the power of God's Spirit, and became a real and earnest Christian.

He was baptized in 1842, being about twenty years of age. He anxiously instructed his little wife, who was less than twelve years old, and she became quite willing to join him wherever he might go, and to let him be a Christian, but she herself did not want to be a Christian also. She would probably not have been willing at all to leave her home and follow his fortunes, but for the hard Hindu law, which would have condemned her to a degrading and well-nigh intolerable life of widowhood on account of her husband's changed religion. But her consent to joining him was alone not sufficient, and the consent of her relations could not be obtained. However, this young Christian man went on praying to God for his wife, until at length a good opportunity occurred of taking her away (a step which, of course, he had a perfect legal right to take). There was in his family an old nurse, a Brahman, and she was exceedingly fond of him; he persuaded this old woman to go to the Zenána and bring away his wife. The Brahman did her part well, not from love of Christianity, but from love of the boy whom she had nursed from his birth.

After joining her husband, the young wife still continued to be a Hindu—indeed, two of her servants embraced Christianity before she became convinced of its truth; but at length, while living in Calcutta, and at the time of the birth of her first child, in the year 1846, the prayers so long offered for her by her husband were answered, and she expressed her desire to be baptized. She had been well taught by the wife of the Missionary under whom her husband worked. She became a widow

in 1858, being left with five children, of whom the eldest was only twelve years of age. This child ultimately became the wife of Bábu K. C. Basu, a well-known Christian in the Panjáb, and had a large family. Her eldest daughter, the granddaughter of the young man and his wife whose history we have thus briefly traced, is now working in the Amritsar Zenána Medical Mission. It is interesting to watch Mrs. Basu and her mother, now both widows, walking together to God's house of prayer, mature Christian women, who have long proved His love and faithfulness, and rejoiced in His service, and to watch also the busy useful life of Mrs. Basu's daughter, in the Hospital or Dispensary, or visiting her suffering heathen sisters, and to reflect on the fact that but for Christianity—but for missionary effort and God's blessing upon it, all these would have been *Zenána prisoners*, in the hopeless and helpless condition elsewhere described, whereas now they afford a delightful proof of the fact that India has hidden in her dark places many 'Daughters of the King.' Here are *three generations of them*, at one time, and in one family, calling for our earnest and hearty thanks to the Giver of all blessing!

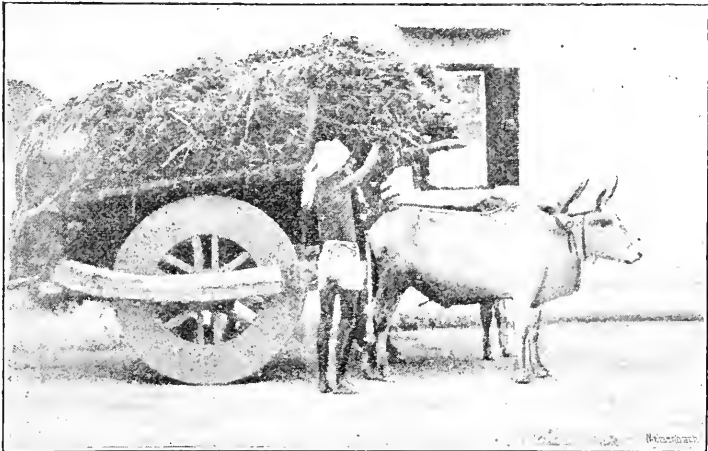
Reserving for another chapter two important questions,—What is being done? and What can we do to help?—we leave with our readers the thought of the urgent, earnest, pleading cry of these sisters of ours, who in all their darkness, ignorance, and depravity are not beyond the possibility of becoming in glorious reality

'DAUGHTERS OF THE KING.'

'Where the word of a KING is, there is power.'

Prayer.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, whose ears are graciously attent to the cries of Thy creatures, Who knowest their weaknesses, sorrows, and temptations, and Who seest the deepest depths of the depravity in which so many are kept by the power of Satan; We earnestly beseech Thee to make bare Thine arm, and to let Thine abounding pity and mercy meet the terrible cry of sorrow and wrong from India. Cause all Thy faithful and true servants to hear this cry, and to go forth, or to give gladly of their substance to send others forth, in Thy strength, that the millions of India's Women and Girls may be delivered from their present state of captivity, from suffering, from ignorance, from sin, and from death. Grant to each of us grace to hear the story of their woes with a tender pity like unto Thine, and be pleased to give such a blessing upon our unworthy prayers and efforts, that by our means many from India may be numbered among those daughters of Thine whom Thou hast promised to bring 'from the ends of the earth;' to the praise of the glory of His grace, Who hath redeemed both us and them, to Whom, with Thyself and the HOLY SPIRIT, be everlasting praises. Amen.



UPCOUNTRY CART.



CHAPTER III.

The Cry of India's Women (*CONTINUED*).

*'And with that cry from Macedon,
The very car of Christ rolls on ;
" I come! Who would abide My way
In yonder wilds prepares My way :
My Voice is crying in their cry,
' Help ye the dying, lest ye die! "*

*Jesu, for men of man the Son,
Yea, Thine the cry from Macedon ;
Oh, by the Kingdom and the power
And glory of Thine Advent hour,
Wake heart and will to hear their cry
Help us to help them, lest we die! "*



WITH so urgent and thrilling a cry coming to us from our great Indian Empire, and with such abundant opportunities and openings for work among the daughters of that vast country, the next question comes most naturally—

3. *What is the Church of Christ doing to meet the occasion?*

Compared with the *need*, compared with her own immense privileges, compared with the love which has been shown her by the Great Head of the Church, her effort has been puny indeed; and there is room for much penitential sorrow on this account, and an urgent

need for prayer that a spirit of more true and heartfelt pity and love may be poured out upon her, so that she may bestir herself and '*work while it is day.*' Still, something has been attempted, and the opportunities of entering dark homes with the message of light and joy are not being altogether lost. We must not be down-cast and discouraged by the fact that there is *one Lady Missionary to about every hundred thousand of the female population of India*, but rather thank God, and take courage, as we remember that in the ten years from 1871 to 1881¹ the number of women and girls under regular instruction more than doubled, being at the latter date 65,761.

It is estimated that about one-fifth of the work among women is carried on by agents of Zenána Societies, properly so called, and about four-fifths by married ladies and others in connection with general Missionary Societies.

It is impossible to show by statistics the leavening influence that is going on everywhere where God's true people are living and working; to estimate, for example, the results of the life lived by so many missionaries' wives among servants and Bible-women and others. Only in eternity will the far-reaching effects of that prayerful, praising spirit, those kind loving deeds and words, that ready sympathy, that courageous example, be fully known! But in that which is more *apparently*, though not more *truly*, work, where shall we begin to describe what is being done?

I. Suppose we begin with *Schools* for Heathen and

¹ Statistical Tables of Protestant Missions in India for 1881.

Mohamedan Girls. We have entered a field of the deepest interest and richest promise.

It is impossible to overrate the importance of the education of young girls in relation to Mission work and the future of India. In the children of to-day is our hope for the Christian India of the future; these girls will become very early in life the wives and mothers of the men of the country, and we have, as it were, a few fleeting hours of sunshine in which to do all the work which human instrumentality can effect for the great harvest which we have an eager longing to see; we have to perform the important duty of giving to these impressionable young minds the right bias, and of sowing the seed of everlasting life in these hearts. Of day-schools for girls there are now no less than 1120, numbering in all upwards of 40,000 pupils. The work in these schools has, like all other work, its bright and its dark aspects, its sunny hopeful side, and its disappointing trying one. We have but to read the letters of missionaries engaged in this particular branch of work to see this. Now they can tell of full schools and eager pupils, of one and another casting off faith in heathen teaching and yielding her young heart to Jesus; of some little one taken away in His mercy from evil to come, and passing through the dark waters of death, trusting Him with the simple faith of a child, and causing the heart of the teacher to realise joyfully that she has not laboured in vain; and anon they must tell of closed schools and scattered pupils, of persecution for their beloved little ones and sorrow for themselves. But, on the whole,

must not our hearts yield hearty thanks to the Good Shepherd, who Himself said that, 'Of such is the KINGDOM of Heaven,' when we hear that in His providence and by His grace it has come to pass that at this time in India there are more than 40,000 heathen and Mohamedan girls under daily missionary instruction and influence! It is very easy to write and read (and *forget!*) figures which represent thousands, and it is easy for even those who have read those large figures with a moderate amount of interest to be sceptical as to how much work missionaries do. The figures require analysing.

We must try to have before our mind's-eye more than 1000 schools, and picture to ourselves an average number of 40 pupils.

We must think of all the provision needed for their instruction, of the details of arrangements for daily work, of the various characters of the children, of the impossibility of mixing castes, of the difficulty of securing good teachers (generally only overcome by the missionary training them for herself), and of the prejudices of many kinds, which must not be too rashly gone against, unless the school is to be closed, and which yet must not be allowed to interfere with the principles upon which the work is carried on. We must try to place ourselves in imagination by the side of each missionary's wife, or Zenána missionary, in the daily round of her duties in such a school, and to appreciate her earnest wish to give the children all necessary secular instruction, and to keep the character of the school up to the

required standard, and her yet more yearning desire to bring those children, in this precious bit of time before marriage, into the fold of Christ; and if in this way we bear in mind upwards of 1000 schools, we shall scarcely be able to help acknowledging thankfully that a mighty work is being attempted, and to a certain extent accomplished, among the Girls of India.

We may be satisfied that in the fresh and comparatively unoccupied soil of the young girls' hearts many seeds are finding an abiding place.

Instances such as the following could be given in large numbers. A little child learned in her school that an idol was nothing, and could not see, speak, hear, feel, or do anything. She resolved to test the statement, and went to a temple where there was an idol in the form of a large black stone. She climbed on the stone, and sat kicking it with her heels; and then, getting down, removed all the offerings of flowers, etc., and threw them away, expressing her conviction that if the god could have defended himself and punished her, he would have done so.

The father, a devout Hindu, was exceedingly angry at his daughter's conduct, and cursed her bitterly; and, to avert any great evils coming on the family, he spent large sums in seeking to propitiate the god. It may fairly be believed that no efforts of his could ever erase the impression made upon that thoughtful young mind!

II. We may next glance at that which is properly called *Zenána work*, that is, the regular systematic visitation of the upper-class houses by the missionaries as teachers.

At the end of 1881 these houses numbered 7522, representing 9132 Zenána pupils.

It may be well to consider the principles upon which this work is carried on, and to distinctly assert that, in giving Bible instruction to a lady in a Zenána, the missionary is not acting without the knowledge, or contrary to the expressed wishes, of the master of the house.

It has often been wrongly alleged that Hindu and Mohamedan gentlemen have been deceived as to the true nature of a missionary lady's work. The fact is, they are fully aware that her primary object in coming to India is to make known the Gospel of the grace of God, and they know at the same time that there are in these days other teachers to be had—teachers who are prepared not to interfere with the religions of the country; yet in the majority of cases they prefer that their wives and daughters should be under the care and influence of a decided Christian lady, who is true to her colours, and we cannot but know that these people have an immense respect for those who are loyal to the religion they profess.

Two incidents on this point are worth recording. A Mohamedan gentleman, resident at one time in London, had yielded to his wife's earnest desire to cross the sea and join him; but, in writing to give her permission, he said it was *on condition that she travelled with a missionary lady!* Again, a Hindu gentleman, in conversation with a Zenána missionary, expressed his opinion that she would get invited into a very great

many more houses if she did not always take her Bible. She replied : ' And suppose that I, believing this book to contain the good news of the one and only way of life, were to go among those whom I consider to be lost and helpless for want of it, and *not* make known to them what I hold to be the truth, what would you think of me ?' Looking thoughtful for a moment, he answered : ' Well, madam, of course I should not respect you.'

If the case can be imagined of a missionary withholding her message for fear of losing her pupils, or consenting to suppress her Master's teaching and impart only secular knowledge, or, on the other hand, striving as it were on the sly, to give religious instruction while allowing the husbands to think she was not doing so, then the want of blessing and success which would inevitably result would be entirely due to her fault ; but none can say that, with her Bible fearlessly open, and her intention to read it with her pupils fully made known, she has acted unfairly, or gained access to the houses of Indian gentlemen under false pretences. Let us now try to picture to ourselves our missionary seated among her *Zenána* pupils, these preliminary difficulties all got over, and her secular teaching only undertaken with the full understanding that the Gospel is also taught.

If we accompany her to a house where she is paying her first or second visit, and afterwards to one where there are pupils of long standing, we shall soon see why primary education at least is such a very important part of Woman's work in India. In the first case, there will be difficulty in being understood, as, although she may

speaking the language well, her different accent, and particularly the strange ideas to which she may give utterance, form a barrier between herself and these dear women for whose salvation and happiness she is yearning, but from whom she seems so far away. In an English house her instinct would lead her perhaps to take the baby and play with it, as a way of gaining confidence and getting friendly; but this simple device is generally out of the question in India, for what stranger would venture on the risky task of tossing or playing with a baby who, instead of wearing clothes, is well greased from head to foot!

Another source of difficulty at these first visits is that one or two of the gentlemen often accompany the visitor into the *Zenána*, and wait about politely to see her established at work. As long as they remain every face among the women is hidden beneath her chaddar, so that conversation with *them* is out of the question. The gentlemen in such cases frequently know enough English to be very anxious to speak it, and they will commence a conversation with the English lady, which she will, if she is wise, discourage, as it is thought by many (with great reason) that to talk to the husbands in a foreign tongue in the presence of their wives is a most unpardonable breach of good manners. But the longest lane has a turning, and presently these awkward moments will come to an end, and the men will retire with a *salám*, followed perhaps by some little fellow aspiring to be manly, who will make a bow, and say to the lady visitor (at seven or eight o'clock in the morning), 'Sir, I

wish you good night !' The chaddars are soon pushed back, and the eager faces look out, and many tongues are set agoing ! We cannot help being surprised as we see how many women are before us, and hear what a noise they are capable of making. There will be the old mother-in-law, with her sons' wives, perhaps three or four in number—and very likely one or two of these comparatively young wives are themselves mothers-in-law—and their little 'Bahus'¹ are there. In addition to these, there will often be several other relatives, as, for example, a niece whose father-in-law is dead, or a sister of the master of the house, who may be a widow, and so on ; and then, further, there are not unfrequently relatives from distant places paying a long visit, or acquaintances from the next house or street come for the day, in order to be present at the reception of the Miss Sahiba. All are eager to ask questions, and sometimes much laughing and pushing of each other, and scuffling, and playing go on, which to those unacquainted with the people would seem rude, but no rudeness is intended. Perhaps, out of all these women and girls, only one wishes to be a pupil, and it is no easy task to give her her first lesson in the alphabet with so many looking on, making remarks and causing endless interruptions, offering tea, sweets, etc., to the visitor, and being generally like a rather large nursery party, each anxious to be heard and to have her own questions answered. One might almost be tempted impatiently to exclaim, ' Can any impression ever be made ?'

¹ Daughters-in-law.

But if we go to a house where, for some weeks or months, one or two young women have been learning, we see a great difference. The first difficulties of reading have been overcome, the books and writing materials are all ready for the teacher, and, the novelty having worn off, the women of the house no longer besiege one with questions, or noisily make remarks, but as a rule sit quietly by and spin or cook while the learners read, write, and listen. There is something like the order of a small school, and it is evident, progress is being made. Very often, too, by this time, a real affection for their friend has sprung up in the hearts of the pupils, and, as they learn more and more, and better understand *why* she came to teach them, this feeling grows. It is touching to see the wistful way in which such pupils will cling to their teacher, who has brought into their dark lives that beautiful thing of which they knew little or nothing before—the light of Love! They are visited by her week by week until in many instances they can read anything in their vernacular, and perhaps sometimes English, and also have learned other useful things, as arithmetic, writing, and needlework.

Higher education is given in those cases in which it seems desirable, but, as one Zenána missionary has most forcibly argued, this ought not to be in those instances where the Gospel message is evidently persistently rejected, though listened to with outward ears from time to time. ‘Are we,’ she asks, ‘to educate first and evangelise afterwards, or does our Master call us to evangelise first and educate afterwards? In other words,

shall we spend our time and strength in pruning and training the wild vines in hope that eventually they may get grafted with grace, or shall we seek first to get our pupils engrafted on the true Vine, and train them afterwards? Shall we spend our best energies in teaching, year after year, pupils who show not a shadow of interest in the great truths we seek to impart, or shall we give higher education only to those who desire to know Christ?’

The simple primary education is undoubtedly an invaluable aid in the first instruction of the women in heavenly things, and more especially as it gives them the power to read for themselves God's Holy Word. The uncultured woman, who just believes as a child when she hears a religious teacher, is certainly—if that faith be real—as truly brought to Christ as her better educated sister; yet who can question the advantage of the convert being able, *from her own study of Scripture*, to give an answer to every one who asketh her a reason of the hope that is in her. And another point not to be forgotten is that, in the event of a Zenána being closed against missionary influence, or the pupil removing, as at marriage, to a city or village where there are no teachers, the missionary who has educated her has been able to give her two blessings—the *power* to read, and *the Book* to read, and that Book is God's Word, which cannot ‘return void’ to Him who sent it.

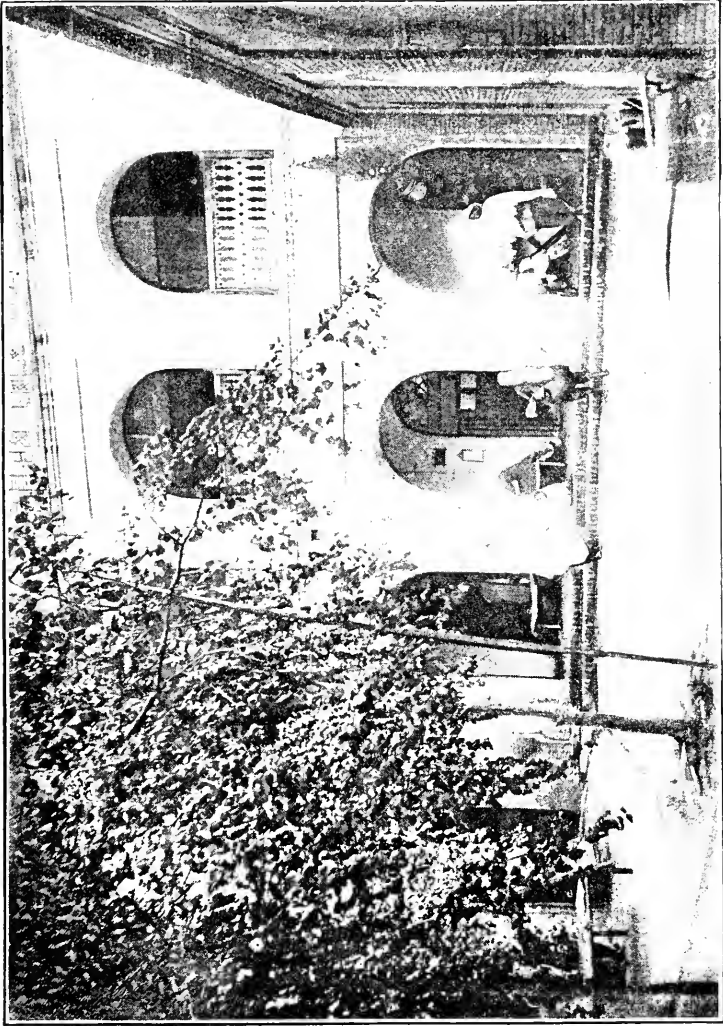
It is not possible to estimate the far-reaching and abiding effects of this simple education, when going hand in hand with prayerfully, earnestly-given Bible lessons.

III. Another important branch of Woman's work in India is the *Medical Mission*, and this may not unfairly be reckoned among the most interesting, the most promising, and the most difficult of missionary undertakings.

(1.) *Among the most interesting*, because it brings the missionary into contact with a very large number of women whom she would probably never see but by its means, shows her an infinite variety of cases of need and suffering, reveals to her many of the sorrows and trials as well as the habits of thought and ways of living of the people among whom she is labouring, and sometimes brings to light one and another who are 'feeling after God if haply they may find Him.'

(2.) *Among the most promising*, because, in ministering to suffering bodies, it teaches the sufferers that love is a real and living thing, that those who come to their homes to help them in sickness, asking nothing in return, must be actuated by love, and that God is Love.

It is thus, even when no words are spoken, pointing the weary and afflicted away from all their misery and pain, straight up to the One who loves them, and who has sent His servants for their relief. The simple preaching of the Cross is indeed 'the power of God,' and men do feel and acknowledge this; but when, by His gracious blessing upon the use of means, we can say to the sometime helpless cripple, 'Rise; take up thy bed, and walk,' who can doubt that the message of 'forgiveness of sins' comes with increased power to the heart? And it is a promising work, because it tends to improve the moral and physical condition of the women, to teach



BACK VERANDAH OF SAINT CATHERINE'S HOSPITAL, AMRITSAR.

them how they may best avert sickness from themselves and from their children, and how they may meet it with some amount of common sense if it should come. That there is sad need for work in these directions every Zenána missionary can abundantly testify.

(3.) *Among the most difficult*—(a), because it can be undertaken in all its branches by women only, and their facilities for fitting themselves for the work have hitherto been very limited, and further, when they are as fully equipped as they can be, they are but women after all, weaker than men, less able to stand alone, and more likely to suffer from hard work and exposure to weather in a country like India; (b), because the prejudices and habits of the people of India in their normal condition, while they form immense barriers to missionary efforts in other respects, are most especially hindering in the treatment of disease. The well-known difficulty in giving fluid medicines and nourishing food to Hindu patients, the custom of taking the advice and drugs of some hakim (or of more than one) without informing the European doctor in attendance, the fact that the more ill the patient the more crowded will be the room and the more noisy her friends, and the prejudice which in severe and lowering types of fever puts a hundred leeches to each foot, and refuses to allow the patient any food, are sufficient instances.

(c) *Because it is a double work.* One has often heard it spoken of as if to attempt the healing of body and soul at the same time were the easiest thing in the world. A moment's thought will show that the very opposite is

the case. Even allowing that there were no more obstacles than there are in English Medical Missionary work, and allowing that the patients, though ignorant and unbelieving as London heathen are, were nevertheless not unwilling to listen to a short address, and not without some perception of its truth and the importance of receiving it, there would still be double work, double responsibility, double thought, double prayer, while neither work may give place to the other; for, on the one hand, we dare not let those go away without hearing the Gospel message to whom the Master has commissioned us to tell it, and on the other hand we have no right to gather people together with the promise of bodily healing, and then give so much time to spiritual instruction that we must hastily slur over the cases, and make our medical treatment less satisfactory than at any other hospital. The difficulty of doing wisely and well these two great works in combination is very great. In dispensaries, and as in-patients in Zenána hospitals, and also in their own homes, whether rich or poor, the women of India are reached by the Medical Mission; and we have great reason to thank God that so powerful an agent for their good has been introduced among these poor sufferers. How great a boon it has already proved to the sick of all classes, and how efficiently it prepares a way for the Gospel, it would be impossible to tell.

IV. *The Village Mission* is a branch of work which is making itself felt among the poor and ignorant, and often unsophisticated women of the rural districts. The vil-

lages have few Zenánas, but many many women, and there are swarms of children, as wild and untaught as the jackals in their fields, and crowds of sick, both women and children, whose pitiable condition for lack of medicine and nursing is entirely beyond description. Some peculiar features of the work among these villagers are—

(1.) They are *easy of access*. One has but to stand for a few minutes at the entrance to any village, to be surrounded by numbers of them, eager to see and know everything about the stranger, and not unwilling to listen, for a short time at least, to what she has to say.

They¹ have often very handsome features, and are fine, strong women; they carry heavy burdens (as large quantities of milk in brass vessels) nicely poised on their heads; they will walk many miles with apparently little fatigue, tucking up the large skirt (which is generally their only clothing except the chaddar over the head), and striding along with a business-like determination to get over the ground; they work much in the fields, and among the buffaloes and cows they may possess. A number of such women clustering round a missionary form a very striking group, and it gives a splendid opportunity to one who has a ready tongue to tell them the story of His love who sent her to India for their help and blessing. And such an interview generally leads to invitations being given into several houses, where women in almost any number may again be met with and spoken to.

(2.) These villagers are *remarkably friendly*. They have no suspicions of the missionary lady who has taken

¹ In the Panjáb.

so much pains to come and see them ; they believe in her love, even though they may not fully understand it, and they are most anxious to persuade her to take milk or fruit from them to refresh her after her long ride or drive. Of course there are villages where the chief man is a proud bigot, and where no entrance is gained, but in thousands of Indian villages the missionary may be quite sure of a *friendly reception*.

(3.) The work is *emphatically pioneering*. The village missionary has, and is likely to have for many years, a very large field unentered, and she must always be going on and on, passing into the regions beyond, continually carrying out her plan of alighting at the entrance of some village, *unvisited before*, and gathering together a crowd of women, beginning to tell them the story of God's love, to which they will listen, with very rare exceptions, for the first time in their lives. Hence it is evident that the pioneer village missionary needs following everywhere by other earnest workers, who will enforce and further expand the great lessons she has tried to begin to teach, who can regularly visit all who open their houses, and who may also begin and carry on schools for women and girls.

It may fairly be said that the *opportunities* and *promise* of this village work are simply immense, and it is a matter for great thankfulness that now, in several parts of India, it is being proved that the missionary who uses the *opportunities* need have no fear as to the *promise* being richly realised.

Boarding-schools for Christian Girls must not be for-

gotten among the various agencies which come under the head of 'Woman's Work.'

This may be perhaps said to be 'not Zenána work,' but wherever the lady missionary can bring influence to bear upon a woman of India, directly or indirectly, there is Zenána work.

Few influences will be more powerful in the future of this country than the lives of Christian mothers, and the homes they are able to make. The effects of the boarding-school life will be seen in the young woman who goes forth from school to be the wife of clergyman or catechist, or, if one of humble rank, she will impress upon her children, and they upon theirs, the marks of her school training. The work of ladies who conduct such schools is therefore of very great importance; they are not only by their didactic teaching, but by their own daily lives among their pupils, moulding these characters for time and for eternity. It is satisfactory to know that in 1881 there were 155 boarding-schools for girls in India, representing 6379 pupils; and it is a thought full of encouragement and hope that, although there must be some failures and disappointments among so many, still the majority of these girls are receiving what they will hand on to others—the good influence of the lives and teaching of whole-hearted, earnest Christian women.

V. *Work among widows* might well claim to be a special branch of missionary effort. It is a fact that there are in India more than twenty-one millions of widows—that is, one widow for every five males of the whole population.

A very large proportion of these are still mere children,

and very many among the adults have been widows from babyhood. In Bengal alone, at the last census, there were found to be more than 43,000 little widows under ten years of age, and it is estimated that nine-tenths of these child-widows must grow up to a life of sin. Very little has as yet been done in the special behalf of these poor creatures, but doubtless many Zenána missionaries have made efforts to organise work among them, to have classes for them, to strive in different ways to lift them up out of their degradation and wretchedness, though we have yet to see the day of anything like an adequate attempt to reach and influence this great mass of the population.

Work among Eurasians and country-born Europeans, and also in Christian families in every part of the country, is ever increasingly called for. Something to strengthen and encourage the earnest among these classes, to instruct the ignorant, to warn the careless, and to comfort those in trouble, is attempted by most missionary ladies; but in this, as in every other department, the demand for workers is far greater than the supply. With nearly five hundred thousand Christians of the country, in addition to the very large Eurasian population, there must be a wide field for work, and we must not forget that if Christians are taught and helped, and built up in their most holy faith, the labour bestowed upon them must surely have its ultimate fruit in the bringing in of more heathen, and the spread of the Gospel into places now dark as the shadow of death!

It has been attempted to show how the great cry of

India's Women is being responded to, and how many opportunities there are for a far larger response; and now we may imagine the reader asking one more question—

4. '*What can I do to help?*' All loyal subjects of the King of kings must ever rise from the fresh study of His work and the progress of His kingdom in the world, with this question more urgently than before pressing on their hearts. Many answers might be given, but some leading thoughts will embrace all—

(a) *Let us sympathise with the King.* He has many rebel subjects, and many who do not yield Him loyal obedience because they know not of His claims. Precious to Him is the sympathy of the heart, which out of its deep love for *Him* yearns over millions of Mohamedans and heathens sunk in darkness, degradation, and woe.

(b) *Let us pray for the King.* 'Prayer also shall be made *for* Him continually : ' **THY KINGDOM COME.**' To how many Christians in favoured, enlightened England might the question be put with well-merited rebuke— 'Why speak ye not a word of bringing the King back?' Why do not the exquisite words of one of the prayers of our own Church find a more constant echo on the lips and from the hearts of God's children—'That it may please Thee, of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom?' Surely this matter ought to be very near to the heart of every follower of Jesus!

In these dark Zenánas, by these weary roadsides, in these clustering villages, and languishing on these wretched beds of sickness and suffering, He has His elect.

(c) *Let us go forth in this service for the King.* It is peculiarly the duty and the privilege of England's daughters to enlist energy, talent, zeal, life itself, in the cause of carrying messages of joy and peace into Indian homes. And where personal going is clearly shown to be *not* the path of duty—

(d) *Let us send help to those servants of the King whom He has sent forth*; gifts for their scholars, work prepared for their Zenána ladies, texts worked or illuminated for distribution, needlework for sale, gold and silver into God's treasury for the general support and carrying on of the work.

There is an infinite variety of ways and means of giving most valuable aid to Missionary Societies without leaving England, and sanctified ingenuity will not be slow in searching out those ways and means, as many a working party, or other well-organised effort to interest and draw them into the work, abundantly testifies. And all who thus strengthen the hearts and hands of those gone forth to heathen countries will realise that while some are engaged in direct evangelistic effort for the heathen, and others are working indirectly in what may seem (and only *seem*) humbler modes—all alike share the great blessing and joy of the service, and as her part is that goeth down to the battle, so is her part that tarrieth by the stuff—they part alike.

‘They shall speak of the glory of Thy KINGDOM and talk of Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His KINGDOM.’

Prayer.

GRACIOUS and loving SAVIOUR, we acknowledge that this service which we render unto Thee cometh of Thee, and is all Thine own. Look with compassion on its many imperfections, ignorances, shortcomings ; in love pass by its mistakes and blemishes ; pardon its sins ; cleanse the hands and lips that offer it from all stain of evil, and our hearts from all irreverence and self-seeking, all sloth, double-mindedness, and backwardness in Thy cause. Having put our hand to the plough, may we set our face, every one, straight forward, and never look back. Forbid it, LORD, that our life should be like that earth which bringeth forth briars and thorns, and is rejected of Thee. Rather may it be as the earth which *'bringeth forth fruits meet for them by whom it is dressed, and receiveth a blessing from GOD.'* May we seek each to please his neighbour for his good to edification, even as CHRIST pleased not Himself.

May the talents which Thou hast given in charge to each of us neither be wasted nor buried, but kept for JESUS CHRIST, and occupied till He comes again. Be pleased so to increase and confirm Thy grace in us, that, having our lights trimmed and burning, we may be ready to go forth to meet the Bridegroom, and may so abide in His love that when He shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

Finally, may the outpouring of the HOLY GHOST, the COMFORTER, fortify and establish our hearts, and make them fruitful with His plentiful dew, and the anointing oil of His sevenfold gracious gifts, that each one of us may be as a green olive-tree in the house of GOD, and may bring forth more fruit in our age, to show how true the LORD our strength is ; and that our trust may be in the tender mercy of GOD for ever and ever : through Thine own merits and mediation, Who art the King of Saints and Lord of Glory. Amen.



CHAPTER IV.

A Call to Mothers.

*' Oh, hearts are bruised and dead,
And homes are bare and cold,
And lambs, for whom the Saviour bled,
Are straying from the fold,
To comfort and to bless,
To find a balm for woe,
To tend the lone and fatherless
Is angels' work below.'*



SURELY there never was a mother who did not love to hear stories of mothers and children!

It is sad to have to begin a description of Indian homes for English mothers, by telling them to lay aside every preconceived idea of home life, to forget pretty cottages, happy wives, fathers returning from work to meet happy merry children; and to try to imagine the anomaly of children having lives without that delightful stage, so full of blessing and joy in our country—childhood; to imagine infants married before they are weaned, and precocious little mites of five or seven years old knowing nothing they ought to know,

and nearly everything they ought not! No wonder if the mothers of England start, and feel as if they were going to hear stories not of children, but of monsters. But, dear readers, if these little ones are to be made happy and good, and if their mothers are to be helped and raised, we women of England must strive to understand their homes, their wants, their woes; and to bring to bear upon them, by God's grace, the light and joy of our own happy lives.

We often hear the words 'our Indian Empire,' and we may once more remind ourselves of the famous saying, 'The Empire is at the fireside.' True, in every land, this is not more true anywhere than in India. It is one of the laws of nature that if any class of the community is oppressed or injured, it will sooner or later tyrannise over all the classes which have united in that oppression or injury; accordingly, if we were asked what it is which more than anything else acts as a dead weight upon progress and civilisation in India, we should have to reply, *the position of the women*. Socially degraded, treated as animals of a lower order than man, excluded from society, kept in grossest ignorance, women (O strange contradiction!) yet wield the sceptre in the home circle. Their influence is mighty, and all the power they possess is spent upon an ignorant and bigoted upholding and enforcing of their own religions. There can be little doubt that in the present day there are large numbers of thoughtful men no longer Hindus or Mohamedans at heart, who dare not confess themselves persuaded (as they are) of the truth of

Christianity, because of the storm it would create at home! Pathetically and truly has one Zenána missionary said, 'Let us in our Master's name lay our hand on the hand that rocks the cradle, and tune the lips that sing the lullabies. Let us win the mothers of India for Christ, and the day will not be long deferred when India's sons also shall be brought to the Redeemer's feet.'

It is very difficult for one who has lived in India to realise how those whose lives are being spent in England cannot all at once follow descriptions of Oriental life; they need to have so many things explained so as somewhat to understand the common customs and manners of the country, before they can enter into scenes which a writer may describe. Those who have spent many years in a land far distant from England, and very unlike it, are apt to forget how everything about 'foreign parts' has an interest for stayers at home, and as one thing after another grows familiar to them they insensibly lose sight of the fact that it would take pages upon pages of writing, hours upon hours of talking, to give to those who have not *seen*, the faintest idea of what has now become to them so common-place, and so thoroughly a part of everyday life; but we hope the following pictures from Indian homes may, with the aid of a good imagination, bring some facts vividly before the minds of English mothers.

To such readers what can be more interesting to begin with than some account of the first birthday of a little Panjábí boy!

The father was a Sardár, or chief, of a village. He was very rich, but the room set apart for the special use of his wife at the time of the birth of her son was literally unfit to be used as a stable; it was dark and close, and utterly destitute of the smallest comfort. It was not, however, destitute of *women*, of whom many had gathered together to show interest in the important event. Not to *help!* Think not, kind reader, with motherly instincts, that one in that noisy chattering crowd of women could do anything for the poor mother in her hour of trial; indeed, the moment the child was born they all rushed hastily from the room, except one, the mother-in-law, who had to make up her mind to remain, and become temporarily defiled, at the trouble and expense of many subsequent ceremonies to enable her again to be among Hindus. With regard to this idea a little incident is worthy of record. An English lady who had done some kind office for a sick Hindu woman, was washing her own hands, and accidentally splashed her patient with soapy water, an article for which the patient would have been much better had she used it freely! With instinctive politeness, the English lady said, 'I beg your pardon.' 'Oh, never mind,' said her Hindu sister, meaning to be equally polite, 'while I am ill I am as unclean as you are!' To return to the little son of our Panjábí Sardár. At length he was born, and the glad news was communicated to his father, who was waiting anxiously with large numbers of friends in the open court of the house below, the women's apartments being, as they often are, on the roof. The

father's anxiety was not due to any particular interest in the safety of his wife (except the very mercenary one which the expensiveness of another marriage in case of her death might suggest)—no! his anxiety was only lest the infant should be a girl.

Had the news of a daughter's birth been announced from the roof, all the assembled friends would have dispersed silently, no one would have ventured to congratulate the father on the event, and a grim and sullen acceptance of the provisions of an inexorable fate would have been the attitude of the different members of the family. But the moment it was heard a son had arrived, there were shouts of joy, with the playing of various musical instruments and the beating of drums, all of which sounds were exceedingly distressing to the poor weak mother. When the lady missionary, who had been a friend in need, looked for the baby to wash and dress him, she discovered that he had been carried out of the close little room in which he had been born to be held over the edge of the roof for the satisfaction of admiring friends and relations in the court below; and when, at her urgent request, he was brought back, he was shivering from this rash exposure to the severely cold air of a January morning in the Panjáb! A few minutes later a man came up and stood outside the door, and sang a long, low muttering song. In this song a man's name occurred, and the poor weary mother was told to listen for the name, as it would be her son's; then, again, the hapless infant was carried forth, without clothing, into the raw cold air, and presented with a sword.

The next day he was dressed very gaily with silk and embroidered cloths and jewels, and looked exceedingly unnatural and uncomfortable. For many days afterwards the noise and disturbance of the whole house with feasting and rejoicing must have been enough to make any sick woman there sigh over her hard lot.

We may now ask our readers to accompany us to another Hindu house. This time it is in the large and important commercial centre of the Panjáb, the city of Amritsar, and our *gári* must proceed cautiously along a narrow, crowded *bázár*. The stranger cannot but be struck by the industry of the people in front of whose shops we slowly move. Workers in ivory, winders of silk, silversmiths, goldsmiths, cutters of precious stones, cloth merchants, with their bales of Manchester goods, are as busy as they could be in London. But how different is the scene! Here there are no shop fronts and no glass windows—in fact, in the majority of cases, there is scarcely any shop. The industrious craftsman or merchant is not doing his work in large factories with thousands of ingenious contrivances, or keeping his books and doing his accounts in a closed private office; but, on a board which projects a little over the gutter at the side of the street, he sits on his heels in the midst of his wares, which he has not seldom to protect from being swept off the narrow board by a passing bullock *gári*, which looks rather too wide for the street. Leaving all these interesting people and their occupations, we say a kind word to the poor old man who sits on the ground at the corner of the narrow *galli* or lane we are going to

enter, where he has been employed for years in the business of patching up old shoes, to be bought for a copper or two by some customer a trifle less able to be luxurious than the passer-by who generously kicked these off and presented them to the poor old cobbler ; and then we send our servant on in front to give a *salám* to a *Zenána* lady. 'What,' exclaims the new-comer, 'ladies live in such places!' Yes ; our servant brings back *salám*, and on we go. The *galli* is very narrow and very dirty ; and it is so difficult to keep out of the gutter in the middle, and yet not come into too close contact with the houses on either side. This difficulty must be overcome in some places by just skipping from side to side, something after the manner of the goats whom we carefully try to avoid. Umbrellas are scarcely needed here for the sun, as the close high walls designedly keep it off ; but they are useful for beating off evil-looking dogs, and for helping us to balance when an unusually difficult piece of gutter has to be stepped over. It is all very well if we do not meet a buffalo, who leaves us hardly any room to get by, or a dozen or two of cows, who, though fairly friendly, are very likely to splash us by hurrying from fear of us into the gutter ; and, O mothers ! look at the children ; the uncared-for, miserable babies, the poor little toddling mites, nearly blind with ophthalmia and flies, and others, only a little older, with the faces of those initiated into all sorts of evil ! We wind and turn about out of one *galli* into another, and at length reach the doorway of a large house.

The part we should call the hall or entrance-

lobby is probably occupied by the family buffalo, and we may have to climb over this mountain before we are fairly in the house. From the lower court a servant shouts up the news that we have come, and up we go, the staircase having nearly as many difficulties and nearly as much want of cleanliness as the galli; but when we reach the top, there is the lady; and she really *is* a lady, so gentle and refined, you wonder how she *can* live in such a place.

She has five children, one a boy, and in him, of course, all the hopes of the family centre, and four pretty winning little girls. One is still a baby, and the ages of the other three range from eight to eleven. These children are so attractive, it has always been a pleasure to gather them together and tell them Bible stories, and sing hymns to them; they have always seemed to understand so nicely, and the eldest has begun to learn to read. The mother, too, has listened with interest, and shown much intelligent pleasure in what she has been taught, and, as to-day we find her so listless and indifferent, we are surprised, until we notice that there is evidently something troubling her, some burden on her mind. At last we venture to ask, 'Are you sad?—is anything the matter to-day?' The sympathetic words touch her at once, and the tears begin to fall. True sympathy is a very rare experience in the life of a Hindu woman. She sends away the wondering children, and then begins to explain as well as she can between her sobs: 'It is for these three little girls I am so troubled; they are all going to be married at once; we cannot

afford many different weddings, and we are of too good a caste to risk the disgrace of letting them remain unmarried much longer, so we are making the arrangements for all at the same time, and I shall lose three at once; they will go away from me, and never be quite my own again.' We ask *why* it must be, and the reply is '*custom.*' Alas! we can easily in imagination follow these babes into the houses of mothers-in-law, or into the horrors of possible early widowhood, and we feel, as we take the poor mother's hand, as though words fail; we can only sit by her in speechless sorrow and sympathy. Mothers of England, how can we comfort her? If only India were wholly won for Christ, sufferings such as these would never be heard of again; for before His light deeds of darkness would vanish, and in His blessed freedom the people would escape from the galling yoke of these cruel and foolish customs.

Let but every woman, who has proved that His yoke is easy and His burden light, *do all she can* to extend the knowledge of that freedom, and the day of the emancipation of India's mothers and daughters will be hastened.

The lot of sick children in India is very sad indeed. It must be remembered that in thousands of cases their mothers are but children themselves, and it would be unreasonable to expect them to understand their ailments, and how to nurse them. It makes a woman's heart ache to see the innumerable cases of fever, cough, sore eyes, lameness, and other deformity, all going uncared for, all calling dumbly for woman's help.

Pitiable, too, it is to see the little creatures loaded with jewellery, which is not unfrequently made of impure metal, of which the consequence is much suffering for the hapless victim. Sometimes, when pure gold is used for a nose or ear ring, its value excites the cupidity of some thief who meets the child in the street, and it is hastily snatched away, leaving, of course, a long tear in the delicate flesh; in such cases the chief anxiety of the mother, who takes or sends the child for surgical treatment, is not to allay the little one's sufferings, but only to make the part speedily fit to wear the ring again, as she firmly believes it will be a family disgrace if her child appears without it. The hair of little girls is plaited up into scores of plaits, and thickly covered with heavy jewels, which are hooked into the plaits and drag on the hair. One wonders how children can possibly endure such misery, but it seems they get used to it. In times of severe sickness there is generally real anxiety to do something for relief, and indeed the poor little sufferer becomes the victim of almost endless attempts to make it well, on the part of different advisers, and is frequently brought to an English doctor when the whole formidable array of leeches, blisters, cupping, etc., have done their worst, and the weary little face seems to plead, 'Oh, please let me die in peace!'

Of course, in multitudes of cases they *do* die; and let the Christian mother contrast what follows with the beautifully significant and hopeful ceremonies of our religion. As soon as any one among the Hindus is thought to be dying, the friends send for the Brahmins

and give them money, food, and clothes, and, if they can afford it, a cow ; this is called *Mansna*, and they hope by the due performance of this duty to obtain pardon for the departing soul.

If it can be avoided, no Hindu is allowed to die on a bedstead or in any upstairs room, and if this happen by accident to any person, it is believed he has committed so terrible a sin that he can never go to heaven unless his relations spend very large sums of money to get the sin forgiven, for which purpose they must go to one of the holy cities, as Benares, Mathra, or Pohowa in the Amballa district, where they offer to the Brahmans cows, clothes, and money, and repeat a particular portion out of the Ved *one hundred and twenty-five thousand times*, giving to a Brahman four annas for each time this portion is repeated !

A place is prepared on the ground for the dying person or child, by spreading 'phalgu' 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, which is filled with Ganges water, so that he may die with his feet in that holy water ; and close to his head they place a heap of wheat, cotton-wool, curdled milk, iron, and 'mahá' (a kind of lentil), with seven kinds of grain mixed together, and some fruit, while two little lamps made of flour-and-water paste, and having 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. All the time small quantities of Ganges water are occasionally poured into

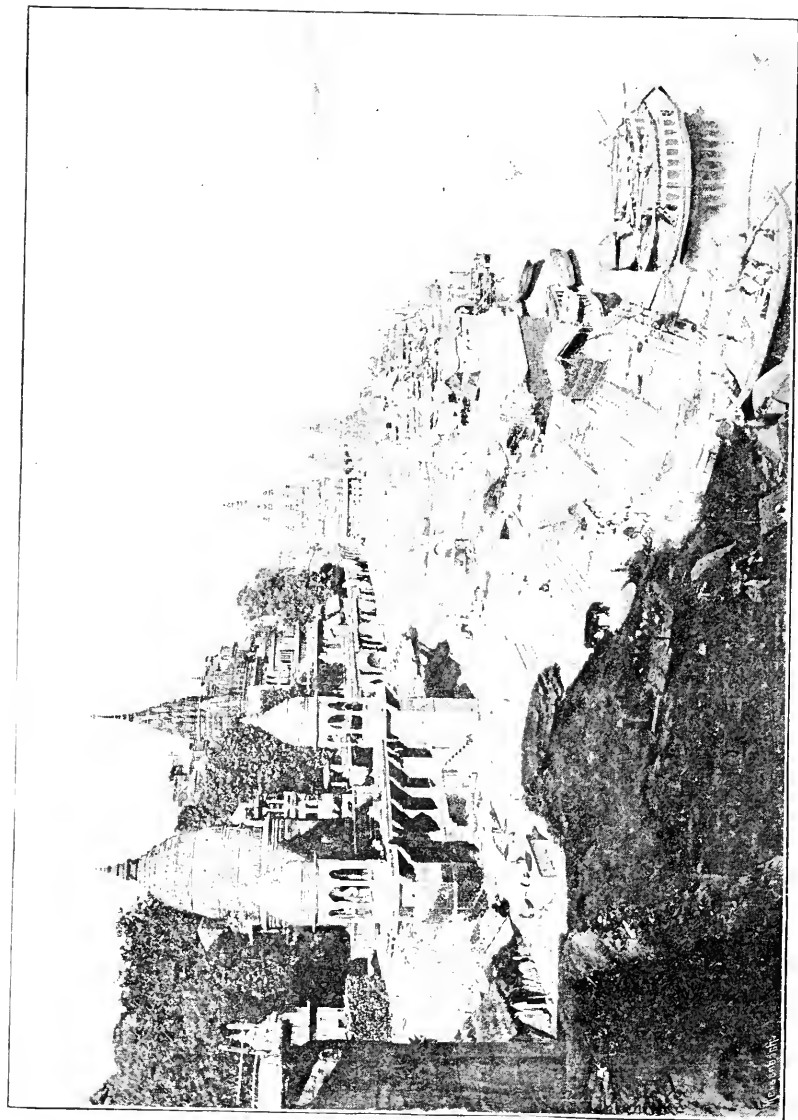
the mouth, and some one goes on repeating the name of *Rám*. These ceremonies have to be performed by the nearest relative, as a son for his father, a wife for her husband, and so on.

The dead body is called 'paret,' which means *without soul*, and whoever touches becomes unclean. After death, the next ceremony is called 'Kiriya.' This also must be performed by a near relative; it consists in drawing water for washing the body, and otherwise preparing for the burning. If a man performs this, he must be shaven, and go barefoot, and wear a new sacred thread; in the case of a woman performing it, in consequence of there being no sufficiently near male relative, she is not obliged to be shaven.

A class of Brahmans called 'Acháraj' have only to do with laying out the dead, and they are never admitted into any house except for this purpose, neither would any Hindu at other times touch them or have any dealings with them. An acháraj goes with the man who is to perform the ceremony of 'Kiriya,' and while this man draws water in a new vessel out of a well the acháraj repeats portions of the Shástras.

With this water the dead body is bathed, and it is subsequently dressed in accordance with certain rules. In the case of a married woman whose husband is living, she is dressed after death entirely in red, and must wear three chief jewels, one on the head, one on the nose, and a finger ring; if she is a widow or unmarried, she is dressed in white and has no jewels. A man has a simple white shroud and a pagri (turban).

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. For young married people a single plank is used. For older people there is a canopy over the bier made of bamboos, covered with red cloth, and decorated with flags and flowers, and cocoa-nuts covered with silver leaf, each married daughter ultimately getting one cocoa-nut from the bier of her parent. In the case of people who have lived beyond middle life or on to old age, there are music and rejoicing at the funeral. Before the procession leaves the house the acháraj makes four balls of barley and rice flour kneaded together; these balls are called 'pinds,' and they are for offering to different gods, but ultimately of course fall to the share of the performer of this pujà. He offers the first to *the god on the spot on which the person died*; this is done at the moment of lifting the bier. The second is offered to the god of the house as the corpse passes out at the door; the third to the god of the gate at which the procession happens to leave the city; and the fourth, on arriving at the place of burning, to the presiding deity there. On reaching this place, 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, ghí and gold-leaf being stuffed into the mouth, ears, and nostrils. Much ghí is also poured over the wood to cause it to burn more rapidly, and the friends throw sandal-wood and tulsi-wood on to the



BURNING GHÁT, BENARES.

pile, to show their love and respect. The body is then covered with the remainder of the wood, and the performer of 'Kiriya' sets fire to it. The acháraj next makes (or pretends to make) an astronomical calculation, and declares that before the year is over five of the family will die; whereupon five little figures are made of grass and thrown into the burning pile, and the acháraj prays to Shiv, the god of death, to avert the calamity.

The performer of 'Kiriya' next takes a thick staff and breaks the skull, the meaning of which is, that as the nearest relative, presumably the most loved, is the one who breaks the dead man's head, the affections ought not to be set on anything in this world. Finally every one picks up a small piece of straw, and the acháraj says, 'Whatever is past, is past; there is no use in weeping; such is the way of the world; the spirit has returned unto the God who gave it;' all the people then say, 'From where the spirit came, there it is gone,' and, breaking the straw in two, they throw it over their heads towards the burning pile, and all go away without looking back. They go to a tank or well, and wash themselves and their clothes. The performer of 'Kiriya' fasts all that day strictly, and for thirteen days eats only once a day; on reaching the house he has to put a little lamp on the spot where the person died, and this lamp is never allowed to go out for ten days. Near it a hole is dug in the ground, over which is suspended a porous cup containing milk and water, which during the ten days continually dribbles into the hole, an offering to the gods to induce them to protect the departed on his journey

through the spirit-world. Every morning and evening an acháraj comes and helps the performer of 'Kiriya' to make *pinds*, not of barley and rice as before, but of thirteen other ingredients. These *pinds* are offered to ensure the formation of a new body for the departed soul. It is believed to take 360 days (the length of the Hindu year) for the spirit to reach God; and either one Brahman is fed every day for a year, and given large supplies of clothes, etc., such as it is supposed the dead man requires, or else 360 Brahmans are fed at one time, and given enough for the wants of the deceased relative for a year.

Every evening the *Prohat*, or Brahman of the family, comes and reads about heaven and hell, from a book believed to have been written by a prophet who had visited both places. The *Prohat* gets every evening a lamp, and some milk and flowers, in order to secure a quiet night for the dead.

On the fourth day they go to pick the bones out of the ashes, taking with them milk and water, and offerings of sweets, scents, flowers, etc., placed on little plates made of leaves. The offerings are placed on either side of the heap of ashes, and *pujâ* is done to eight gods, and some passages from the *Shástras* are read. The eight gods are—(1) *Rájah Inda*, the god of the East, the greatest god, and the last to whom the spirit goes before reaching its final destination; (2) *Dhurram Rai*, the god of the South, the god of judgment; (3) *Barán*, the god of the West, and god of water; (4) *Kuber*, the god of the North, the god of riches; (5) *Chandar Má*, the god of

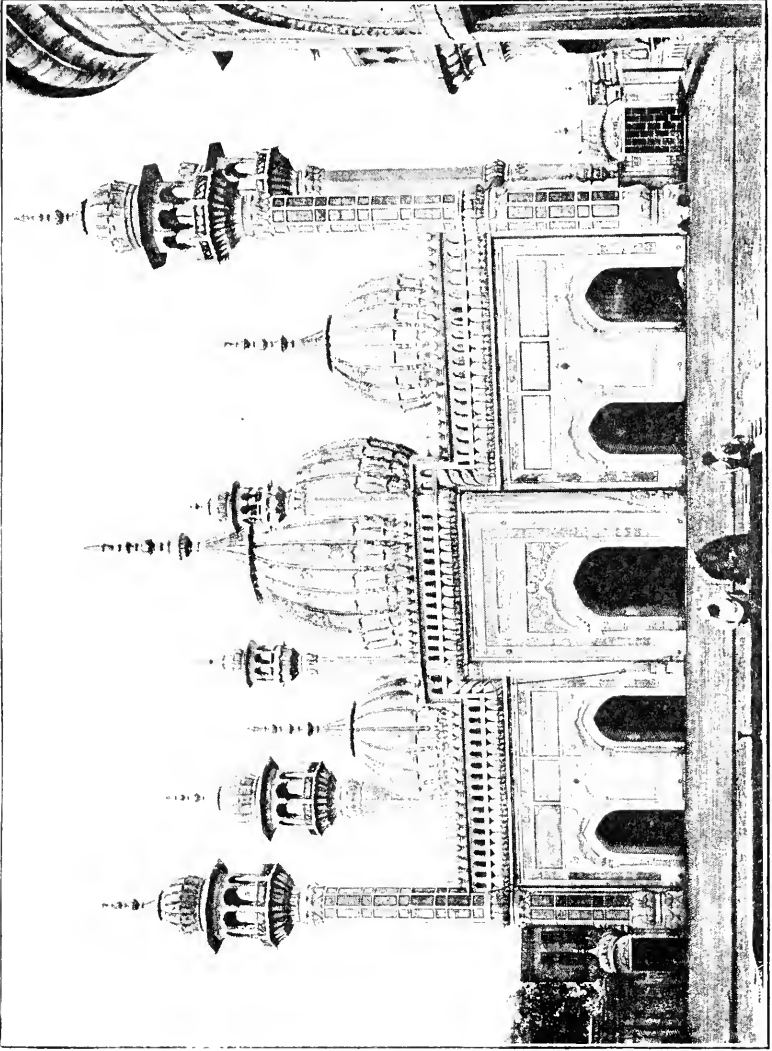
light ; (6) Shiv, the god of death ; (7) Agni, the god of fire ; (8) Paun, the god of air. The meaning of offerings being made to all these is, that each may in his special region protect the soul and help it on its way to Rajáh Inda.

The ashes are generally still hot, and the acháraj and performer of ' Kiriya ' have little spades to rake out the bones, and milk and water to cool them before picking them up, and collecting them in a cloth spread for the purpose. They next gather the ashes, and throw them into water, and the bones they keep in a bag made of deer's-skin, till they have an opportunity of sending them to be cast into the Ganges, which must be within six months. On the tenth day all the friends assemble, and take the little lamp which has been burning on the spot where the person died, and, going together to a far-distant tank, they float it on the water, and offer with it a pind ; this is the last act of pujà to Shiv, the god of death.

On the thirteenth day the acháraj comes to do the last pujàs to all the other gods. He makes three pinds (one for each of three generations), which are then cut up and mixed together, signifying that the departed person is now gathered to his fathers. He is then seated on a bedstead, and swung round and round, while he shouts, ' worthy of heaven.' He next makes twelve more pinds, one for each month in the year, and receives clothes and anything else of which the dead man is supposed to be in need, and departs with milk and water thrown after him, to signify, ' Never come again !' On the seventeenth day everything given to the acháraj is given over again

to the prohat, and a number of Brahmans are fed. Meanwhile, the soul for whom all this trouble is taken may pass, after weary journeyings, into any of the lower animals—a horse, a cat, a rat, even a snake! O religion destitute of comfort and joy!

If we turn to the Mohamedans, their ideas as to the departure of the soul from the body give an insight into the dark, comfortless, superstitious rites of *their* religion. There is a belief that after death the angel washes the knives with which he killed the person in any vessels of water which may happen to be in the room, so the relatives of the deceased run and empty all such vessels as quickly as they can. Some think that after death life still remains in the brain, and that the sound of weeping and wailing is heard by the dead; this idea incites the friends to make as much noise over their mourning as is possible. A hired woman is engaged, who stands in the centre of the room or court, all the relatives and friends of the dead person standing in a circle round her; she keeps on repeating the virtues of the deceased, and the others have to beat their breasts, tear their hair, and cry as loudly as they can: this goes on for forty days. There are also hired men and women who lay out the dead. From fifteen yards of new long cloth two sheets are made, one upper and one lower, and a long piece is torn off to make a shroud, while a little piece is reserved for a cap. When all this has been arranged, a third large sheet is provided for enveloping the whole body, and this is tied above the head and below the feet. A mixture of rose-water and camphor is thrown over the body, verses from



MASJID, OR THE MOHAMEDAN WORSHIPPING PLACE, AT AMRITSAR.

the Koran being all the time repeated in the ears, with the idea that something may be heard and remembered. The grave is dug with an excavation on one side within it, which must be 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. When the funeral is over, the mourners move away forty steps from the grave, and then all turn round and lift up their hands towards heaven, and pray for mercy. It is believed that at this juncture the angel Gabriel comes into the grave to question the dead. The angel is said to tell him to sit up (hence they are so particular about having the cave high enough), and to ask him, 'Whose servant are you?' If the dead man has been a good man, the answer is, 'The servant of God;' but a wicked person becomes frightened at the dreadful appearance of the angel, especially because his eyes burn like flames of fire, and in his terror he answers, 'Thy servant,' at which the angel beats him with an iron rod; and the same question is asked again, but he can give no other answer.

The Mohamedans believe that in their graveyards screams and groans may be heard, which are explained on the supposition that Gabriel is administering chastisement to refractory followers of the prophet. Hence the custom, as soon as the lights are lighted in the evening, for all devout Mohamedans to repeat some portion of the Koran and 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

Mohamed ; God is the only Lord, and Mohamed is the true prophet of God.' After this the angel leaves off beating, and goes away, saying, 'Rest in peace until the judgment day.' The poor are fed for forty days by the relatives of the deceased, in the hope that in some way or other he will be benefited by it.

The miseries of the women of India when they are ill are such as almost to surpass our powers of belief. Stories might be told of their treatment by hakims, and of the exceedingly great difficulty of taking into Zenána names any good system of doctoring or nursing, which would, perhaps, cause our readers to suspect exaggeration ; but it may be safely asserted that it is scarcely possible to overdraw the picture. It is, of course, an old and oft-repeated story how, when in some great emergency a doctor is called in to prescribe for a lady who lives in pardah, he is only allowed to feel her pulse and see her tongue through holes cut in a curtain or sheet held between himself and his patient ; but the following *fact* may be new to many readers, and it well illustrates the absurdities practised with regard to medical treatment, and, perhaps, also the very light esteem in which the life and health of women are held in India. A Hindu gentleman called an English doctor to prescribe for his wife. On arriving, the doctor found he was expected to write the prescription and tell what was to be done for the patient merely from the account he could get of her malady from other persons, and he was not to see her at all. At this he demurred, and expressed a wish to at least feel her pulse and examine her tongue in the way

above described. The reply was that it could not be allowed, and there was much discussion as to what had better be done. At length the husband said, 'My father and brothers and I have carefully considered the point, and we cannot allow you even to feel the pulse of *the lady of this house*' (a Hindu gentleman never says 'my wife,' unless he becomes extraordinarily anglicised); 'it would not be consistent with our ideas of our family honour; but we have thought of a good plan: you may feel the pulse of her servant-woman, and after that you can prescribe.' It need scarcely be said that no treatment was attempted. One almost smiles at the tyranny of customs which make men, otherwise intelligent and well-informed, act with such folly; but let us not forget that while we may laugh at such absurd conduct, to the poor suffering woman, who could not get the medical aid which she needed, and which was actually so near to her, it was no laughing matter. We know not what her malady was; perhaps she was in great pain, or extreme weakness, perhaps dying; perhaps it might have been possible to alleviate her sufferings, or, better still, save her life. But she was 'in pardah,' and the family honour was involved, and this consideration overcame every other; it is too probable she was but the representative of millions, who in the course of years are sacrificed for such absurd folly.

Many cruel and superstitious customs prevail, which add considerably to the list of sick and dying among the women. After the birth of a child, a Hindu woman is kept in a very small, close, dark room, with a fire⁵ (which

is generally placed under her bed), without any possibility of fresh air ; on the next day she is given a cold bath, and returned to her cell like a prisoner ! Small wonder that the mortality among young mothers is frightfully high ; indeed it seems as though means were devised for shortening their lives.

In some parts it is the custom in a time of great drought to propitiate the gods by pouring water over any unhappy old woman who can be caught in a galli, and who is too feeble to run away from her persecutors. The water is drawn up from a well in an iron bucket, and the performance ends with beating the old woman with the empty bucket. Of course, when she is allowed to go, no one attends to her or dresses her wounds, unless she is so fortunate as to be able to turn her steps towards the Zenána Mission Hospital, where she can be comforted and cared for. But Mission Hospitals are few and far between, and multitudes of the victims of superstition are quite beyond the reach of all the means of help at present to be found in India. How loudly do their sufferings appeal to every woman who has known pain *and* ease, weakness and sickness *with* kind care, and gentle, skilful treatment ; who can scarcely imagine what it must be to endure anguish without the least hope of any comfort, help, or relief, almost without the knowledge that there are such things in this world of sorrow !

We have often been struck by a hopeless, stolid kind of power of bearing misery which these women seem to acquire : it is only now and then that they give way to complaining of their undoubtedly hard lot. We have

seen the totally blind, for whom there was no hope in this world, come to a doctor fully persuaded that they would soon see, and on being told there was nothing to be done, they have risen to go without the least change in their faces, without a look of sorrow or disappointment, and have just said, 'Achchha, Khudá Ki marzi' (*i.e.* Very good, God's Will), or perhaps they have used the less happy expression, '*Qismat*' (Fate), and sometimes they will say, 'It is what is written for me,' referring to an idea that all that is to happen to a person is written on the frontal bone, or bone of the forehead, and that whatever is written there *must surely* come to pass, and generally in using this expression they touch their foreheads and say, 'Mere nasíb,' which means 'My destinies.' A cripple woman who was visited by some missionaries had been twenty years unable to walk, and she said she had only grumbled *once* all the time, and that was when her dear son, aged twenty-three, went out one morning strong and well, and was drowned in a sacred tank where he had gone to bathe. She said she did not mind being such a helpless cripple, if only God would let her go *once* to see the tank, and the place where her boy was drowned!

Many touching stories of the possibility of reaching the depths of these women's hearts, although they are so thickly crusted over with sorrow and sin as to be very hard, may be told by those who have been among them, not alone as missionaries, but as *medical* missionaries, to relieve their sufferings, to soothe them in pain and weakness, and then to tell them of the great spring and

source of the love which they themselves are trying, by God's grace, to pour out upon these sad, weary lives. A poor woman, very ill with cancer in the throat, was received into a Mission Hospital. She was a devout Mohamedan, and it was remarkable the fervour with which she used to ask a blessing before every meal, and give thanks after it, and never take her medicine without first lifting up her eyes towards heaven and saying, 'God bless this medicine, and make me well.' She was at first very angry when any allusion was made to the Saviour, and she said many bitter things in her ignorance against Him and His people; but she softened by degrees and began to listen to the story of His love, and at length she took His name in her prayers. She was wonderfully patient about her terrible disease, which continued its ravages until her head was nearly severed from her body, but she was *never once heard to grumble*. What a lesson for some Christians! She passed away confessing her faith in 'Jesus, the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners.' She was not baptized, but we quote her case as a proof that tenderness and pitying love in times of sickness are means of reaching and softening the heart, and that women in India, hardened as they often are by circumstances, are not beyond the power of the love of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But God works by *means*, and the channels of that love and grace it is His will to find among His rejoicing; free, and favoured daughters in Christian lands!

With one story of a poor girl brought into the fold

of Christ, we must close this appeal to mothers, and it is a story likely to touch every mother's heart.

Rahmo was a despised outcast, disliked by those who had charge of her on account of her helplessness, for she was a paralytic, and having no father or mother or other responsible relation, she was left in a large Civil Hospital to be never claimed again. In course of time she was discharged incurable, and her story was told to a Medical Mission lady, who was begged to take her in and have her nursed. She replied, 'We can scarcely take incurables into our little Hospital.' But it was urged that she had no home or friends, that she must end her days as a Mohamedan in a workhouse, where of course none would care for her soul, but that perhaps in the Mission Hospital she might become a Christian! So Rahmo was received into the Mission Hospital, which has ever since been her home. For nearly three years she listened day by day to Gospel teaching, and began at length to learn by heart many texts, the Lord's Prayer, and some hymns.

Her paralysis proved incurable, but her general health improved greatly, and her mind strengthened with good diet and happy surroundings, until at length she was quite intelligent and bright. In January 1884 she was, at her own earnest desire, baptized, after giving decided evidence of a true and lively faith in her Saviour. She was very happy about her baptism, and entered into everything in a manner which surprised those who had regarded her as somewhat weak.

The service was private, because of the great diffi-

culty of taking so helpless a person to church. The name Rahmo means mercy, and it was retained, as every one felt it could not be improved upon. God had indeed had mercy on her! After her baptism she developed much as a Christian, endeavouring to be very patient under her trying affliction, and to overcome a naturally bad temper. She also often spoke to those who were ill in beds near to her, concerning the love of God, and it was interesting to see her at the time of evening prayers, lifting up a finger and trying to silence the patients. In the next year she heard about the approaching confirmation of a Christian nurse and Bible-woman, living at the Hospital, and she said to the missionary who had been the means of rescuing her, and whom she always regarded as a mother, 'Mama, dear, I want to be confirmed; you know I *am* God's child, but I have never seen my Father's House.' After this touching appeal difficulties were put aside, and Rahmo was taken to church and confirmed, lying on her bed. There were about thirty other candidates, and the service was long, but the girl's devout 'Amen' was never wanting, showing how closely she was following everything that was said, and she was very solemnly quiet as the Bishop walked down the aisle and stood by her couch to confirm her. Probably none of those present had ever witnessed such a scene before, and none could help giving thanks at the thought that this happy girl was rescued from evil, misery, and death without hope, and brought to the place which she could truly call her 'Father's House.' Shortly afterwards

she was permitted to commemorate the dying love of her Saviour, the opportunity being offered to her of joining with a dying Christian woman in the Hospital, to whom the Holy Communion was going to be administered. She was very full of joy about this, and her quiet and reverent manner showed that she really understood the solemnity of the service in which she took part. She used on that occasion an extraordinary expression for one who had so lately been brought to know God, and who had been through the greater part of her life so ignorant. She said to young companions and others in the Hospital, 'Don't come and talk to me to-day; I want to be *alone with Him*.'

Truly in this dear girl's case we may rejoice over one who is 'a King's daughter.'¹ How overwhelming is the thought that there are thousands of such now neglected, despised, oppressed, and afflicted, who *might* be brought up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay, to have their feet set upon a rock, and to have a new song put into their mouths, even praise unto our God! Oh that we could rouse the women of England as with a trumpet-call, to engage in the blessed service of seeking them out and bringing them to Jesus! This work demands—

(1) *Enthusiasm*. Let us enter lovingly, feelingly into this enterprise,—engaging in it talents spiritual, mental, physical,—realising it to be something worth living for,—yes! and worth dying for.

¹ Since this was written Rahmo has passed peacefully away into her '*Father's House on high*,' on Whit-Monday, June 14, 1886.

(2) *Earnestness.* Let not mere enthusiasm expend itself in feeling without advancing to real earnest effort ; let collections, subscriptions, working parties, gifts for schools and Zenána pupils, lively interest, heartfelt prayers, all prove that in a work so near the Saviour's heart we are enlisting earnest energy. And shall not one still greater proof of this be seen in the readiness of England's mothers to give daughters to God for India ?

(3) *Endurance.* 'It is good to be zealously affected *always* in a good thing.' Difficulties will meet workers in India, and those who seek to help and encourage them ; but to all alike comes the message, so full of solemn warning and holy comfort, 'Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not.'

OF HIS KINGDOM there shall be no end.

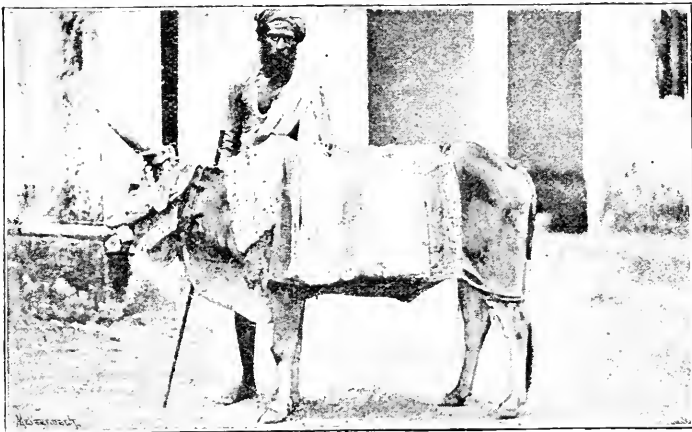
Prayer.

O MOST merciful and gracious GOD, the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST ; in His name we offer unto Thee our heartfelt praises for the many mercies and favours vouchsafed to us. We have light and comfort, knowledge and joy, the blessing of Christian homes and peaceful days, while so many millions of our fellow-beings are in darkness, ignorance, and sorrow, living without the knowledge of Thy great Salvation, and dying without hope.

By Thy grace we are what we are, and of Thy goodness and mercy we enjoy all these privileges. Accept our thanksgivings and praises, and enable us to show them forth in our lives ; make us more diligent in prayers, in gifts, in efforts for those who have not the means of grace and the hope of glory, and grant in Thy great mercy that many of Thy servants may be sent forth to heathen and Mohamedan countries, to carry good tidings, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to offer to the sad 'the garment of praise for the spirit

of heaviness ;' and do Thou give to those who shall be taught, the hearing ear and the understanding heart, so that Thy word may be unto them 'the savour of life unto life,' 'the power of GOD unto Salvation.' Let those who have believed and obeyed the Gospel be made stronger and stronger in faith, and enabled to live as very members of the body of CHRIST, becoming themselves, by earnest words and holy lives, missionaries to those still unsaved. Accept whatever we have tried to do in the name of JESUS to further Thy cause in the world, cleanse us and our services in His precious blood, confirm and strengthen us in every good word and work, establish Thou the work of our hands upon us, and let all redound to Thy glory.

Finally, do Thou advance the Kingdom and hasten the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and cause thy whole Church to be watching and waiting for Him, and so living and working for her absent Lord, that when He shall appear she may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming : for His only merits' sake who hath loved her, and washed her from her sins in His own blood, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever ! Amen.



SACRED BULL.



CHAPTER V.

A Call to Children.

*'A grain of corn an infant's hand
May plant upon an inch of land,
Whence twenty stalks may spring and yield
Enough to stock a little field.
The harvest of that field might then
Be multiplied to ten times ten,
Which sown thrice more would furnish bread,
Wherewith an army might be fed.*

*A penny is a little thing
Which e'en a poor man's child may fling
Into the treasury of Heaven,
And make it worth as much as seven.
As seven! Nay, worth its weight in gold,
And that increased a hundredfold.
For lo! a penny tract, if well
Applied, may save a soul from hell.
That soul can scarce be saved alone,
It must, it will, its bliss make known;
Come, it will cry, and you shall see
What great things God hath done for me!
Hundreds that joyful sound may hear,
Hear with the heart as well as ear,
And these to thousands more proclaim
Salvation in the Only Name.
That Only Name, above, below,
Let Jews and Turks and Pagans know,
Till every tongue and tribe shall call
On Jesus as the Lord of all!*



OW many times in every year do happy English children join in singing the beautiful words—

*'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His Kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.'*

We know that this hymn is really founded on Psalm lxxii., and is therefore full not only of happy thoughts concerning the future, but of actual promises of God. We who are His children are watching and waiting for the fulfilment of these promises. When we leave England and travel far in other lands, we soon begin to see that the fulfilment has not come yet. It is quite true that 'the Lord reigneth' over the universe, and orders everything that happens, and 'doeth according to His will;' but He is not yet reigning in all hearts, not yet being loyally obeyed by all men as their true and only King. Ah! if He were, what a different world it would be! Why, it would really be heaven! Think of what the hymn calls the sun's journeys. Of course we know that the sun does not journey at all; it remains quite still, and its 'rising' and 'setting' are only, as we say, *figures of speech*. But the meaning is, all round the world, and if we think round the world, our thoughts will have to travel across many countries where Jesus is not loved, where hearts are not yielded to Him, where lives are not lived for Him, where His wise and holy laws are not kept. There is one who is called 'the God of this world.' We all know who that is; he is blinding people's eyes, so that they shall not see the Holy King Jesus. All the object of missions to the heathen is 'to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.' Every Christian is distinctly called to help in some way in this great work, even children having their part to take. To His disciples Jesus said, 'Go ye into all the world and preach

the Gospel to every creature,' and every Christian child is His disciple, and therefore under the obligation to obey this command. There is no part of the world which does not present this work for us to do. Calls come to us from China, from Japan, from Africa, from the isles of the seas, and from the vast country called India, where our beloved Queen rules as Empress. How interesting to children to read and hear accounts of these countries, of their inhabitants, their customs, their scenery, their many strange and wonderful sights; and how much must the interest increase when they are told that they, in the earnestness of their young hearts' love for Jesus Christ, may be allowed to help in beautifying with His holy religion countries now charming in many other ways, but having all their beauty spoilt, only because 'man is vile'! It is particularly about India that we have to tell our young readers, and, out of all India's millions, more especially about the mothers and children. How difficult it is to enable those who have never seen to understand how vast is the multitude of girls and women in India! Suppose you could have them pass before you as you sit reading, and suppose that one girl or woman should pass you every minute, it is a fact that it would take more than 250 years for all to go by. Only try to imagine the days, weeks, months, and years slowly passing away, and every minute, without any cessation, one woman or girl coming and going, until two and a half centuries were ended! We can scarcely imagine this, but if we try, it will enable us a little better to understand how many many mothers and

daughters there are in India. You shall now hear one of the foolish stories which poor, dark Indian mothers teach to their little children as *sacred history*.

The Hindus believe that many lakhs¹ of years ago God had a desire in His heart to have some form. He was then, they say, moving like a Spirit on the face of water. When this desire came it was soon gratified, and the Deity took the form of an egg. In that egg a desire arose that it might come to some other form, and this desire also was gratified, and *Brahma* was produced from the egg. Afterwards there came from Brahma—Vishnu, and from Vishnu—Shiv. These are called the three in one.² Brahma is said to have had two wives, Sawithri and Gayatri. He had seventeen sons. Of these, one—whose name was Kershop—had a number of sons who were giants, and a number of sons who were gods of the sun, water, moon, stars, and so on. Vishnu's wife was Lachmi, which means light, and she is the goddess of wealth. She has one grand day in the year, when a great mela or fair is held in her honour. This fair is called *Diwáli*. On that occasion one sees all Hindu houses grandly illuminated. Do you wonder how the illuminations are managed? Indian houses are built with very many little niches all over their outside walls, and when it is desired to illuminate, a small vessel made of earth and filled with oil, and having a floating wick, is placed in every niche. When all these little *chirágs*, as

¹ Lakh=100,000.

² The letter represents this combination, the little dot at the top being chosen as picturing God, or the Essence of all things.



they are called, are lighted up, the effect is really quite grand. What a lesson, by the way, for all missionary workers, great and small! Each chirág is so very small and insignificant by itself, it would seem as if its light were scarcely worth having, but when every one is alight and shining, there is such a blaze of light! The Hindus believe that every house which is well lighted up at the time of the Diwáli fair will be visited by the goddess Lachmi, the goddess of wealth, who will show her pleasure by enriching the inhabitants.

Shiv had two sons, Swamkártak and Ganesh. The name of the wife of Shiv was Parbatti. Both Shiv and his wife agreed to make one son each of clay. Parbatti said hers would be by far the better-looking of the two. She succeeded in making a very handsome son, and then she waited in the Himalaya Hills (whither she had gone to get clay of which to form him), until Shiv came to bring the son whom *he* had made, to show her. She put Ganesh outside the door to keep watch, and to let no one in. When Shiv arrived, Ganesh, not knowing who he was, tried to keep him out, and when Ganesh resisted, Shiv killed him with an instrument called a tarsul.¹ When he told Parbatti she cried very bitterly, and to pacify her he promised to bring her son to life again; this he accomplished by killing an elephant, and taking its head and fixing it on to the shoulders of Ganesh. Soon after this Vishnu called all the gods, and promised to appoint as Guroh over them, or teacher, the one who would go round the world most quickly. Ganesh knew that he could

¹ The tarsul is an instrument in this shape Ψ .

never accomplish this feat, partly because he was very stout, and partly because of his elephant's head. He therefore took a Tulsi-leaf, and wrote on it the name of God, and walked three times round it. He then remained worshipping God while the others went round the world. Vishnu was so pleased with this pious act that he set Ganesh on the Guroh's throne. All Hindus frequently praise Ganesh; indeed the devout among them do nothing without repeating some of the worthy acts of this deity. You shall now hear why it was the Tulsi-tree leaf upon which he chose to write the name of God. The Tulsi is a tree about three feet high, and it has green flowers and pods. It is said that Shiv was walking near the place where the Ganges falls into the sea, and he made a son by his own great power without knowing it! It was left in the sea. The god of the sea saw it, and was very glad, because he had no child, and he thought this was his. He sent for Brahma, and told him the child should be his grandchild, and he was to name it. Brahma took the child, but it pulled his beard till the tears came into his eyes. He called it *Jullundur*, which really means belonging to the water.

When Jullundur grew up, he performed 'tapish,' or certain acts of a religious devotee. For this he received a blessing from Vishnu, with the promise that no god would be able to stand before him in war. After getting this blessing he went and made war with all the gods, and of course overcame them, and became the lord of the world. He then built the city called Jullundur, in the Panjáb. All the gods grew very jealous, and they begged

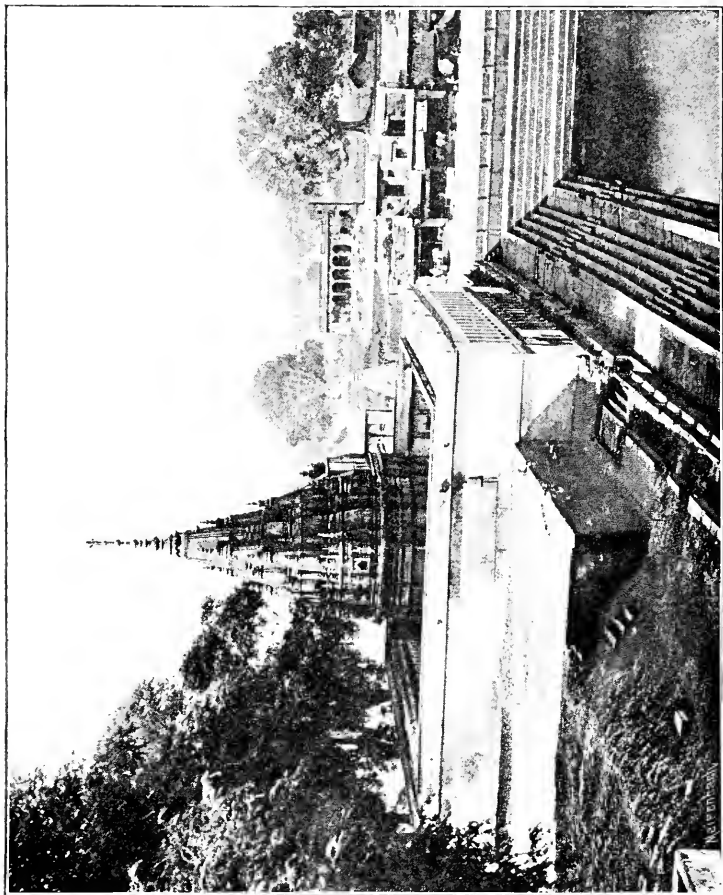
Vishnu to release them from this homage. Vishnu said he could do nothing; but at the very urgent petition of the gods he agreed to go himself and fight with him. Ultimately, he was so pleased with the bravery of Jullundur that he promised to do whatever he asked. In reply, Jullundur asked Vishnu to come and stay with him, and Vishnu agreed, and after staying some time he told all the gods that only Shiv would be able to destroy Jullundur. All the gods engaged a faqír named Nárad, to go and entice Jullundur to offend Shiv. Nárad went to Jullundur, and said that he had better go and take away Parbatti, the wife of Shiv, because it was such a pity for her to be condemned to live always in the house of the god of death, who covered his body with the dust of dead bodies, wore a necklace of human skulls and jewels of living snakes, his food being the deadly poison called datura. This advice ended in a war which lasted hundreds of years. Vishnu then advised Shiv to make Jullundur more angry by stealing his wife, and he even undertook to go and do it for him! The wife of Jullundur was named Brenda. Brenda cursed Vishnu, and said he was to become a Shalagrám—a kind of stone,—and Vishnu cursed Brenda, and said she was to become a Tulsi-tree; and now every year devout Hindus spend thousands of rupees to celebrate the marriage of Shalagrám and Tulsi. The Shalagrám is the round, smooth stone which is worshipped in the Golden Temple at Benares. Now, isn't this a more absurd story than 'Jack and the Bean-stalk'? But these things are believed as part of the religious faith of the Hindu, and little children worship these

cruel and wicked gods instead of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You shall now hear the story of Ráma and Sita. Ráma was one of four sons of a great king, and these four sons had been granted to that king in answer to his prayers, and in acknowledgment of a solemn religious rite which he had performed to please the gods—namely, the sacrifice of a horse. Now it happened that the king had more than one wife, and so the mother of his eldest son was not the same as the mother of his second. The mother of the second son had once so greatly pleased the king that he promised to give her anything she might ask, and accordingly she made request that the eldest son, Rama, should be banished for fourteen years, and that her own son should be king instead of Ráma, after his father's death. The poor old king was so grieved that he died of a broken heart. Ráma took with him into exile his wife Sita, because, she was so good, she refused to remain at home at ease while he was wandering about alone. A younger brother of Ráma's went with him also, to help him to bear his misfortunes and take care of his wife; and the brother who came to the throne was very kind and affectionate, and tried to find Ráma, and get him back to reign instead of himself. While Ráma and Sita were journeying about, it happened that Ravana, the wicked demon-king of Ceylon, met them and ran away with Sita, who in great terror found herself carried off to the island of Ceylon. Then Ráma toiled night and day to deliver his wife Sita, and lo! troops of monkeys came to his help, and made a long bridge of

their own bodies all the way across from the mainland of India to the island of Ceylon, and over this bridge Ráma walked, and so entered the place where his wife was a prisoner, and, after hard fighting, slew the demon, and carried Sita off in triumph. Then, shortly afterwards, he began a prosperous and happy reign. Now all these imaginary characters are looked upon as gods, and everything a Hindu does is sure to be prefaced by the name of Rám. You cannot pass along the crowded streets without hearing people saying on all sides, and on every kind of occasion, 'Rám, Rám.' The monkey also is a sacred animal, because of the story of the bridge of monkeys; and it is thought to be a religious act to feed monkeys. At the famous Monkey Temple at Mirat they may be seen by dozens in the trees, even in the public road which leads to the temple, and they look so fat and saucy, as if they were very well kept, and allowed to have their own way.

Every year there is a Hindu festival, at which the whole of the story you have now heard is acted like a play. Two boys have to perform the parts of Rám and Sita, and it is said that parents very much dislike their children to be chosen for this play, but they do not like to refuse, lest the wrath of the gods should come upon them; however, they always expect that the boys who personate Rám and Sita will be dead within a year, and it is said to be a fact that this fear is generally realised, and the boys do die in a few months from the time of the play; some people think this is because of the very bad paint with which their bodies are daubed for the occasion. Poor children of India!



MONKEY TEMPLE, AND BATHING GHÁT, BENARES.

Your sweet hymn goes on to say—

‘ For Him shall endless prayer be made,
And princes throng to crown His head ;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.’

And now you know a little about these very silly stories, you can imagine how sad the missionaries feel who often, as they pass along the streets, see tiny Hindu children putting their hands together in prayer before images of Shiv or Vishnu. These ugly idols may be seen at the corners of streets or in little buildings made on purpose for them, having iron bars in front, through which their cruel-looking eyes seem to glare at every one who passes. It is a wonder the children are not frightened, and it is terribly sad to see them putting their little hands through the bars to scatter sweet flowers before the idol, and never passing by without bowing to it.

Every story connected with Hindu worship is wicked, so that all that the little children hear is evil, and they have no good examples set before them to make them try to do right and be good. All round the rooms in Hindu houses there are gaudy pictures of scenes from the life of such gods as Shiv, the destroyer, or the god of death. These pictures are so ugly, one wonders how the women and girls, who live always in their own houses and never go out, can bear to be constantly surrounded by them. Surely English children would run away as quickly as possible. There may be the whole story of Rám and Sita, with the dreadful demon King of Ceylon, and the

bridge of monkeys; or the story of the Káli, the very wicked goddess, trampling on a dead body, or a picture of the ugly Ganesh with his elephant's head—which by the way has only one tusk, because he got the other knocked out when he tried to help Rám in war!—or there may be a great variety of other idols drawn and painted, to be gazed upon, and talked about; idols with *no* arms, idols with *four* arms, idols with tails, idols with grinning faces, showing large red tongues, and teeth ready to devour. O dear children! think of your little Hindu brothers and sisters, with nothing prettier, nothing nicer, nothing happier than all this to look at. Think of having these ugly pictures instead of your beautiful *Bible* picture-books! Sometimes English boys and girls have sent illustrations of Bible stories, all the way across the sea to these children of India. Well would they be rewarded for any trouble or self-denial it has cost them, if they could see some little *Parbatti* or *Ganeshde* (for they get named after their gods) eagerly searching through the book on the knee of the missionary lady, and with earnest eyes, and quickly-pointing fingers, asking, 'What's this? oh! who's that?' and then listening to the beautiful story of Daniel, or of Joseph and his brethren, or best of all, of the holy Child Jesus, and then slowly turning thoughtful eyes to the hideous painting on the wall. Perhaps the child is thinking she never heard such sweet things in *her* religion, and she would not like to tell her lady friend the naughty, naughty things she has heard about those gods. As the visitor leaves she will be followed to the stairs by the child—

who, if in good position, is married, and may not go out—and there will be the earnest, pleading little voice, ‘Come again soon, and please bring the picture-book!’ Then what do you think is the wish which often comes into the heart of the missionary lady?—‘Oh that the dear children in England would send more books and good pictures for these little mistaught ones, and also ask God to prepare them and send them forth when they grow older, to carry glad tidings of great joy to the boys and girls of India!’

There is one sect or division of the Hindu religion which professes to have no idol-worship; this is the religion of the Síkhs.¹ The Síkhs are Panjábis, and the man who founded this sect was named Bába Nának, who lived about 400 years ago. The word *Síkh* means disciple. The chief place for this religion is Amritsar, in the Panjáb, where there is the famous Golden Temple. It is a curiously-shaped building in the middle of a tank, and is reached by a fine bridge of white marble. It is built of marble, and overlaid with gilt. It glitters very much in the sunshine.

Within there is a book called the Granth,² which contains the wise sayings of Bába Nának, and is the chief sacred thing the Síkh possesses. Indeed the people treat it with so much reverence, and say so many prayers around it, that it is really their idol, and so they are not free from idolatry, as they say they are. The book lies on a heap of beautifully worked shawls, and is covered over by one upon which words from the

¹ Pronounced *seek*.

² Pronounced *Grunt*.

Granth are embroidered in coloured silks. There are always several priests in attendance, and they have to take great care that no insect alights on the book, and that no harm happens to it in any way. At night it is carried from the place where it remains all day, over the marble bridge, to a room on one side of the tank, where it is put carefully away (put to bed, we might say!).

Sweet flowers are constantly scattered on the cloth, above the book; candles are kept lighted, and a kind of music goes on incessantly, performed by means of guitars and drums. At a place called Kartápur, some forty miles from Amritsar, there is another Granth, which is declared to be the original one, and at Taran Táran, a large important village or rather country town, about fourteen miles from Amritsar, there is another Golden Temple and another Granth, and these are believed by some Síkhs to be superior to the temple and the book at Amritsar. On some particular feast-days great multitudes of people go to Taran Táran to worship and to hold *melas* or fairs; on such occasions the road, for the whole distance of fourteen miles, seems to be one blaze of colour. Many who can afford to ride do so, but the majority walk, and they form one long stream the entire way, so that driving is difficult, even though the road is wide. The bright colours are the *pagris*, or turbans of the men, and the skirts of the women. Panjábí women wear skirts, and they delight in bright colours, particularly in red and yellow. When they all reach Taran Táran they seem to do nothing but

hustle each other about in the narrow streets, and go to bathe in the sacred tank. On the eve of every new moon this bathing takes place, and they believe that the sins of a month are thus washed away. Probably thousands of those who go know little or nothing of their own religion, and have not the least idea why the fair is kept, but to idle about in a crowd and talk, which is generally called 'seeing the tamásha,'¹ is a great pleasure to these people. We cannot help smiling as we think of the water of such tanks being supposed to make people clean ; we should rather imagine they must wash again at home after bathing in it ! There is a belief that the waters of the tank at Taran Tاران cure leprosy. This superstitious idea arises from a popular legend, which tells that once upon a time, in the reign of Guroh Arjan Singh, a poor couple lived at Taran Tاران, and the husband was a leper ; his whole body being full of the terrible disease, he was unable to help himself in any way at all, and he could not walk. His wife, instead of neglecting and despising him, as many would have done, used to carry him about on her shoulders, from door to door, to beg their daily bread. One day this woman became very weary of the burden, and she left him at the side of a small stagnant pool. As soon as she went away, he began to think what a trouble he was to her, and he felt very sorry, and at length resolved to make her life easy and happy by drowning himself in that pool. With much difficulty he managed to drag himself to its side, and then closing

¹ Seeing the sight.

his eyes, in the full assurance that he was about to die, he threw himself into the water. To his great astonishment, he found strength come into his limbs, and, as he opened his eyes, he saw that he had been changed into a perfectly healthy man! He then crossed the pool, and sat on the other side, to await his wife's return, and to find out what her feelings would be when she no longer saw her sick, miserable husband; no doubt he expected to see her relieved to find him gone! But when she came, she supposed he had drowned himself, in a fit of despair, and she bitterly blamed herself, and lamented having left him there, exclaiming that, alas! she had been the cause of his death. Then he told her the story of his miraculous restoration to health, and they went home together, very happy, and amply rewarded for their self-sacrifice and devotion to each other.

After this the Guroh Arjan Singh had the pool made into a fine tank, three miles in circumference, and the Golden Temple was built. A small portion of the tank is partitioned off for women's bathing, and here on the feast-days the lady missionaries go, and, getting quite inside the women's enclosure, tell them of the precious blood of Jesus Christ which truly cleanseth from sin. The English Government has a Leper Asylum near Taran Taran, because it is found that lepers are willing to go and live near a village which has such a famous tank, and as many as are well enough will walk every morning to the Golden Temple, a distance of a mile and a half, in order to bathe in the sacred water.

In this asylum three hundred people can be received, and generally there are about two hundred and seventy, among whom there are sure to be several children.

Two years ago there were six Christians in that leper asylum, and chiefly by their means six other poor afflicted creatures became inquirers after the way of life. The inquirers were taught every week by missionary ladies living in Taran Taran, and at last, after being questioned by the Church Missionary clergyman of the same place, in the presence of all their fellow-lepers and the heathen doctor, they were baptized. Their answers to the question were very plain and good, and every one could distinctly hear their brave and open confession of faith in Jesus. They all seemed very happy, but especially one woman who was so ill as to have to be baptized while lying on her 'chárpaie.'¹ A few weeks later this poor weary sufferer passed away to be for ever well and happy in the presence of her great Healer. A chapel has been built for these Christian lepers by the 'Lepers' Society in England, and services are held weekly by the missionary or the catechists. A teacher has also been appointed for them, and they have a Bible-class every day, and are being prepared for confirmation. Not very long ago three more from among these lepers were joined to the Church of Christ. It is very sad and terrible, this plague of leprosy; there is nothing else so dreadful, and, as you know, it cannot be cured; it goes on spreading over the body until piece by piece it is destroyed, the hands, the feet, the nose, and all other parts dropping

¹ Bedstead—it really means anything with four legs.

off, and the suffering and weakness growing daily worse. It is a very touching and beautiful sight to see the Christians among this terribly afflicted crowd, gathered round their teacher, listening to the words of everlasting life; and good it is to hear them sing in a very simple rude fashion, but so heartily, hymns of praise to Jesus Christ, and repeat their belief in God the Father who made them, God the Son who redeemed them, and God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies them. Shall we not often pray that many more of these outcast and suffering people may be brought to Jesus and be made happy and good?

Concerning the Golden Temple and tank at Amritsar, it is interesting to know that the sacred water gives its name to the city, for 'Amrit' means everlasting life, and 'sar' means a spring; the whole name therefore is the Spring of Immortality. Whenever you think of this name you may turn your thought into the prayer that God will so bless the preaching of His Word in this great Sikh city, that it may become indeed a fountain of life and blessing for all the thirsty and perishing multitudes of the surrounding country.

In the religion of the Mohamedans there is no worship of idols, for it is the first article of the Mohamedan creed that 'there is no God but God.' Five times every day each Mohamedan is supposed to pray; that is (1) before sunrise; (2) at noon; (3) before sunset; (4) during twilight; and (5) when night has begun. At those times, wherever he may happen to be, in the field, or garden, or shop, or street, he must take off his

shoes, and, spreading out a little piece of carpet on the ground, turn his face towards Mecca (which is called the Kibla, or proper point of adoration), and perform his devotions. In the act of prayer he has to put himself into several postures, so that if you watch him you will see him now standing erect, now sitting on his heels, now kneeling, now lying prostrate on the ground. There is often contention among the Mohamedans as to these postures, some thinking one way right, and some preferring another; and serious disputes have been known to arise on the question of praying with the heels close together or a little way apart!

Any one who has lived in an Indian city must often have heard the early morning 'call to prayer.' This call is chanted from the tops of the minarets of the Masjid, or worshipping-place. The followers of Mohamed also have rosaries, or strings of ninety-nine beads, each bead representing one of the ninety-nine names of God; and they say 'God is great' or 'God is good,' or some such expression, a certain number of times, counting them off on the beads. At the end of the regular time of prayer, a man may sit cross-legged on the ground, and in an easy position, and go on praying for anything he specially wants, keeping his head a little bent down. But let us not forget that in all this making of prayers there is no real approach to God; because there is only 'one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus,' and *Him* the Mohamedans entirely reject. The only reason why the prayer of a Christian is heard and answered, is that it is offered 'through Jesus Christ our

Lord,' and this is just what is wanting in the prayer of the Mohamedan.

There is for the Mohamedans a great day of sacrifice, which is really founded on the Great Day of Atonement of which we read in our Bibles. On this occasion all who can afford to do so slay a sheep or goat, the blood of which is sprinkled on everything in the house, and then its flesh is distributed to the poor. For a few weeks before this day one sees a sheep or goat getting fat outside the door of every Mohamedan house, except the very poor.

Another verse of our beautiful hymn has something particularly to do with the ladies and little girls who live in Zenánas, because they are really *prisoners*, and often very *wearry*, and it says—

‘ Blessings abound where’er He reigns :
 The *prisoner* leaps to lose his chains,
 The *wearry* find eternal rest,
 And all the sons of want are blest.’

Have you realised that many thousands of women and girls in India never go outside the doors of their own houses, except, perhaps, under the cover of night, to creep along over the roofs of two or three houses into one belonging to a near relative.

One lady, whose husband was a religious teacher, and who was anxious to be thought exceedingly grand, was visited by an English lady when she was ill. She was found to be living in a very small room, with no windows, and opening into a tiny, square court, on the opposite side of which there was another wee dark room, where

she kept her cooking things, and had her bath! She was the mother of grown-up sons, yet she had never been out of that house since she was married. Nothing at all could be seen from her very limited dwelling-place, except a small strip of sky, no tree or distant view. She was considered so grand that the missionary lady was told the family had been a long time making up their minds to ask *her* to enter their house! When it was suggested that perhaps a little fresh air might do the sick woman good, it was answered, 'Oh, she goes on the roof on very hot nights to sleep, but she must not go up till it is quite dark, and she must awake and come down as soon as the cocks begin to crow; and if it is a moonlight night, she may not go at all!' Little girls begin this life of captivity long before they ought to have finished going to school, and many an Indian woman has never seen a tree since she was so small that she cannot remember it.

When these prisoners are ill, their case is very sad indeed, for there are few lady doctors in India, and gentlemen are not allowed to see and give medicine to Zenána ladies. We cannot really understand how miserable all this is, because *we* have had such happy lives; but we can try to imagine the sadness of the existence of Indian ladies, and then we can see better than we did before the great need of sending missionaries to that great country, who shall be able to tell the *captives* of *freedom*, and to invite the *wearry* to have *rest* in Jesus Christ.

Will not all children who have heard of the wicked religions and foolish idols of the heathen world, and of

the sorrows and sufferings of women and girls who are kept like prisoners, while we all may have liberty and joy, try to be, even while they are young, missionaries— (1) By *doing* something—some needlework, some painting, some writing, *anything they can*—to help those who go to India to preach the Gospel ; (2) by *giving* something, as they are able, for this work of God ; and (3) by *praying* often that every word of our beautiful hymn may come true for India—yes, and for the *whole world* ; and

‘ Every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honours to our King,
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen ’ ?

‘ Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not,
for of such is the KINGDOM of Heaven.’

Prayer.

O LORD GOD, our Heavenly FATHER, we have been taught that Thou art more ready to hear than we are to pray, and art wont to do more than we either desire or deserve ; Pour down upon us now the abundance of Thy mercy, and teach us how to ask of Thee the things we need, and how to pray for others of whose needs we are told.

We thank Thee for Thy great goodness and grace to us in causing us to be born in a Christian land, and to enjoy so many blessings.

We ask Thee to send blessings like ours to the children in India of whom we have heard, to pity them in their great darkness and ignorance of Thee, and to send missionaries to teach them the good and the right way. Grant that many children there may learn of JESUS, the SAVIOUR, and may grow up believing in Him, and loving Him.

Have pity also upon all heathen and Mohamedan parents, and grant that they may not hinder their children from learning the way of

salvation, and that they too may turn from idols and from the false prophet, to serve Thee, the only true God.

Bless whatever Thou dost enable us, Thy children, to do or to give for Thy sake, and grant that while we send the Gospel to others, we ourselves may be living holy, happy lives, loving Thy service, and seeking to please Thee in all things, for His sake Who became a little Child for us, and left us an example that we should walk in His steps, even Jesus Christ our Saviour and our King. Amen.



COLLECTOR OF FIREWOOD.



CHAPTER VI.

Bringing the Sick to Jesus the Healer.

*'Thou, to whom the sick and dying
Ever came, nor came in vain,
Still with healing word replying
To the wearied cry of pain,
Hear us, Jesus, as we meet,
Suppliants at Thy mercy-seat.*

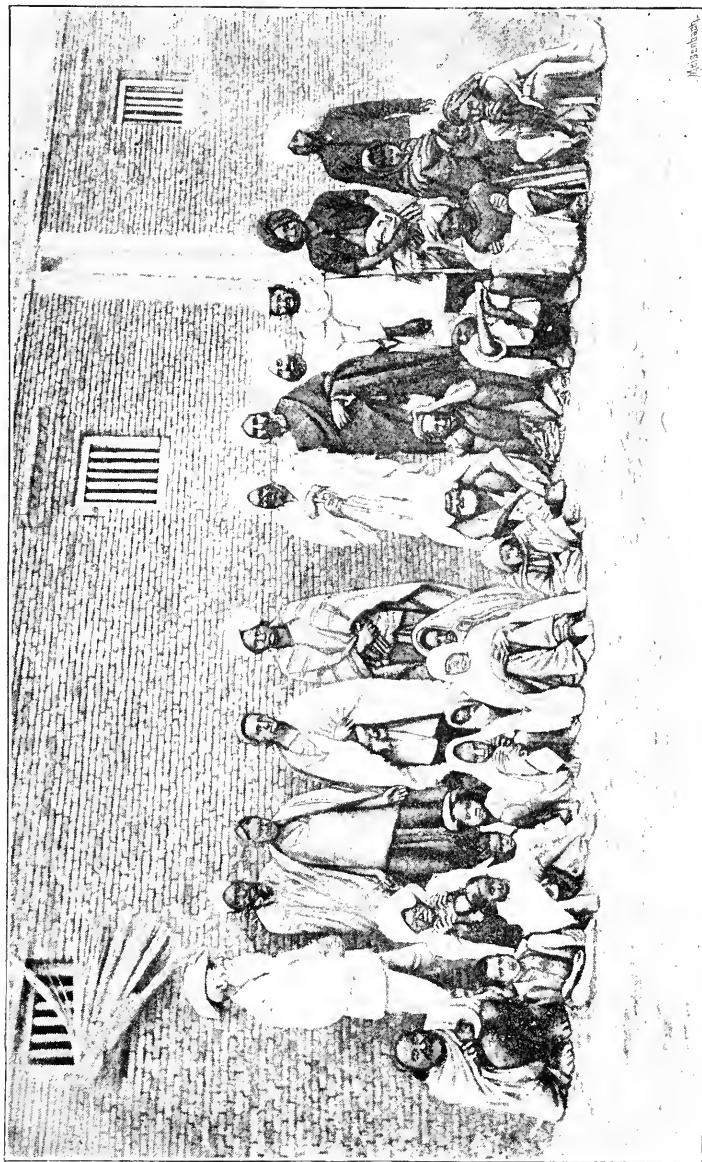
*Still the weary, sick, and dying
Need a brother's, sister's care ;
On Thy higher help relying,
May we now their burden share,
Bringing all our offerings meet,
Suppliants at Thy mercy-seat.*

*May each child of Thine be willing,
Willing both in hand and heart ;
All the law of love fulfilling,
Ever comfort to impart ;
Ever bringing offerings meet,
Suppliants to Thy mercy-seat.*

*And may sickness, sin, and sadness
To Thy healing virtue yield,
Till the sick and sad, in gladness,
Rescued, ransomed, cleansed and healed
One in Thee together meet,
Pardoned at Thy judgment-seat.'*



PREVIOUS Chapters have endeavoured to give the reader a *general* idea of the needs of India's Women, and of the efforts which are being made to bring the light of the Gospel into their dark homes. It will now be in-



GROUP OF LEPERS AT THE LEPER ASYLUM, TARAN TARAN, PANJAB.
(European and Panjabi Doctor present.)

Myersbach.

teresting to show some *details* of life and work amongst them, and first especially with reference to the attempt to reach their hearts, and win them for Christ by means of ministering to them in times of physical suffering and weakness. Let us pay a visit to the Zenána Medical Mission in the fine old Sikh city, Amritsar, in the Panjáb, in the month of June. It happens that the workers in this Medical Mission are themselves located in a Zenána. It is not very easy to describe such a building to any one who has never seen Oriental houses. Its chief features are a large quadrangle paved with red brick, and having rooms arranged (upstairs and down) on its four sides, and a great expanse of flat roof, where one can get a nice morning and evening walk and a beautiful view of the city. Instead of the many doors of a bangalow, there is only one entrance, making it quite possible to live in *pardah* if one likes; and the visitor is amused at night to see the servants locked out, and the beds of the ladies being all prepared on the roof and in the quadrangle or courtyard, every one thus sleeping out in the open air with perfect security. An occasional dust-storm may disturb the general peace; and if it should happen to be succeeded by a few thunder-claps and heavy rain-drops, the sleepers are compelled to roll up their simple and easily-managed beds, and run to the shelter of their rooms. These storms come very suddenly; and it is curious how, after a few experiences, one gets quite clever at finding slippers, securing one's watch, and rolling up the bed almost without waking. To those who have not lived in India it is

almost impossible to imagine a dust-storm. There is generally an unusually hot day, with a sense of stifling and oppression in the air. Heat, indeed! not the temporary 85° *in the shade*, which now and then makes such a sensation in London, but the constantly abiding degree of 98° or 100° in all one's rooms, even the coolest, and even at night. Through this heat the wise worker in India will go steadily on, thinking and saying as little as possible about it, and finding in constant employment for mind and body the most effectual charm against 'feeling' it. When a dust-storm is coming the heat is for a short time at its very worst, and then all at once the air seems full of dust; grit, *hot* grit, is flying into one's ears, eyes, mouth, and nose. If it is day-time there is darkness, partial or entire; and at the end of the storm one will find all books, musical instruments, and other precious things covered very thickly with dust, and altogether in a state which it seems impossible to find words to describe. Such a storm may last a few minutes or several hours, and during its course, whether long or short, there is a perceptible and very acceptable fall in the temperature. When it passes over quickly in the night, the disturbed sleepers will probably return to the cool court or roof in preference to remaining in their rooms without *pankahs*. Sometimes the night is a series of disturbances from such causes, and from calls into the Hospital; but He who has called to the work can and does give strength for all that it involves. Hark! just as all are settling down again to sleep, there is a vigorous knocking and hammering at

the door. 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 shaking contrivance on four wheels, with wonderful propensities for letting its doors fly open and its wooden shutters fall down with an alarming bang, but it has the merit of generally going at a great speed, of which one is very glad, in spite of a few qualms of conscience at the thought of the horse, or, in a *first-class gári*, the *horses*, presumed to be a pair, but one almost invariably two hands shorter than the other.

On the roof of the *gári*, or possibly on the box, with his legs crossed, sits our driver, who wears no livery! One of the first things which strikes us in the stillness of the June night 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 or 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 pleased; perhaps we ourselves might not be particularly patient under the circumstances!

We at last arrive in the dark at the end of one of

those narrow, tortuous gallis, which are so very characteristic of cities in India. It is a curious experience following our guide and feeling our way, now by the corners of houses, now by the edge of a well, now stumbling on a sleeping cow, and again disturbing slumbering human beings. We wonder whether we shall ever get there, and think with dismay of the return journey! But 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 Mohamedan, and she is carefully hidden away in an upstairs room, which is crowded with relations and friends. They all cover themselves up, and appear very shy, but gradually come out of their chaddars, and venture to talk to us as the men retire and it begins to be evident to their minds that we are women. There is so much confusion and loud talking that it is almost impossible to make ourselves heard. It is a fact that on such occasions, especially if there is the least fear of the illness proving fatal, as many as from forty to fifty women will be present. It requires great patience and some tact to get to understand all the circumstances of an illness, and 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 or mother-in-law begins to explain, she only complicates matters, and makes everything even more difficult to understand. 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 was given. But presently it happened that 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, and saying to the friend, 'Why, you told me she never had a child,' the answer came very promptly, 'Oh yes, she had a *girl*, but what is that?'

Well, by degrees we calm the excited and perhaps frightened women who have come crowding to show sympathy with the patient. It is not easy to get them to leave the room, and no roughness or harshness would answer our purpose, even supposing it were right under any circumstances. The most likely way to secure quiet is by coaxing them like children, and perhaps taking some loud-voiced old grandmother, prevailing upon her to sit down quietly, and assuring her that if we hear her speak again we shall be unwillingly obliged to send her out of the room. The mother-in-law needs a great deal of persuasion to leave off crying and fussing, and allow necessary investigation to be made as to the cause of the illness; and amid many difficulties the medical part of the visit is at length accomplished. Then comes the question, 'What about the true missionary part?' In the confusion and semi-darkness of the room, with the woman suffering and alarmed, and with friends anxious for the treatment to begin, it would seem cruel to compel them to listen to reading; indeed, it could not

be attempted, yet some word from Him who sent us must be given, or we shall be unfaithful to our commission. The simple message is therefore quietly whispered to the sufferer, 'God is love, He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; if you seek Him, He will be found of you; if you pray to Him, He will hear you; if you repent of sin and ask Him to forgive, He is very gracious and full of compassion; He gave His own Son to die instead of us sinners.' 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. It is nice to lie down and be quiet after this curious night experience, but we are not to have this pleasure long. At 5 o'clock the bearer arrives, and every one must scramble into her room. At a quarter to six he rings the chhoté hárzari bell, and at this meal all the family meet. The family consists of medical missionaries and their helpers, to whom we get introduced as the day goes on. They are all going forth to a long morning's work, and chhoté hárzari is a very necessary institution. It really means *little breakfast*, but it should answer to the ordinary English breakfast if missionaries wish to live long lives in India; many breakdowns might be traced to starting to work in the morning with insufficient food. There is no time for talk, and besides, it is better that each should be occupied with quiet thought before starting to the duties to which God is sending her. At 6 o'clock there is

family prayer in Hindustani, and a hymn of praise and the Psalms for the day are very inspiring and refreshing for those who have much which is depressing in their work. By half-past six we are setting out with one of the medical missionaries to see her round of patients, and to visit the Branch Dispensaries.

At the door she is stopped : a man is waiting whose daughter is in the Hospital, and he is determined to take her out. He evidently intends to accomplish it by a process called 'diqqing' or giving trouble, *i.e.* worrying, and repeating applications by letters and otherwise, over and over again. This often happens, we are told, even when a patient has been most willingly brought into Hospital by her friends, and has stayed perhaps only one night, giving, of course, no opportunity of cure. Sometimes it is a case in which good nursing is absolutely needful if life is to be saved, and where there are no comforts or resources of any kind at home ; but all persuasions are of no avail, and the poor woman is taken out of her nice comfortable bed and carried away. We wonder very much at this, and are told that a not unfrequent cause is that all the relatives of the family have met together, and decided that unless the patient is quickly brought home, her husband—or whoever may be the offender who took her to a hospital—shall have his nose cut off, and also that, when eventually she does return, the same terrible punishment will befall her ! (This is no mere threat, as we are told that our missionary friends have seen in the *bázárs* persons upon whom it has evidently been executed. Many years ago it was

indeed a common mode of expressing anger or jealousy to bite off a person's nose, and an operation for restoring it was hence *the* thing in surgery which the native doctors understood and practised well before European learning and practice were introduced.) In our present case the impatient father is persuaded by the lady doctor to leave the patient a day or two longer; and with a few kind words and promises that he shall hear if there is the least chance of her dying, so as to give him time to avoid the disgrace of death occurring in a Christian house, he goes away fairly contented. We drive first to the house of some Patháns, and on the way, in the *gári*, we hear a curious story about their family. Six years ago one of them came to call the medical lady to see some one in his house. She went at once, forgetting to take with her a woman servant, as is very customary when going for the first time to a *Zenána*. When she found that the *gári* was proceeding to a lonely house a good way out of the city, she became a little uneasy, and on arriving and finding it surrounded by a large garden and high wall, she hesitated much as to whether to enter. She asked that her *chuprassi*¹ might come in also, but this was declared impossible, so she decided to be brave and go in alone.

As she went further and further into the large rambling old house, she again felt a little uncomfortable, but after almost resolving inwardly to go no further, she suddenly saw to her relief some women servants evidently expecting her, and they took her in to the

¹ Messenger.

Bibis. These Bibis were dressed in most wonderful fashion, in a curious mixture of European and Oriental dress. They were so much painted that they looked like wax dolls, and their hair was adorned with feathers and imitation flowers in bright colours. Tea was prepared for the visitor, which was exceedingly unpalatable, but which had to be taken, as it is said, if you once refuse the hospitality of an Afghan, you have made an enemy of him ; but he will never do an injury to any person who has eaten or drunk in his house. Very little could be done in the way of reading or talking to these ladies, as they were utterly unwilling to listen, and in subsequent visits the missionary was often disheartened in her efforts to persuade them to let in the light into their poor dark hearts. The great *power of darkness* is terribly felt in such cases, and the utter powerlessness of any human worker ; and it is fearfully sad to see people steadily closing their eyes against light and their hearts against love, and refusing to listen to those whom God has sent.

After a few visits, when her services as a doctor were no longer required, the missionary was requested not to come again. Nearly four years passed away before she was brought into contact with this family once more, and then it was a very strange circumstance which brought them to her notice. It was an intensely hot day, and after a long and busy morning all in the house were resting a little, when suddenly she heard a great scuffling and noise outside her room ; the door was thrown violently open, and an Afghan girl of about twenty years of age sprang at one bound on to her bed. Her hands were

torn and bleeding, and she was very excited and frightened. She had let herself down from a high window in her own Zenána by means of a rope, which had thus cut her hands. She was trying to escape from the cruel treatment of a step-mother. She had run down the short street and entered the first large house she saw, utterly bewildered at finding herself for once in her life in the outside world. 'O Miss Sahiba, pity me, help me! I have no one, my father is away and I am unprotected; if I will not be wicked, my step-mother will beat me. I am come to you because I heard you talk and read in the house of my relative so long ago, and I believe you will be like God, kind and good. Oh, do let me always live with you! I am weary of my life.' Such were the words, eagerly, earnestly poured out by this poor escaped prisoner as she sat on the English lady's bed. It soon became necessary to make some arrangements for returning her to her friends, for the house was getting surrounded by angry-looking Patháns, and the rumour had gone forth that *to become a Christian* this girl had run away to the missionaries. But too well they were aware that she had no idea of this, in fact knew nothing at all about religion. She had *only* taken refuge with them from a persuasion that those who loved and served God must be kind and good to her: we say *only*, but it is impossible not to think how deeply important it is to give no contradiction in our lives to this kind of persuasion. How much do Hindus and Mohamedans notice professing Christians! How humbling for English people the consideration of the question: *What*

might India have been now if all representatives of Christianity in that country had been able by the grace of God to stand the test of the criticism of the Heathen and Mohamedan world?

The affair ended by the superintendent of police coming to keep order in the street, and two magistrates coming to question the girl as to whether she wished to remain with the Miss Sahibas or not. Her answer was that she knew nothing about Christianity, but she wanted protection from cruelty; and this being promised by some relative of her father's, she very unwillingly allowed herself to be taken away. Not long afterwards she was married, and she now lives a few streets further off, and is happily settled. She is visited sometimes by missionaries, and will listen when read to. She comes occasionally under cover of night to visit her sisters, and from the window whence she once took her dangerous leap, she may sometimes be heard saying, 'Salám, Miss Sahiba,' as her friends of the Christian Zenána pass down the street. It is indeed exceedingly rare for Zenánas to have outside windows, but the Afghans do not seem so strictly particular about pardah as other Mohamedans. After seeing a patient at this house, and staying for a little reading and talk with the only Bibi here who really knows Hindustani, we proceed to visit the woman who was so ill in the night. Alas! on arriving at the door we find it closed against us, and we receive the information that the patient is gone to her mother's house. 'Yes,' says our friend, the medical missionary, 'this sort of thing is not at all uncommon; it is because of the few words

spoken in the night about the love of God; they are afraid of our teaching.' It is impossible to help exclaiming, 'What a pity to have had so much trouble for nothing!' But the answer is: 'The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it.' So we proceed cheerfully to another Zenána, and before we reach it our readers shall have the rest of the story as it came to the knowledge of the missionaries long after the visit of that night. Some months later the doctor lady was again called to that galli, and this time it was to a patient with only some trifling ailment, soon prescribed for.

She was sitting alone, and her visitor noticed a pile of books at her side and inquired if she were a scholar. She laughed, and seeming greatly pleased, began to read aloud. 'But when did you begin?' she was asked. She then told her story in the following words, which it is better that the reader should have in their own naturalness and simplicity: 'Don't you remember, Miss Sahiba, coming one night to that house in this galli, where my cousin was so ill? Your medicine made her quite well, but they would not let you see her again because of your teaching, for our people are great bigots. I was there that night (I had gone after dark over the roof), and I heard what you said to my cousin about the love of God, and I thought, "*Why do these English women know so much that we do not know? it must be because they can read!*" and from that time I had a great desire in my heart for reading. After some days I told *him*,¹ but he

¹ The polite way to speak of one's husband.

only said, "Oh, nonsense, women are mischievous enough by nature, and what will they become if they learn to read?" I was very sorry, but I determined to try again—he is fond of me, and often lets me have my way—and so I waited, and one day when he was in a very good temper, I said again, "I do want to learn to read." Then he said, "Very well, call a lady to teach you;" so we sent a servant and asked a mission lady to come, and she came, and I began to learn to read. Then every one in my family said it was a disgrace, and when I began to learn some stitches in English wool-work, they cried shame on me, but when I could read the first book they said "How clever!" and when I had worked a pair of slippers for *mine*, they all began to want to work slippers for *theirs*! And then we asked for more teachers, and one after another of my relations began to learn to read, and now there are several houses in this galli where they are learning regularly; and, O Miss Sahiba! it's all through me, and the words you said that night to my cousin.' This intelligent and interesting young woman is reading God's Word now. Stories like this set one thinking. How mighty is the work which is going on! In spite of all the weakness of workers, how many encouraging assurances they get that the efforts they make are being blessed, and how many a word spoken in humble dependence upon God, and with prayer for His blessing, is just lying in some heart, germinating like seed, to give to the world some day the vigour and beauty of a full-grown plant!

But we are stopping before the door of a Hindu

Zenána, and the lady within has sent us a salám. We enter, and find her so nice, so refined and lady-like, it is hard to look at her and believe that she is not a Christian, she *seems* so like one! Yes, there is every reason to hope her heart is yielding to the sweet influences of the Gospel which she is reading constantly, and that she is one of those hidden, faithful ones who will come out some day and confess before men their allegiance to Christ. How did she come to be visited by missionaries? Several years ago a little boy in a family closely related to hers swallowed an oval glass bead, and was taken, after going the round of the hakims, to the medical-mission lady, who was fortunate enough to discover the place in the air-passage where the bead was lodged, and who, as she had not the necessary instrument, advised the father to take the child to a surgeon in Lahore, celebrated for his skill. The child was in great suffering and distress, but he came back next day relieved and happy, and brought the bead to present to the doctor lady! She indeed had done a very insignificant and easily-performed part, but the gratitude of the family knew no bounds, and ever after, when they had sick women or children among their relatives, they would bring them for treatment, even from great distances, seeming to be always quite confident of cure, though sometimes they had to be assured it was impossible.

In this way ten different families in this one connection came under missionary influence, and as they were all educated and intelligent people, even the women being generally able to read, it is hoped that they understood and will remember much of what they heard.

One who was brought a long distance in order to be treated, said, 'Come every day as long as I stay here, and always bring your Bible.' And she added that her husband had read religious books of all other systems, and had read the Bible also, and though still a Hindu, he said that *it was the only book that satisfied the soul's thirst*. Three other ladies are reading regularly up to this time, of whom one is the intelligent and interesting woman in whose house we are calling. It was she who sent a most touching and pathetic message by her missionary friend to the women of England, a message which was delivered to a few; but oh that its thrilling words might reach and stir the heart of every Christian woman in our happy country! She had been reading three times a week, and she began to beg that she might be visited for instruction every day. She was reluctantly told that this could not be managed for lack of time. She looked sad, and asked why more ladies from England did not come. 'Have you,' she asked, 'no sisters and cousins in your own land?' 'Yes,' was the reply; 'many, very many.' 'Do they read your Bible?' was the next question; and when she was assured that they do, she again asked, 'But do they *believe* it?' 'Yes, certainly,' said her visitor, beginning to see now the drift of the questions. 'But this which I have just read,' persisted the poor Hindu captive; '*this*,' pointing to St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20—'do they believe that Jesus Christ said this? You call Him your Master, and say that this was His command, do *they*? Oh, then *why—why do they not come?*' Then after a pause she said, 'Miss Sahiba, you are going

for a little while to England: will you tell your sisters and cousins that a Hindu woman said, If only so many English ladies would come that every Hindu woman could have a visit every day, I think all the Hindus would become Christians.'

It was a large request, but it contained the truth, which perhaps she who made it little realised, that to win the women is to win India for Christ. If we cannot do all she asked, we can do something; and many more of these hidden, longing, believing hearts may be comforted and blessed, if in response to this pleading cry, only a few of England's daughters will rise and consecrate themselves to lifelong obedience to the command of Him whom they *call* 'Master and Lord.'

We stay a little while with this nice woman, and read to her, and are quite delighted with her evident interest and thoughtful questions, and then we are soon on our way to another Hindu house, where we see the wife and daughter of a merchant. They are very pleased to welcome us, and they listen attentively to the reading when the medical part of the visit is over, and it is evident they have learned something, and are desirous to know more. When they were first visited, and told in very simple words that God gave His own dear Son to be the Saviour of the world, they both asked with tears in their eyes, 'Oh, why did no one tell us this before?'

The next visit we pay is less encouraging; the patient grumbles and says she is no better, and when we examine the medicine-bottle, we find none has been taken; and then there is a *charm* tied round her forehead, consisting

of a passage from the Koran, written on a piece of paper which is folded up in a very small, hard knob, and tied on tightly. Other signs are not wanting that some mode of cure is being chosen in preference to that of the Christian lady. The people are polite, but they look at each other in a meaning way, and although they make loud professions of entire confidence, and say they mean to come at once for some different medicine which is promised, our friend tells us they will do nothing of the sort, and that this will be the last opportunity we shall have of visiting them. She then makes one attempt to read God's Word, but the patient at once has a violent fit of coughing, a child begins to be noisy, some women present talk loudly, and in various ways it is rendered altogether impossible to do anything but retire. This is a regular defeat, but we are reminded of "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not," and away we trudge down the narrow galli, and turn our steps towards another house.

This must be the last for the morning; the patient is a poor Cashmiri! she has been very ill indeed, but is much better, and the gratitude of the whole family is really touching. As soon as the medical part of the visit is over, we propose singing a hymn, and the woman says, 'Oh yes, sing my favourite—"Even me."' But we are begged to wait while more people are called, and soon we can count forty sitting crowded together in the little courtyard. They are all poor people and very ignorant, and as they listen first to the hymn and then to the story of the Prodigal Son—many of them with tears in their

eyes, and earnestly exclaiming at the end, 'Come again soon,' even following us down the galli to the gári with the words, 'God bless you, come again,'—we cannot help thinking of 'To the poor the Gospel is preached,' and 'The common people heard Him gladly.'

We call next at the Dispensary, near the Golden Temple, and find another missionary busily at work seeing poor patients, and another with several waiting ones gathered round her and listening to the story of the love of God, and being charmed with her 'bája' or musical instrument. We are told that this Dispensary is in a very good position for catching women who come to bathe in the sacred tank at the Golden Temple, and that some six years ago, one of the workers feeling sure it was a most desirable spot, prayed while walking up and down in the bázár that God would give them a house *in that place*. It was a most unlikely quarter for Christians to be favourably received, and for a long time it seemed as though no house or room could be obtained, and meanwhile, in other bázárs more distant from the Golden Temple, many suitable places offered. However, it was never found possible to make arrangements for them; some difficulty always arose, and the workers went on waiting and hoping till at last a man asked them to rent a small house of his, close to the Golden Temple, in fact *on the very spot where it had been prayed for!* Many Sikh women attend it, and hear of the true and only cleansing for sin. We may give one story as illustrative of the kind of women who come, and the influence under which they are brought. One of the

young Christian ladies trained at the Hospital as medical missionaries writes : ‘A merchant’s wife often attended this Dispensary, not for medicine, but on purpose to hear the reading. She was a very strict Sikh, and knew the Granth¹ very well; she often argued with us about the Christian religion. She would bring her little Granth wrapped up in a very clean handkerchief, and read to us some portions of it, and try to prove that Jesus is one of their gods, only we call Him by a different name! She had great respect for her Granth, and always kept it carefully in her lap, or if she had occasion to place it anywhere else, would ask us to let her put it on the table, because it ought to be *on a high place*. We liked her and found her interesting: she was a very dignified woman, not given to gossip like others who come to the Dispensary. She came for a very long time to listen, but she did not get convinced, and at last she left off coming. Then it happened that one summer night when she and all in her house were sleeping on the roof, thieves got in and stole everything of value they could find; the grief was very great to her, for they were rather rich, and she fretted so much that she became ill. She did not send to us for medicine because she had begun to be afraid to listen to the Word of God, and for six months she tried Hindu hakíms, but became no better. We heard she was ill, and resolved to go and see her. She was pleased to welcome us, but said she dared not take medicine from Christians. We told her that if she dies because she will not take medicine, it will be just as

¹ Pronounced Grunt—the sacred book of the Sikhs.

if she had killed herself, and God will be very angry with her. Then she agreed to have our medicine, and in a short time she was quite well, only very weak. During the illness we visited her every other day, and we used to read and sing to her. At first she tried not to hear, but at our fourth visit she asked us to read, and began to listen thoughtfully. At last she said that she believed there was no other way to get to heaven but through Jesus Christ. She said she could no longer believe in her own religion, but she *must* keep to it, as her husband is a kind of priest, and keeps near his house a little Temple in which is a copy of the Granth. We often used to see men and women come there to worship, and they would drink dirty water from a little pool just outside the Temple. In this water a holy faqír had washed himself, and then it had run down a very dirty drain into the pool. We asked the sensible Síkh woman how she could believe that such water could wash away sin? She said that not only washing in the water, but giving alms to the faqír was necessary for salvation; then we asked if giving of alms was necessary, to whom does the faqír himself give? She replied, "To no one;" then we told her that in that respect his followers are *holier and safer than himself!* She said nothing: she was much shaken in her belief in her old religion. We sent her away to her mother's village for a change of air; and she told every one she met about our Hospital and our teaching. She came back well and strong, and told us she had promised the women of that village to ask us to go and have a Dispensary there. Afterwards she said

she felt all we had taught her was true, but how could she ever confess to her own people that she had begun to believe in Jesus! Cases like these are such as we should remember often in prayer.'

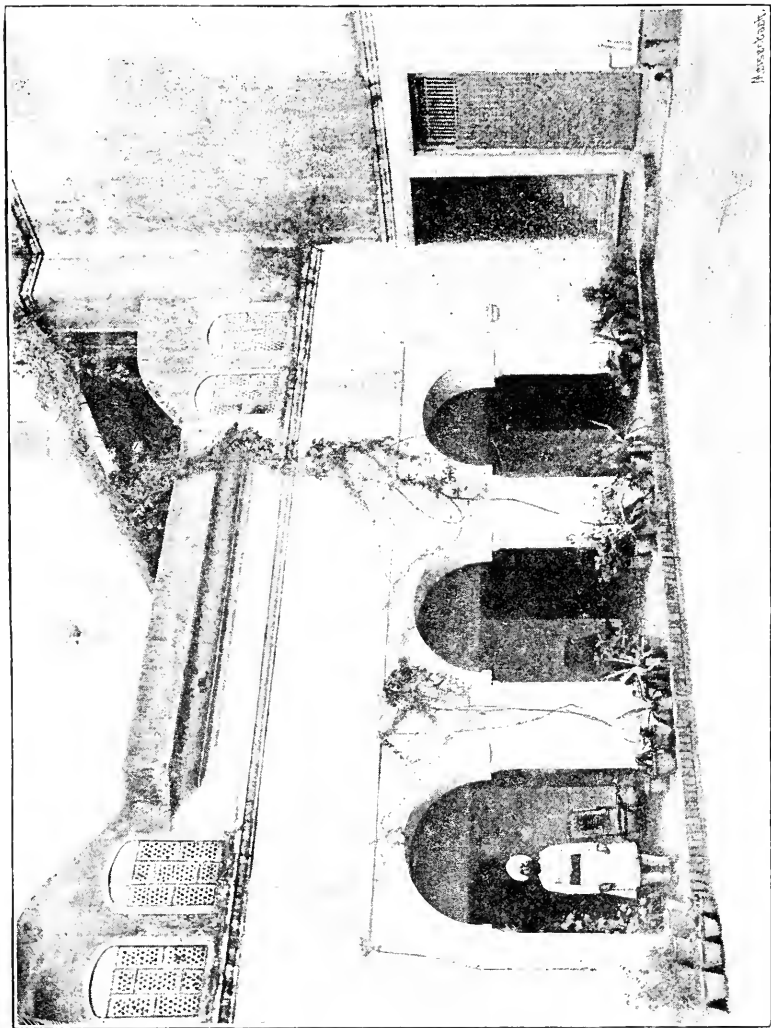
After this we go on to another Dispensary in a quarter of the city thickly populated with Cashmiris, where we find again a medical worker very busy, and another waiting-room with its little party of listeners. We are told that these workers have all been paying visits just as we have, and in this way several people are seen at home every day, making the total number of visits in the year amount to over three thousand. When we reach the Hospital we find out-patients waiting to be seen, and it is very interesting to watch them one by one. Some of their own stories and descriptions of their illnesses are intensely amusing, but are scarcely of a kind to be published in any except a medical book. Their gratitude is in many cases very touching—many little offerings, as sweets, etc., being brought and laid on the table; and the forehead having been touched by the hand, the same hand is laid on the Miss Sahiba's feet. The difficulties in the way of making them understand about a spoonful of medicine, and *when* it is to be taken, are very great. They 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 they have not thus seen the sun till after noon!

One poor woman came to get medicine for her mistress, and she supposed that the proper thing to do

was to pretend it was for herself, and so cleverly did she personate the sufferer, sighing and groaning, and holding her hand over the painful part, that she was really taken for the patient ; and she certainly was not well herself, and looked quite thin and ill enough to be in need of the medicine. She was given it with due directions, and a mustard plaster ordered to be put on, and kept on for twenty minutes, while she waited. At first she submitted quietly, but when the plaster began to burn, she rather naturally tried to run away ! At length she said that she had really come to get medicine for her mistress, and had thought she could only get it by thus simulating the illness. Of course, she was not believed, deceit being here so terribly common ; however, she was accompanied home, and her statements were proved true. She rushed in, very excitedly, telling the people whose servant she was that never again would she go for their medicines, for at the Dispensary the nurses put mustard plasters on messengers ! She was much laughed at, and then the real patient was seen. In this curious way visits were begun to one of the most interesting Mohamedan families that had been met with at all, where ultimately the Bibis listened attentively to the regular reading of the Bible, and became quite attached friends of the missionaries.

In the out-patient room at the Hospital, as at the Dispensaries, the reading and singing of the Gospel message is heard, and those who have some time to wait for medicine and attention get a golden opportunity of hearing.

Perhaps some may wonder how much of the seed sown in this often very unpromising soil is likely to take



Museo de la...

COURT OF ZENÁA DWELLING-HOUSE, ATTACHED TO SAINT CATHERINE'S HOSPITAL.

effect. We can only say, 'The Day will declare it.' We may give an instance, to show, *as far as it goes*, that impressions are produced. A poor Mohamedan woman came in a time of extreme agony and peril, to ask for an operation almost sure to be fatal, and saying, 'I want you to do it because I should like to die in a Christian house;' and she gave as her reason, 'Four years ago I heard in your Dispensary that Jesus Christ loves sinners, and I am a sinner; I believe He loves me, and died for me, and I want to die in a house where they love Him.'

The operation could not save her life, but it lengthened it by two days, and enabled her to die quietly and without pain, instead of in cruel agony. She passed away praying to Him in whom she said over and over again she believed.

The out-patients seen, we go into the wards. There are some sick ones lying here who are new and strange, one or two just being admitted, and finding it very hard to be obliged to part with clothes which have not been taken off for weeks! Some are very ill indeed, and take little or no notice of us; some are better, and have evidently much to thank the Hospital for; and they look so happy and comfortable, as they sit up to enjoy their late breakfast. And there are some children whose history we learn; they are poor little waifs who have been rescued and baptized, and are now being taught and cared for. One of these is Catherine Lachmi; her old name was Lachmi, which means *light*, and is a pretty name, so at her baptism it was retained. She came of her own accord a year ago, and begged to be kept and taken care of; she was suffering with scrofulous disease

of the ankle, and although everything possible has been done, it is not cured, and there is every reason to fear that her life will be a short one. She seems about ten or eleven years of age, and is a very bright, intelligent girl. Gradually, as she stayed in the Hospital, she began to believe the things she heard day after day, and eventually yielded her heart to Jesus Christ, and evidenced a simple child-like faith in Him, which made all the Hospital workers very glad. A short time ago she was baptized, on which occasion she was exceedingly happy, and seemed greatly impressed with the solemnity of the service. She has to be carried everywhere, but she goes to church now regularly; and though often, poor child, in much pain, would be very grieved if she might not go. Little Persis is her constant playmate; another rescued waif! Such a bonnie, merry little thing, it is always a temptation to stay in the ward and have a romp with her; she is suffering from very weak eyes, but when she is well she goes regularly to school. Her mother died in the Hospital, and left her with the request that she might be brought up a Christian; she was baptized at the same time with Catherine Lachmi, and she seems to be between five and six years old. When these children and other old friends have all had some kindly notice and a little chat, and others more ill have been carefully attended to, we are glad, after our long morning, to come in to breakfast.

After breakfast, the workers all have a *quiet half-hour for prayer*, one of the indispensable arrangements of a mission-house. The servants also are read to from the Bible, with a short explanation, and a simple prayer for

them and their wives and children. They come very willingly to this little Bible reading, though not actually compelled to do so, and it may be hoped that in this way seed is being sown for eternity. After a little rest, lessons begin, the elder students who have gone through all the course taking charge of the Hospital meanwhile, or teaching common daies—midwives—of whom there are about seventeen learning. The medical school is to furnish medical missionaries for the future, and it is a very promising and hopeful branch of work.

As soon as the dinner-hour of the patients is over, and the work done for the night, there is a short service in the large ward, whence the voice of the reader can easily be heard all over the Hospital. The patients look for this service and like it, and some will ask to be prayed for, really believing that our prayers are heard and answered.

English evening prayers follow this, and after dinner and a short time for reading and writing, the workers are thankful that bedtime has come.

Thus the busy days come and go, and sometimes also the busy nights! What a delightful thought that comfort and ease are being ministered to not a few poor suffering bodies, and the water of life offered to thirsty souls! The work is going on in similar ways in other places—Peshawar, Trichur, Bhágulpur, Benares, Delhi, Bareilly, and other important stations, having now their lady medical missionaries.

It is in these days admitted on every hand that the needs of the women in sickness are immense, their unalleviated sufferings pitiable and heartrending; and

efforts are being made outside the missionary circle to help and minister to India's daughters, and give them the surgical aid and good nursing which are enjoyed by their fellow-women and fellow-sufferers of more favoured lands. But philanthropic effort—good as far as it goes—cannot satisfy those who see, beyond the bodily ailment of the weary sufferers, wounds which sin has made, sufferings caused by ignorance of Him who suffered for them, sicknesses which only He can cure; and who know by their own blessed experience of the healing touch of the Great Physician, that *to bring Jesus to the sick and dying* is the one certain, unfailing hope amid life's thousand mysteries of pain.

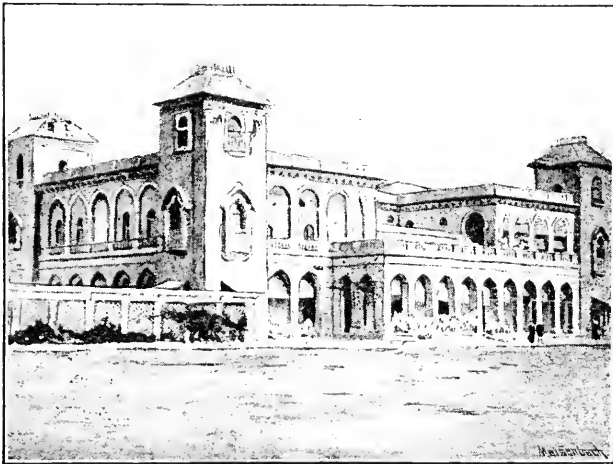
But alas! these women of India live and suffer and die in millions without even hearing of Him. 'How shall they hear without a preacher?' Christian sisters! hasten to the rescue, and let it be said of *you*, 'How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publish peace; that bring good tidings of good, that publish salvation!'

'Hearken, O daughter, and consider; and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house; so shall the KING greatly desire thy beauty, for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him.'

Prayer.

MOST Merciful and Compassionate FATHER, be graciously pleased to accept our hearty thanks for the blessed gifts of health and strength enjoyed by so many of us, and for all Thy bountiful provision for the alleviation of suffering when it befalls Thy children. We

acknowledge that Thou makest sore and bindest up, Thou woundest and Thy hands make whole. We know that Thou canst do all things, and we come to Thee in the strong confidence of faith. Let Thine arm be stretched forth, in answer to the cry of us Thy children, to help and to bless the Women of India, causing them to feel and to understand somewhat of Thine unutterable love and pity for them. Send them, we pray Thee, comforters ; send them wise and tender physicians for body and soul ; send them health, remove the moral pestilence which exerts so baneful an influence in that dark land, and let many who are spiritually sick be brought to JESUS the Healer. JEHOVAH ROPHI ! unto Thee we present our humble petition that every Medical Missionary to those suffering women may have grace to walk in the footsteps of JESUS, and to go about doing good in His name ; always seeking first the Kingdom of GOD and His righteousness, and striving to make the work for the weary and suffering only a channel of grace and blessing for their souls ; bringing many to touch by faith the great Physician, and to be made perfectly whole, and thus preparing in India a people for Thy praise, for the sake of Him Who Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses, to Whom, with Thee and the HOLY SPIRIT, be all honour and glory, thanksgiving and praise, for ever and ever ! Amen.



ALEXANDRA SCHOOL, AMRITSAR.



CHAPTER VII.

Lights and Shadows of Work in Cities and Villages.

*' We know Thee, blessed Saviour, Who hast filled us with good things ;
Thou hast arisen on our land, with healing in Thy wings ;
Thou hast arisen on our hearts, with light and life divine ;
Now bid us be Thy messengers, bid us " arise and shine " !*

*Oh, pour upon our waiting hearts the Spirit of Thy grace,
That we may plead with Thee to show the brightness of Thy face ;
Beseeching Thee to grant the will, and strength, and faith, to such
As lie in helpless misery—Thy garment's hem to touch.*

*And then, Lord Jesus, make them whole, that they may rise and bring
New praise and glory unto Thee, our Healer and our King ;
Yea, let Thy saving health be known through all the earth abroad,
So shall the people praise Thy name, our Saviour and our God !'*



HOW much romance has often attached in people's minds to the work and character of a Missionary! One lady who objected to missionary meetings, was refusing an invitation to one shortly to be held in a drawing-room, and she gave as the reason for her refusal that she had lately heard something very disappointing about missionaries. On being pressed to tell what it was, she said, with a gravely disapproving look, 'Why, do you know, they actually live in houses, like

other Europeans!’ ‘And do you know,’ was the prompt reply of the lady whom she addressed, ‘they are actually of the same flesh and blood as other Europeans!’ This is a fact too often forgotten, not only by those who would otherwise be supporters of missionary effort, but by those who give themselves to the work. There is a sort of vague, undefined sense of something supernatural about foreign missionary work, almost an expectation of living above all the ordinary things of everyday life, and being continually in a rapturous state of excitement, going about among people all anxious to hear and know the truth, and being engaged from morning to night in teaching and preaching to crowds of willing listeners. Perhaps, if numbers of people were asked to draw an imaginary picture of a Zenána missionary at work, the majority of them would begin with a palm-tree, under whose shade their heroine would be sitting with her Bible on her knee, expounding its truths to several earnest eager-looking women gathered round her; or if the interior of a house were pictured, cushions and carpets would not be wanting, and the pupil would be a handsomely dressed lady reclining luxuriously upon them, with her books and writing materials all ready, and herself in a state of eager preparedness for her studies. Like many imaginary pictures, it would give a very false impression. The women are willing enough to be interested in a new-comer, and to inquire about her dress, her hair, her family, her circumstances, etc., but they are *not* all at once willing to listen to what a new-comer has to tell them, and even if they were, not a word

can she speak to them. Language and customs have to be learned before she can hope that her visits will be really acceptable to the people. Language and customs! what a field of study these two words open up, and how much of the *mere romance* of a missionary's life, *the merely unreal part*, gets rubbed off while that study is being pursued!

And perhaps we may add, how much the missionary learns about herself before that study is anything like completed. Besides finding that she lives in no unreal, dreamlike atmosphere of work, unlike anything ever known before, work which never palls in itself, and which ensures freedom from all sorts of common everyday things, she sees that she herself is as human as ever, as liable to make mistakes, and to be beset with temptations and trials as she ever was in evangelistic work in England, and as compelled to yield to feelings of fatigue. Yes, and the missionary lady comes in from her work hungry, and there is plenty of need for a good knowledge of housekeeping; the price of bread, the condition and mode of cooking other food, are subjects which must not be beneath her unless she intends to remain hungry or become ill; in short, she has to live a common everyday life.

The late Bishop Patteson well expressed exactly what is the common idea about missionaries, when he asked for 'men who have got rid of the conventional notion that more self-denial is needed for a missionary than for a sailor or a soldier who are sent anywhere, and leave home and country for years and think nothing of

it;' and again he spoke of 'a fellow with a healthy active tone of mind, plenty of enterprise and some enthusiasm, who makes the best of everything, and above all does not think himself better than other people because he is engaged in Mission work.' If we, who support and who take active part in foreign missionary effort, will remember this common-sense view of the life, we shall do much towards dissipating those romantic ideas which so often lead to disappointment.

A few words peculiarly illustrative of the absence of romance, and of the plain, ordinary, often uphill work of the Zenána missionary, may be very suitably quoted here from the pen of one of our most able workers and writers, the honoured A. L. O. E. Miss Tucker writes: 'I have no striking changes to report of our Batala. Every day brings its appointed work, the furrow to be lengthened, more seed to be sown. Is there then no variety? Oh yes; in visiting more than a hundred places one meets with different experiences, as in patch-work some pieces are bright and some are brown. Here are smiles of welcome, and there—a mild approach to impertinence. I considered that I was in a bright piece to-day, and yet assuredly the surroundings were not what would have suggested to a lady fresh from England ideas of brightness.

'How utterly does an ordinary Batala Zenána contradict European ideas of Oriental elegance and magnificence—jewelled beauties reclining on cushioned sofas, with perhaps a peacock-feather fan or silver hookah to give picturesque effect to the scene!

‘Imagine the missionary seated on a very low stool, a good deal the worse for wear. The floor beneath her feet is of beaten mud. The light in the special Zenána to which I am referring comes, not from a window, but a hole in the roof; that hole must also serve as a chimney. Before me, in a little semicircle, are seated—or rather crouch—seven or eight small forms. There is enough light to distinguish that all have something red over their heads, but their faces are hardly visible. By the tiny fireplace two women squat cooking and eating. This is a nice Zenána, one of the bright bits of the patchwork, for the small creatures are very quiet, listening to the story of the Good Shepherd and the little tired lamb in His bosom, or some song about the Lord Jesus.

‘Yesterday, in another place, as I sat talking to women, a strong, rough-looking merry fellow came and sat down close by me. His voice being to mine as a trumpet to a pipe, he rather monopolised the conversation, as if to talk me down.

‘Some of the Mohamedans in Batala, and this one amongst them, have a strange way of trying to appropriate what they cannot help admiring in our religion. The effrontery with which this is done is simply amazing. “It is *we* who mind Jesus, *you* do not mind Him,” said the man; “He is *our* Prophet. I do not understand you.” I mildly suggested that he did not understand because he *talked* instead of *listening*. I pointed out as a sign of my being of the right persuasion that I was not angry. The rough man conceded that Christians are loving. “Is that not a sign that their religion is of God, for *God*

is love?” This was in our Zenána patchwork a piece of medium colour. There was rather a dark bit the other day, when my Kahár was slightly bitten by a dog at the door of a woman whom I have often visited, and who has usually received me with hearty kindness.

‘Unfortunately one day I met her infidel brother, a sad sample of the class whom Government is training by a godless education to be as thorns in our sides. “*I know everything,*” said the repulsive-looking man; “*I have read papers by Bradlaugh.*” When I next went the woman’s refusal to admit me seemed to be backed by the bite from the dog. I consider that Zenána as closed for the present, but *nil desperandum*, perhaps it will open again.’

We have spoken of language, and we may dwell for a moment on the thought of the *variety* of tongues spoken in even one place. Taking Amritsar by way of example, we find in its bázárs people who speak Panjábí in more than one dialect, and also Hindustani, and besides these the speakers of Cashmíri, Persian, Pushtoo; while the inhabitants of Bokhára, Thibet, Beloochistán, Scind, and Bengal, add their tongues to the general Babel, so that one is reminded of Acts ii. 9-11, and can scarcely help sighing for another outpouring of the gift of the wonderful day whose history is recorded in that chapter.

But it is of no use to sigh, and it is worse than no use to come home after a walk in the crowded bázár and feel dismayed and discouraged.

Books must be perseveringly studied; hard lessons must be learned; lists of words which feel as if they would never remain in the memory must be put again and again

into their right places, and the memory persuaded to retain them if possible till they become familiar; efforts at speaking must be made, and above all, prayer for that Divine help and blessing without which all this toil will be in vain must be continually resorted to.

And thus the would-be evangelist, longing to proclaim the good tidings, has to plod on, and be often constrained to feel hopelessly dumb.

We will next imagine her first beginning a little with the Zenána ladies to whom she has been introduced; she must not be surprised if she often causes a laugh, or sees, in cases where they are too polite to laugh, a suppressed smile, and some amused glances from one to the other.

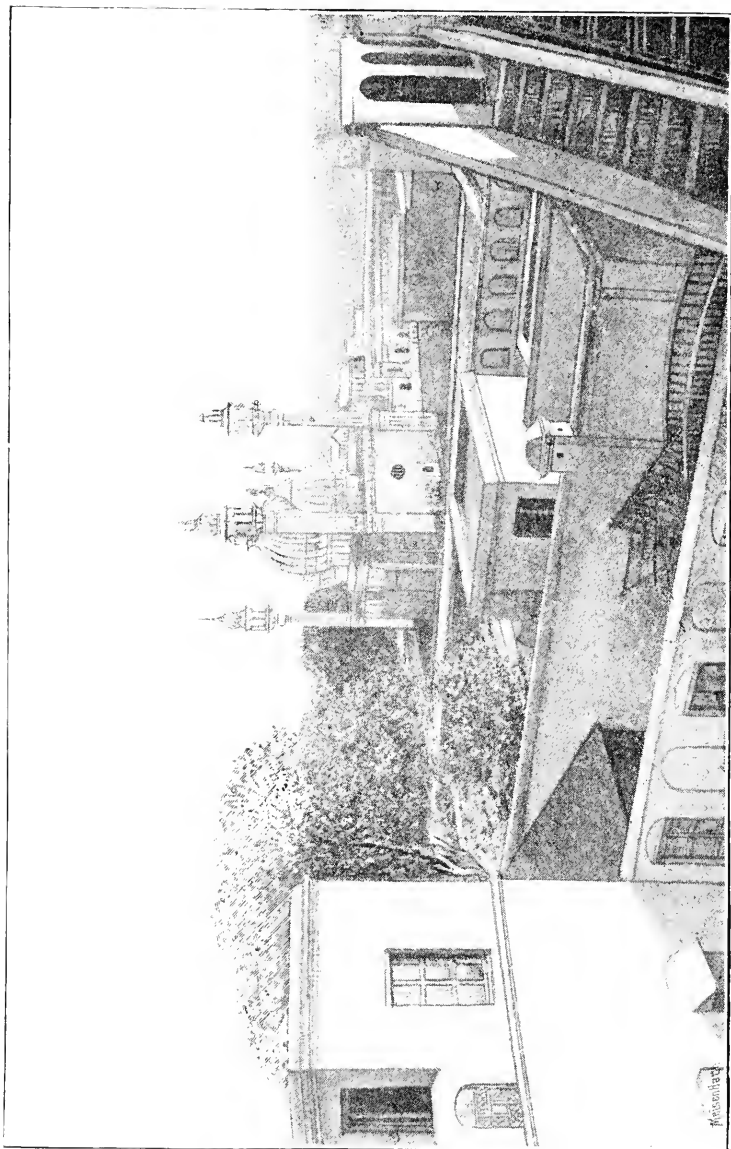
Of course she at once begins to torment herself with wondering what she can have said, but she must not be discouraged, only try and try again.

It is very likely she has advised them to make a *camel*¹ very hot, and put it in the bed against the feet of some sick woman, but she meant a *brick*; or perhaps she has told them, in reply to some of their many questions about our customs and meals, etc., that she has had a *blind man*² for breakfast, when she really had nothing more dreadful than an *egg*! But she has to persevere; it is *the* remedy; and she must always hope cheerfully on, and the time will come when she will have the satisfaction of hearing the women say they like to hear her talk, because they understand her 'boli' (talk).

The city work of a Zenána missionary is in many respects very unlike that in the villages. The people,

¹ *Unt* is camel, and *int* is brick.

² *Anda* is egg, and *andha* is a blind man.



VIEW OF THE MASJID FROM THE ROOF OF SAINT CATHERINE'S HOSPITAL, AMRITSAR.

their customs and manners, are so different. Finding out all about the customs of even one district is like learning a new science, and many are the mistakes and awkward blunders which are sure to be made if this science is not mastered! One lady was, on the occasion of her first visit to a Zenána, offered a rupee by every lady present, and the whole amount was R.16. These coins had been given round by the master of the house beforehand, that each person might have some offering to make. But the missionary did not actually *take* even one, she only *touchèd* each in succession, making at the same time a salám to the holder of it, and the master of the house was so pleased with her knowledge of their customs that he gathered together the sixteen rupees and sent the sum as an offering for her mission-work!

It is very interesting to learn about the different classes of women and their employments.

For example, among those who are not in pardah, but who go about and earn their living, there are the Bihishtins (the feminine of Bihishti, a water-carrier).

These women work very laboriously, carrying strapped over one shoulder a large bag or leathern bottle, which is really the skin of a goat, minus its head and feet. The bihishtin fills this skin-bag gradually at the mouth of a well, by means of a smaller leathern bag, laying down the larger bag while she draws the smaller one up, and tying a strap of leather round the neck of the larger during the work of filling, to prevent the water running out. The water moving about causes the skin to resemble a headless, hairless goat, drawing long breaths as it lies on the

stones at the mouth of the well. Some water-drawers stand on the neck of the goat's skin instead of tying it, while drawing up the small replenishing bag.

In the city one *bihishtin* gives water in several *Zenánas*. The original reason why women became drawers of water was the introduction of the *pardah* system by the *Mohamedans*; up to that time men supplied every house, but of course the custom of keeping *Zenána* ladies secluded forbade the entrance of the *bihishti*, and resulted in his deputing his wife to do his work in all places where he could not go himself, and now it is a recognised occupation for women as much as for men. The due wages for a *bihishtin* are from every house bread and cooked vegetable, and a few pice every day, and once in the year a *chaddar*, or other piece of cloth. In case of a wedding the *bihishtin* gets many presents, perhaps amounting to five or six rupees in one day. The *Zenána* missionary constantly meets these women. In the crowded *gallis* and round the wells there they are with their heavy burdens of water, or going on with their hard and monotonous work of drawing from the wells, and in the house where she may be teaching they will walk in quite freely and be entirely at home; and having filled the various vessels for the use of the family, they will sometimes put down the empty goat-skin and sit and listen a little, or look at the *Miss Sahiba's* picture-book; but soon they have to go, for frequently one *bihishtin* supplies every day one hundred houses with water; and it is said that the feeblest old woman, if used to the work, can manage twenty-five.

Thus they get opportunities of hearing the Gospel, and it is remarkable how often, when the more leisurely inhabitants of the Zenána are too lazy or too bigoted to listen much to their visitor, these, or similar humble serving-women, will follow her to another house as if anxious to hear more, and will beg her to come again and again to talk to them.

Another class met with very often in going in and out of city Zenánas is a set of women called *Nains*. These are really barbers' wives, and their duty is to dress the hair of any who can afford to employ them. They earn an anna, or perhaps two, in each house. But, like their husbands, they do not confine themselves to hair-dressing; they also cut nails, trim eyebrows and eyelashes, and so on; and in cases where their customers are not in *pardah*, it is not uncommon to see several women availing themselves of the services of one Nain, the whole party sitting at the side of the street, or in any other equally public place, during the process of personal adornment.

In case of a death these Nains give notice of it to friends of the family, and call them for mourning and other ceremonies, on the first and fourth and thirteenth days. For this duty they each get one or two rupees. They are also paid to mourn for the dead, and the missionary frequently meets in a large house with quite a troop of these women who have come to smite their breasts, tear their hair—or *pretend* to!—and cry aloud in a frightful manner,—a cry which will never be forgotten when once heard. On such an occasion an opportunity

may generally be secured for a few words from the missionary, and the subjects of life and death, sin and sorrow, may be dwelt upon with a tolerable hope of a patient hearing. Nains also conduct poor little brides home to their mothers-in-law (generally, if they did but know it, as truly a matter for wailing and woe as a death!), and among the Mohamedans they cook wedding-feasts.

Another class hold a kind of religious office. These are the Brahmanis, and they might almost be called the priestesses of Hindu families. They carry on what are supposed to be religious exercises in *Zenânaş*, and teach the generally vile tales of the heathen deities to women and children. But one of their principal offices is to give children to those who greatly desire them, and in the prosecution of this pretence they tie a piece of thread on the head of a woman, with many incantations and prayers, and for this performance they get three or four rupees.

In cases where a child happens to be born in a house where this folly has been practised, the Brahmani of course gets great rewards; and if no such happy event follows her prayers and efforts, she clears her own character as a prognosticator by telling the woman it is her *nast'ib* (or fate).

If a childless Hindu woman hears that some friend of hers has had a child, she ties a thread round her arm and fasts all day. In the evening she eats, but if any one happens to call her while she is eating this meal, she has to bury it in the ground, and eat no

more till the next day. The Brahmani helps at all these ceremonies, and is well paid, as of course she assures her victims there can be no success without this !

It is not very pleasant to meet these Brahmanis during one's Zenána visits. The women are greatly in bondage to them, and are afraid to listen to religious teaching in their presence, while they themselves are, as one may naturally suppose, very bitter against the introduction into Zenánas of teaching which, if believed in and followed, must take away the hope of their gains.

Another class, very far removed from the *holy Brahman*, is the class called Sweepers. Their duty is literally to sweep and clean. They carry away refuse from houses and streets ; clean drains, roads, etc. Their case is, on some accounts, very pitiable, they are so exceedingly ignorant, so utterly untaught and uncared for ; but, on the other hand, they are teachable, and if touched by the power of the Gospel, have no caste to lose, no religious belief and customs to unlearn. In embracing Christianity they gain in every way, and their social position becomes for the first time worthy the name. Naturally this is not an unmixed advantage, as it makes it more difficult to find out, than in the cases of others, whether the mere desire to improve their worldly state is inducing them to wish to be Christians.

In Amritsar there is a Sunday-school for sweeper-women, attended by about one hundred, and a few of these constantly attend the day-school which is connected with it, where they learn reading and needlework. Some among these are very desirous to be received into the

Christian Church, and are being tested and taught, with a view to baptism. After they become Christians they must be kept and employed, as it is impossible to allow them to remain at their old work, where companions and habits would of necessity be utterly incompatible with their Christian profession, and it would be a miracle if any woman could live as a Christian and continue in such an employment, especially as she would be obliged to mix with very low and depraved people, and be almost cut off from Christian society.

Teaching some trade, or other mode of earning a living—as nursing—to these women, in the event of their becoming Christians, is a very important item of work.

About 250 years ago a certain portion of the Sweeper class received the distinction of being called ‘Mazáhibi Síkhs.’¹ This was because in the time of a cruel Mohamedan persecution the Guroh or teacher of the Síkhs was murdered, because he would not become a Mohamedan. It is said, by the way, that he died uttering the remarkable prophecy that neither Síkhs nor Mohamedans would ultimately be anything at all, but another religion would be introduced into the Panjáb, the religion of some new conquerors, whose rule would be so good and peaceable that they would cause a goat and a lion to drink out of one spring without quarrelling. The utterance of this prophecy is vouched for as matter of history, and the Síkhs quite believe it is now being fulfilled! As soon as the murder of this man became

¹ From the word Mazhab, religion.

known, numbers of Sikhs declared themselves Hindus, and they would have nothing to do with his body ; but his son sent some sweepers, who, with great care and devotion, performed all the religious rites for the dead, and who showed so much affection for the martyr, and so much readiness and alacrity in the service they had undertaken, that they were rewarded with the name of Mazáhibi Sikhs, or Sikhs from a religious point of view. These people have really no caste. They are supposed to conform to the Sikh religion, but they generally know very little about it. They are the only sweepers who are engaged in the special work of cleaning the Golden Temples at Amritsar and Taran Taran, and are considered about on a level with sweepers ; but they get some advantages, and often raise themselves by their perseverance and industry to be something better than they were originally.

If we turn our thoughts now to the villages, we learn that there are very few, strictly speaking, pardah-keeping women ; only the wives of some very particular Sardárs, or chiefs of villages and large landowners, keep carefully within their houses ; all the middle and lower classes of farmers' wives are women who lead very busy out-of-doors lives, and consequently they are, as a rule, much more healthy than their sisters of the cities. They rise between three and four in the morning, and grind corn enough for the family for the day, then milk their cows ; and next they make butter with the cream set the night before. They take some of the previous day's bread and some new milk to their husbands in the fields at about

five o'clock, the men having frequently, in summer, worked from one o'clock in the night. On returning, they attend to their children in a fashion (it seems the worst performed of all their duties), and then they make fresh bread, and, perhaps, cook vegetables, and go again to their husbands, to give them a more substantial meal. During the day they spin or embroider their own chaddars, and at six they cook the evening meal. Sometimes they pick cotton, and otherwise give help in the fields, or take vegetables to sell in towns. Their condition is far less pitiable than that of the inhabitants of grand Zenánas, but they are extremely ignorant, and hard of understanding. One who came to the missionaries for medicine was unable to understand the very simplest direction or question, only saying over and over again, 'Do not ask me, I know nothing; I am just a cow!' It is good to be able to add that after some days' residence among her medical missionary friends, she grew so accustomed to their 'boli' that on leaving she was able to remember and repeat some of their teaching, especially the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which, with some fair attempt at explaining its meaning, she told very eagerly and well. It was then said to her, 'Now go home to your friends, and tell them what you have learned, and how great mercy God has shown you;' and she answered very earnestly, 'That is just what I am going to do.' Such an instance as this shows that the thick crust of ignorance which covers the intellect and conscience, and makes the teacher's task so difficult, is not really impenetrable; it *can* be broken; and once broken, it often

reveals promising soil for missionary effort. A little story illustrative of this may be given in the words of a missionary, some of whose work is in a large village in the Panjáb. It is a story which also gives the reader a glimpse behind the scenes into the common kind of incidents which go to make up the missionary day. She writes: 'It was a sultry morning, and the clouds were gathering up for a dust-storm; I had walked a good long way in and around the town to different houses, and was feeling fairly tired. I thought it would be a short cut back to the little house we were using for mission purposes if I walked on the edge of two sides of the sacred Tank, instead of winding about through the streets, to get back. But, of course, as I descended the steps to the level of the water, I was told, as I expected to be, to remove my shoes before stepping on the sacred marble. This it was not unpleasant to do; but what Zenána missionary would willingly walk her stockings into holes! These, therefore, were carried as well, and the hot, tired feet did not at all object to the feel of the refreshingly cool marble. The large black ants which thrive in damp, shady places made many efforts to nip my feet; but by running briskly along I escaped them, and presently came to the steps for ascending again to the level of the street. Here I was met by a Sikh woman, with a brass vessel, bright and clean, full of water, nicely poised on her head. She at once said, 'Miss Sahiba, allow me to wash your feet.' I accepted the kind offer, and seating myself on my camp-stool, gave myself up to the comfort and enjoyment of this really thoughtful attention.

There is something very remarkable in the ready kindness and politeness of some of these women, and their touch in the performance of any little office is exceedingly gentle. While the water was being poured over my feet, I said, by way of beginning a conversation, "Did you get this water out of the Tank?" The poor woman looked horrified. "Out of their Tank! Their Guroh¹ would never have given leave for the water to be used to wash my feet!" I then began from that point, and tried to preach to her *Jesus*, telling her that our Guroh gave His own most precious blood for sinners, that they might wash away their sins and be for ever clean, and that He refused none; He made all freely welcome to this great gift of His love. Other women came round and listened very earnestly to the story, saying, whenever I ceased speaking, "Go on, tell us more;" and at length they followed me to the house, where they stayed all the morning, listening, talking, and asking questions about *our Guroh*.'

In the villages of the Panjáb ladies have of late years begun the very interesting and important work of itinerating amongst the women, and they are encouraged by the large numbers who gladly gather round them wherever they go, to listen to the words of eternal life. Here and there already they have been able to build a Church and a Bungalow, and settle a staff of Bible-women and other Christian workers, and we cannot but look for great blessing upon this effort to reach the masses of ignorant yet simple, and often unsophisticated village women.

¹ Teacher.

In South India and in Bengal village work has been long established, and many tokens of success and of harvests already reaped to God's glory, may be rejoiced over by those who will follow the accounts of such work as that of the beloved and honoured Mrs. Lewis of Palamcottah, lately gone to her heavenly rest, and that of Mrs. Kearns of North Tinnevely, and also that of the ladies working in Barrackpore and other village centres in the neighbourhood of Calcutta.¹ One C. M. S. missionary writes very emphatically about village work for ladies. He says: 'Take for example the subdivision of Mahepur, which is the portion of Nuddea I have to evangelise. The number of males is 163,342. The number of females is 175,212. I have therefore before me *the sad fact that the Gospel message can only be delivered by men to the smaller portion of the population.*' 'What we want is a staff of (lady) workers permanent in the district, and wholly devoted to evangelistic work.' And again, speaking of the poor women of the villages, the same writer says: 'The question may be asked, 'Will these Hindu and Mohamedan women listen to the Gospel?' I can answer from experience, gathered from seeing the work of my wife and of the Zenána ladies who have been with us. The missionary or her assistant Bible-woman need never lack an audience.'

And from the far-away south of India we may quote the words of a missionary working among women of both town and country, and with her words of hope close

¹ See *India's Women*, the periodical of the Church of England Zenána Missionary Society.

this chapter. She writes : ‘ I must tell you also of one dear Nair lady, and almost my first pupil, who says she never now bows down to worship their own gods. She is reading in secret our Bible, and is much struck with the wonderful things Jesus said and did, and says He must be the “ Divine Son of God ;” others of them are also reading the Scriptures, but if convinced, it is still a very difficult thing for them openly to confess Christ, and God the Holy Spirit alone can give them the grace and courage they need to do so ; but we thank Him for what He has done, and have large expectations for the future, for our Covenant God’s promises cannot fail, and though Brahmanism, caste, idolatry, and superstition still hold the great mass of the people of India in the bondage of Satan, and they themselves have no desire to be made free, yet finally truth must prevail, and the time is hastening when the promised Deliverer will come, and then to Him shall every knee bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father !’

‘ **Thy KINGDOM is an everlasting KINGDOM, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.**’

Prayer.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Thy Word is cast like seed into the ground— in city streets, in country villages. Thy servants sow in the morning, and in the evening withhold not their hands ; they know not whether shall prosper, this or that ; but we pray Thee, by Thy mighty power, to cause it to come to pass that, in all the places where they labour, both may be alike good.

LORD, look in tenderest pity upon the Women of India ! Look upon the weary desolate ones, and send Thy people to seek them out and set them in families ; look upon the sick and suffering ones, and send Thy messengers of healing and comfort ; look upon the neglected, despised, and hated ones, and send home to their hearts the glad tidings of Thine own love ; look upon the women, living lives of toil and hardship, unceased by the knowledge of CHRIST, and reveal to them that same JESUS who visited with His salvation the Samaritan woman at the well ; look upon the long-neglected villages, and send Thy servants to gather in thence a people for Thy praise !

O Thou LORD of the Harvest, *thrust forth* labourers into Thine Harvest, for the sake of Him who taught us thus to pray, whose is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever ! Amen.



BIHISITI, OR WATER-CARRIER.



CHAPTER VIII.

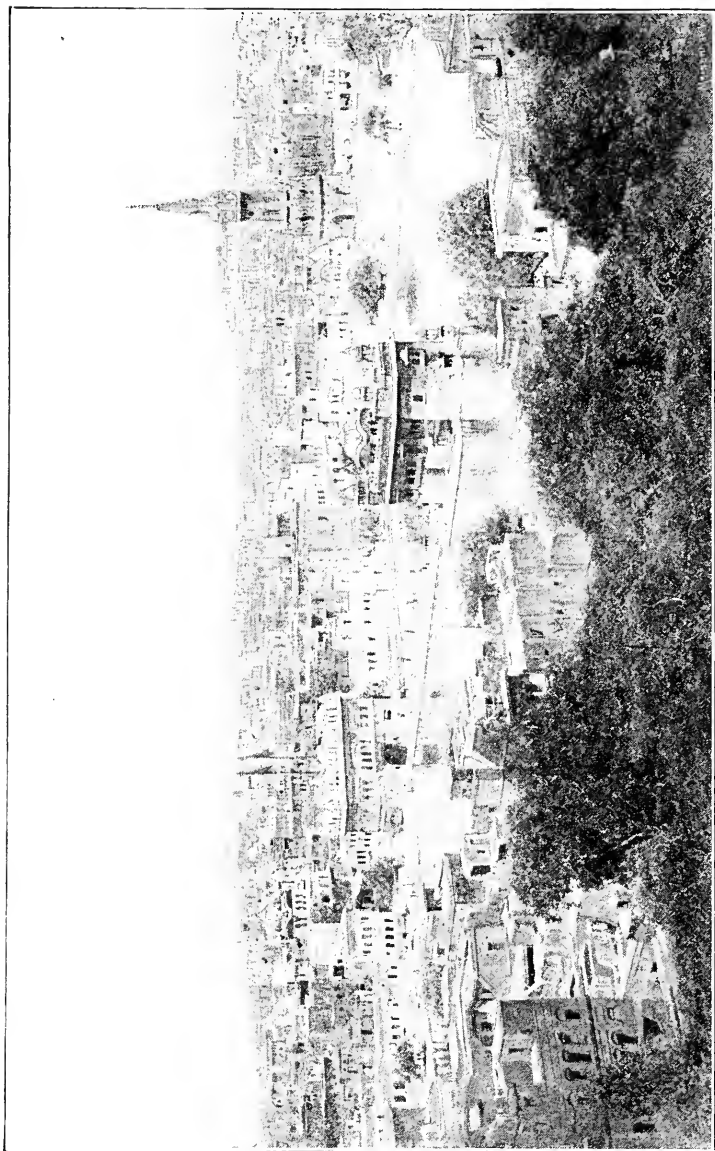
Many-linked Chains.

' Each link is Love !

*God draws His own unto Himself
With golden chains of providence and grace :
Oft hidden is His work—His wondrous work—
But not less sure or true. And He who knows
Each human heart, knows best
How, and with what, to attract it to Himself.
O ye who love Him, be ye gladly now
His instruments—His meanest, humblest tools,
To rivet by His mighty grace,
And in His all-resisting strength,
Some links in those bright chains of His great Love
Which bind the hearts and lives of sinful men
For ever to His own !'*



MY mother died when I was three months old, and my father gave me to a neighbour to bring up. My father was a Bengali Hindu. When I was about two years old he re-married, and my stepmother was very unkind to me. At length, in order to get rid of me altogether, she persuaded my father to let some (nominally) Christian people have me, and they gave him *rupees* 20 in exchange! With that family I learned several Christian hymns, but they never took me to



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF AMRITSAR. GOLDEN TEMPLE IN THE FOREGROUND.

church or taught me to pray. They were not very kind to me, and they put me to take care of some children, for which I was not at all fit. I remained about a year there, when my father, hearing of their unkindness, gave them *rupees* 40, and took me back again! I have often since been sorry that I was taken away, because, but for that, I might now have been a member of the Christian Church. I stayed with my father about a year, and was then given in marriage to a Mohamedan, who was the owner of a tea plantation in Assam, and we had every comfort and luxury. The reason why I was not married to a Hindu was that, in consequence of my having lived with Christians, I was not any longer considered a Hindu, and no Hindu would have me. My husband and I lived most happily, and I had no thoughts or cares for the future, no sorrows or anxieties—I lived a most easy and careless life. When I was sixteen years old I had a little daughter. My husband mixed a good deal with Christians, and in all ways acted like a Christian, and I am sure he would eventually have been baptized; but alas! two years after our marriage, he suddenly died. He had often spoken to me of his wish to become a Christian. God took him away very suddenly, after only one hour's illness. Since then I have had sorrow upon sorrow. Twice, as I have told, I was in the way of becoming a Christian; but, after the lapse of nearly twenty years, I am still not one, in name.

‘After my husband's death his relations took away all my money and land. The shock of my bereavement had made me quite ill and almost delirious; this they

took advantage of, and gave out that I was mad, and must have a change to Calcutta. A Christian gentleman, who believed the story, and thought he was doing me a kindness, gave me an escort ; and, after collecting the few valuables and money which my enemies had left me, I started for Calcutta with my little girl of one year old. My escort acted very deceitfully ; he put us into a boat going to Calcutta, and then left us, taking with him all the money he had been intrusted with for our needs. On the way we were overtaken by a cyclone, and the sailors saved themselves and us in a little boat ; the one in which we had sailed was lost in the storm. Very thankful I was to God for having preserved our lives so wonderfully. After five days we reached land, but I had not a pice with which to pay my railway fare to Calcutta, and there was no alternative but to take off my jewels and sell them. But I was deceived by the man who said he would buy them ; he took them, and told me to wait for the money, and I never saw him again !¹

‘ I made my way to the station, and stated my trouble, and an official, moved with pity, purchased a ticket for me, and gave me eight annas. When I reached Calcutta, the stationmaster advised me to go to an English gentleman who had known my husband very well, and who, he thought, would be sure to help me. This gentleman counselled me to put my child in an orphanage, which I did, promising not to take her away for three years. I then served as an ayah until I had thoroughly learned

¹ We must remember the apparently foolish woman was a mere girl of seventeen and utterly inexperienced.

ayah's work. Ladies were very kind in teaching me to read, write, and do plain sewing as well as fancy-work. When I was far away from my child I often wondered in my heart how she was getting on, but I did not get an opportunity of again visiting Calcutta for fifteen years.

‘In the meantime I had married again, at the suggestion of those whom I served as ayah,¹ and I had had five children, of whom only one was living. My husband and I journeyed to Calcutta with a family, and I at once went to search out my girl. It was with difficulty I found her, the school having been removed to another house. At first, too, the lady in charge did not believe me; but when it was proved from the register that my story was true, and also a mark which I described as on my child's knee was found to exist, I was allowed to claim her. She was on the eve of being married to a respectable Christian, and I thanked God that He had so mercifully provided for her, and that He had taken her out of heathen darkness into His own true way. The next day I saw her married, and was very much struck by the service, and the contrast to our own weddings.

‘My daughter invited me to her house, and the first time I went she received me very warmly, but her mother-in-law forbade further visits, and the door was shut against me.

‘When I discovered how much I was suspected by my daughter's new relations, of having some covetous

¹ Most families would object to a young unmarried ayah in the circumstances of an Indian household.

motives in wishing to see her, I was very angry, and left Calcutta, declaring that I would never see her or write to her again. Alas! it was a sad resolution. For seven years I have heard nothing of her; but a mother can never forget. I have often prayed to God that He would let me see or hear some news of her, but my prayer is unanswered. My younger daughter is married to a cook, not very happily, but God will take care of us, as He has done in the past. I know and believe that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour, but my husband is a bigoted Mohamedan, and my daughter is married to another, and I desire to cling to her because I see signs of her inclining towards Christianity. She reads the Bible to me every morning and evening, and I thank God our Father for all His grace and love to me. Sometimes I am not able to sleep at night, my heart is so full when I think of His mercy.'

Such is the life-story of a poor woman, who at this time is living at a mission-house (where her son-in-law is servant) under the direct influence of the Gospel. We believe the story will yet have a blessed ending, and those who have read her history with interest so far will yet hear the good news that this child of affliction has, after so many wanderings and trials, entered into the rest promised to the weary.

We cannot but believe that God's dealings with her have not been in vain. He has led her by a strange way, and we have good hope that it is to bring her to Himself.

Another true history from life may serve to illustrate several important points in missionary life. It will show,

first, the same overruling providence of God, and His grace towards those whom He has chosen, of what country soever they be; secondly, it will give a little insight into the difficulties and trials connected with the confession of Christ by a Hindu lady; and, again, it will teach us that the gifts of the grace of God, in all their fulness and beauty, can be given and received by those who have been, perhaps for years, prisoners in Zenánas.

Nearly twenty-six years ago a Hindu gentleman having embraced the religion of Christ, he tried to persuade his wife to join him. She was very fond of her husband, and was willing for his sake to tolerate Christianity, though not herself, at the time of his baptism, a believer. When she really believed, she made many efforts to get away from her father's house. She was, however, closely watched, and when it was known that she desired to go, she was locked up, and treated like a prisoner indeed. For many months she was kept in one room. At length, after a long weary waiting-time, she managed to escape by means of the help of some friends. Very little is known of how she spent those months of suspense, but she must have been taught of God Himself, for when she came out and received baptism, she was a very earnest believer. Her Christian life afterwards was very beautiful. She lived with other converts, and it is said that she was the friend and helper of all, ever ready to offer her services, and ever kind and gentle in all she did.

She was very careful never to allow her morning and evening devotions to be interfered with by any duties.

Her husband was studying in college, and they were not rich, so they kept but one servant, which necessitated her doing many things for herself and her husband and child. But she understood the meaning of 'pray without ceasing,' and she made a rule for herself that at nine in the morning, when the husbands were gone to college, and the wives were sitting together in the verandah working or reading, she would retire to her own room for an hour of silent communion with God.

She was a great favourite, and often the other Christian women would come to sit near her to hear her talk of spiritual things. She was at first too shy to tell them that she must go away for her quiet hour, but they began to wonder what she was doing, and by and by they tried to guess, and one ventured to ask her timidly why she locked herself in her room so long. They were all new Christians! they had been taught to pray, but it had never occurred to them to devote an hour to prayer every day.

In a few words this good woman told them what she did, and then added, 'Dear sisters, do you not agree with me that it is good to set apart an hour, or even half an hour daily for prayer, for it brings us our blessings; at night we can all find time easily, but in the early morning our household work and children take up so much time, but after our men have gone away, and our children been attended to, then we can devote an hour to prayer and reading, for the morning is the best time for turning the whole heart to God.' Then those Christian women began to feel ashamed, for they had not been earnest in this matter as she had been, and they all resolved to follow

their sister's example. But God had prepared this fair flower for His heavenly garden, and she was early taken there. She left the sweet fragrance of a holy and devout life, and in the hearts of all who had known her there was written a never-to-be-forgotten lesson on the blessings which come upon God's people in answer to prayer.

We may take another case, very different in its details, but illustrating almost the same points.

Some years ago two Mohamedan girls were under the kind care and instruction of Mrs. Fitzpatrick, one of the first missionaries in Amritsar, in the Panjáb. This lady had a school in the city, and, having by some means obtained an entrance into the Zenána where they lived, she visited them often, and at length tried to get them to her school. The father declared it was quite impossible to allow them to go out, as he wished to keep them in pardah. Their mother was dead, and the lady could not further try to persuade the father to allow them to walk through the crowded bázárs.

But a bright idea struck her : the house next to theirs was empty ; she would hold her school in it, if the father would allow her to make a door in the wall, and would send his girls to school through it. He agreed ! It was a victory ; it reminds one of the words, ' By the help of my God I shall leap over a wall.'

It is a signal instance of the power of God to order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, for *only* about the door did the father yield ; in other ways he opposed the good work, but the door was enough ! It let those girls into the light of the Gospel ; it gave the

teacher the undisturbed opportunity of sowing the good seed. She taught them very affectionately, often taking them on her knees, as they still love to tell, and pleading with them to come to Jesus. The seed sank into their hearts, to bring forth fruit 'after many days.' It did not perish, it only lay hidden, and now and then there were signs of something good in these young women, who, although after their kind teacher was removed, and their father dead, they went very far astray from the right way which had been taught them, still continued to read the Bible, and occasionally went to the houses of Christians. It is said that in one instance, when a Christian neighbour was dying of a terrible disease, which made others shun the house, these sisters were her devoted and constant nurses; and when the poor woman died, they prepared her for the grave, and then accompanied the body as far as the gate of the city, though they still retained enough *pardah* ideas to prevent their going all the way to the cemetery, some little distance outside.

And once on a railway journey a missionary lady, who was travelling in the 'Zenána carriage,' on purpose to secure the opportunity of speaking to Hindu and Mohamedan women, was talking of Jesus the Son of God, and one of these sisters, who happened to be there, helped her in her good work by explaining and enforcing all she said.

But the chain of evil habits was strong, and it held back the sisters from touching by faith that Saviour of Whom they had heard so much.

At length it pleased God to visit them with very

grievous sickness in the time of the Amritsar pestilence, in the year 1881; and when they were first seen by workers from the Medical Mission, one of them seemed to be at the point of death. Very little hope indeed could be held out of her recovery; but she was told of Jesus as the One 'able to save to the uttermost,' when the poor weary face at once lighted up, and the sufferer said, 'Oh, we know it all, and we ought to have been Christians long ago.'

Afterwards, in telling their history, they said, 'God has called us so many times, we can refuse no longer.' They were admitted into the Mission Hospital, and, after a short time of further instruction, they were baptized, together with the little girl of the younger sister. God graciously granted restoration to health and strength, and they have worked as nurse and Bible-woman in the same hospital ever since. Their new names are Lydia and Phœbe, and we trust they are learning to be 'succourers of many.' They are growing and improving as Christians, and we may rejoice that the solemn vows of Baptism and Confirmation are being, by the grace of God, kept, and may well rest assured that He who has thus led them to Himself will never leave them nor forsake them, but will perfect that which concerneth them.

Another very remarkable story, showing the immense difficulty to be encountered in the attempt to set a Zenána lady free, may be given in the words of Miss Ellen Lakshmi Goreh, herself a missionary of the Church of England Zenána Mission. She says: 'My great-grandfather was prime minister to Ali Bahádur. When the possessions of

Ali Bahádur were confiscated, his prime minister went with him to Baroda. When he grew old, he wished to spend his last days at Benares, so he retired there with my grandfather and my father's uncle. When my great-grandfather died, my father's father committed all the household affairs to my father's uncle, who was his younger brother, because he wished to devote all his time to religious exercises.

‘My mother was seven years old when she was married to my father, and it was four years after their marriage that my father had some thoughts of becoming a Christian. He often talked to her on the subject, and she never made any objections; perhaps she did not fully understand all he said to her. When he was baptized about three years afterwards, when she was fourteen years old, she was sent away from him by his uncle. Her father took her home to his house, of course, where she was regarded as a *widow*. Her father taught her to read, to give her some employment in her widowhood.

‘My father's Christian friends were very anxious to get her sent back to him, and they sent petitions to the Deputy Magistrate to secure an interview for the husband and wife. He gave orders to the Thánedár¹ to go with my father to her house and demand an interview; but it was unsuccessful—her family would not allow him to see her. The Thánedár promised one hundred rupees to a man, who had some access to the house, to try and get her away, but this also failed. At last the European Magistrate, whose interest in the case was stirred, went

¹ Officer.

with some of the missionaries to my mother's house ; it was a small three-storied house, with a very small court ; there were two doors, an outer and an inner, both very strong ; the outer door was raised two or three steps above the street. The Magistrate stood on one of the steps, and commanded my mother to be brought.

‘Just about that time my mother's father had died, but a Brahman came out and spoke rudely. The magistrate insisted on her being brought, so her mother brought her into one of the rooms, and her husband was allowed to speak to her, but with a screen between. She was very angry with him, and called him an outcast and a *chamár*, etc., and said she would never follow him. So, for the time, the Magistrate gave up the case, after having scolded the Thánedár, who had been secretly on the side of my mother's family, while pretending to be helping to get her away. Just about that time the city of Benares was in a great ferment, because the Government had issued an order that one man should cook for all the prisoners in the jail, instead of each one cooking for himself. It greatly enraged the Hindus, who assembled and demanded that the order should be revoked, and they even threatened and threw stones at the Magistrate. For this conduct they were punished, and all the people of the city were greatly cowed. My father's Christian friends took advantage of this, and went armed with clubs, and, headed by Mr. Leupolt, to fetch away his wife for him by force. The man, who had *rupees* 100 promised him, also accompanied them, and was successful in finding her and bringing her down

to them. As soon as she found herself in the gári with my father, she said to him, 'Never leave me again.' Crowds followed, and some Christian friends were for advising my father to take her away from Benares altogether for a time, but the missionaries said not a dog would dare to move his tongue, and they had better stay.

'My mother's mother sued my father for taking away her daughter, but, of course, that was no good, as she was his lawful wife. However, the Magistrate was obliged to summon my father to answer to the charge, and then everything depended on my mother, and whether or not she would elect to stay with him. When she was asked, she firmly said, "I wish to stay," and so the case was dismissed. My mother was, however, still angry about my father's Christianity. By degrees her anger cooled down. She read some of her husband's Maráthi tracts, and all at once, in a most wonderful manner, her mind changed, and within three months of the time of her being rescued she was a baptized Christian. After this her whole manner was changed; she became very gentle and humble, and wondered at the grace of God which had led her to Him. For a long time she was very weak and suffering, and when I was still a young infant, she passed away to the better land. She had been a Christian three years.' 'God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.' If human beings, with their finite understandings, had to manage affairs in the Mission field, how different would be their place! God's purposes are often hidden, but of each

we may truly say, it is 'ripening fast, unfolding every hour;' and full of blessed encouragement is the thought that, in many a dark village, in many a prison-like Zenána, the reare souls thirsting for God, and not a few, unknown to any, have already begun to drink of the Water of Life. There are men who in Mission schools first felt drawn to God, but who through succeeding years have been entangled in the world, and in the falsehoods of their religions—men upon whose book-shelves there are English Bibles, which have been really read perhaps once or twice since the day when they were given as prizes at school. There are such men in some houses visited by Zenána Missionaries, who, touched by little kindnesses shown to wives or children, will begin to speak with the English lady on the subject of religion, in such a way as to show that for years the good seed has been lying in the heart, not dead, but fruitless, because lacking earth and moisture.

They have their *intellectual* difficulties; they have their *practical* difficulties in the lives of some professing Christians, and in their own often complicated family relationships; but there is in many cases great reason to hope that the work in their hearts is begun.

One such man, after long and serious conversation with a missionary, wrote: 'On my return home, I commenced studying the Gospels again, with the aid of a Commentary. I have not yet finished the Gospel of St. Matthew, but I see that, when I read it with humbly inquiring heart, I do not find any objection or doubt concerning the truth of the Word of God to occur to my

mind.' And again, a few days later: 'I believe in Jesus Christ as a Man, and a Mediator between God and man. He was a Prophet, and those who, knowing Him, have no faith in Him, are unbelievers. Would you consider a man still an unbeliever who believes in the Gospel and loves Jesus Christ? Did ever Christ reject a person who sincerely expressed his faith in Him and love for Him, simply on account of his not being baptized?'

Those who understand the immense difficulties in the way of a public profession of Christ by a man in good position in India, will know that this is not a cowardly shrinking from baptism, and will feel that there is something very touching in this craving after the right way—this hope of not being rejected by Him of whom, in another letter, he speaks as '*our Lord Jesus Christ.*' This is but a sample; here and there, all over India, there are men and women 'feeling after Him, if haply they may find Him.'

It is not for us to ask *why* God allows some thus to go on groping after truth—*why* He does not at once bring out into His own glorious light all these people dissatisfied with their own religions and more than half believers in the truth of Christianity; but it is certain that in very many of the histories of Christians in India we find a series of strange and wonderful dealings of God's providence. These seekers after God seem to be permitted to continue undecided, perhaps puzzling and wearying themselves for years to find the right way, and at length some missionary has the joy of being used as

the instrument for leading them straight to their Saviour, Jesus Christ. Does it not seem as though God, who in His inscrutable wisdom uses these unworthy instruments, *waits* for them to come forward and prove themselves 'willing in the day of His power' to be used for His glory?

How many of these almost Christian men might be conversed with, even by missionaries who do not know the language; how many might be corresponded with, supplied with useful books, helped and encouraged to take that decisive step so often accompanied with persecution and disgrace, that men otherwise manly and strong shrink from it! And how many women might be found, not necessarily in the prison-like Zenánas—though there, too, there are some—but among those who go about, who see and hear what is going on, and who are beginning to lose confidence in their own religion of lies—how many almost ready to be gleaned for the Lord of the Harvest!

But the labourers are few. Yes, there are so very few women in England who realise how useful they might be to these hidden inquirers—so few who understand that there have been efforts made, work begun, influences brought to bear by missionaries and others, now gone perhaps to their rest, and that all these things need *carrying on*. Very often the threads of a life are just waiting for a God-directed hand to take them up and weave them, by His grace, into the life of His Church. Or we may use another metaphor, and say that many chains are being made, and workmen and

workwomen are needed to add, under the teaching of God's Holy Spirit, link after link.

One poor hard-working woman was attracted by the word *salvation* as she passed a crowd gathered round a preacher in a *bázár*. That preacher had added a link in *her* chain, though he knew it not, and it remained for a lady missionary, who could visit her in her own home, to add more and more. A few years ago a young man lived and worked in a village far away from Christians and churches, and he happened to receive a portion of God's Word from the hands of an itinerating missionary, and was so angry at its contents that he helped all the people who had received similar books to gather them together and burn them.

But the missionary's visit to that village was not lost; the conscience of that man had been touched, and although apparently nothing came of it at the time, yet a few years later, when he removed to a town where he came into contact with Christians, his chain needed but another link or two in instruction and influence, and he was brought to God. He is now a useful Christian servant, and his wife, to whom he was married after the death of his heathen wife, is an earnest and valued Bible-woman.

Who, then, among us happy English women, is willing to consecrate her service to the Lord for this work? Who will be used by Him for the furtherance of His gracious objects, the accomplishment of His mighty purposes?

Even while the words are being penned, an old man whom circumstances have brought out of the seclusion

of his native village into the bustling city stands before the door. He is very simple and child-like in all he says. He is a Christian; he does not know much, but he says he believes that there is One named Jesus Christ, who is very good, and who can forgive sins. He adds, with touching simplicity, 'They sold Him for thirty rupees, or perhaps it was forty, I am not quite sure, and then the people they sold Him to crucified Him; and because of His death He is able to forgive sins, and I believed this, and so I was baptized.' And then it turns out that eleven persons in all in that village, including the old man's whole family, are Christians; and his sons read to him every evening out of the Bible. No one visits these babes in Christ to instruct and help them. One's heart is deeply stirred to rise and go to see that village, and hear the whole story of the preacher who came and told them the truth, and also to teach and help them—perhaps establish a service for them and encourage them to bring in others—but where is the time? It would take some hours to come and go, and work at hand is pressing. 'More labourers' is still our prayer. Oh, when will English Christians understand what God is calling them to in India?

In one such village there was one young Christian; she was the only person there who professed the name of Christ, and she became a teacher in a small Mission school there. Under her influence the heart of one girl was drawn towards Christianity; this girl became ill, and went to a neighbouring city to a Mission Hospital. She had already heard and believed so much that she proved

a ready listener, and was ever anxious to be taught. Many weeks had not passed away before she declared herself desirous of being baptized, as she sincerely believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. She was further taught and tested, and, before her baptism, her parents were sent for, that it might be evident to them that she was not detained among Christians against her will.

The old people came; she was their only child, and it was affecting to see how *very much* they wanted her to go back with them. But the girl was very firm.

‘Father, mother,’ she said, ‘I do not want to be parted from you, but I must follow Christ, so I beg you to come and be taught, and follow Him too, and then we shall all live and be happy together; but if you will not do this, we must part, for I cannot go back from Him now.’ Then those poor old people tried coaxing and persuading, and then anger and threatening, and at last went away and left her with many a curse.

Next came her husband, to whom she had been affianced as a child, but whom she had never seen since. He demanded either the girl or the price he had paid for her, which was a *cow* and some rupees. The value of a cow and the additional rupees were given him, and he went away quite contented, and gave a written paper to say he released her from her engagement! He added his curse to that of the parents, and another for the missionaries.

Soon after this the girl was baptized; she then continued to live quietly among her missionary friends, and did some work to earn a living. One day she said she

felt a strong desire to go to see her parents, just to try to persuade them to listen to the Gospel; and, although it was felt that she was unlikely to gain a hearing, she was so urgent in her petition to be allowed to go, that she was yielded to, and started for her village in charge of an older Christian woman. On arriving she was driven from her father's door, and beaten with sticks. She begged for a little water to drink, but her father forbade any person in the village to give her a drop, and he went on heaping bitter curses upon her as long as she and her companion sat resting, during the heat of the day, in some shady place. She returned weary and disappointed, but pleased to think that she had at least *tried* to show her love to her parents, and bring them into the right way.

She was married to a nominal Christian, but most unfortunately her husband proved a very worthless fellow, and her short married life was full of sorrows and hardships, and once more she was received into the Mission Hospital very ill.

On rallying a little, she gathered up all her strength for another effort to reach her parents, and went again to her native village.

They admitted her to their house, but finding how ill she was, and fearing lest a Christian should die under their roof, they turned her out into the street. She was found by a Bible-woman, who had come to that place with a missionary lady, who was itinerating. They were staying at the Travellers' Bangalow. Thither the poor sick girl was taken, and there she was carefully tended

for the night, and then started back to her old place of refuge, the Hospital. After this she slowly sank, and just at the last her mother came, and it was she who was supporting her when she passed away. This poor girl was not well educated or very bright, but she had simple faith in the Son of God, and amidst all vicissitudes and troubles she kept true to that faith.

We may close our series of illustrations of the wonderful way in which God leads to Himself those whom He has in His mercy chosen to everlasting life, with one more picture of an Indian girl. Little Niroda was a child without home or friends, and she was found wandering alone in the neighbourhood of Burdwan in Bengal. She was cared for by first one and then another of God's people, and at length was happy enough to be brought under the special notice and care of a lady missionary.

She appeared unable, and was perhaps afraid, to answer questions about her former home and life; but it was pretty clearly made out that she had run away from cruel treatment, and later on, when far away from the scenes of her childhood, she confessed that she had fled from the unkindness of her *mother-in-law*; for she was nominally a wife, this poor little ignorant uncared-for waif! After a time she was transferred to the Converts' Home at Barrackpore—a home indeed! A haven of quiet rest for any weary soul, a place where it is a joy and solace to be, and where the love of God is shed abroad everywhere, and the house is filled with the odour of the name of Jesus!

It seems almost impossible for any woman or girl to go and stay there, and be surrounded by loving and praying friends, and not yield her heart to the Master of the Home ; and there Niroda was taught and drawn to Him.

She was baptized while there, and she was very happy in her life there, when fever set in, of such a severe and weakening kind that it was thought needful to give her a thorough change of air. She was therefore sent all the way up to the Panjáb, to the Hospital in Amritsar, and, after some time of careful nursing there, she became stronger and better.

She was next sent to school, but she did not prove strong enough for that, and she ultimately returned to the Hospital to learn to be a little waiting-maid to the patients. She was very neat and handy, and an exceedingly affectionate girl, making friends with every one, and all were sorry to part with her finally, when a proposal came for her to have a little home of her own, as the wife of a worthy Christian man employed as a bearer in a missionary's house. This man had been a Hindu faqir, but had been led to see the folly of such a life, and had become a very humble and earnest Christian.

It would be very amusing to English people to see the way in which such a proposal of marriage is made in the Panjáb.

Niroda was asked whether she would like a little home of her own, and whether Bhagat Singh might come and ask her for himself. She only replied, ' Anything you like, Miss Sahiba,' which meant that she was

well content that it should be so. When the would-be husband arrived, he brought an offering of a large plate of fruit and sweets, covered over with a fine Panjábí silk handkerchief. In the presence of the lady missionary this offering was made; but when he was told he might speak to the girl, or ask her any questions, his only answer was, 'Miss Sahiba, if you are satisfied, I am.' And neither could Niroda be persuaded to give any other answer when she was asked whether she was pleased, but she held out her hand for the plate of sweets—the faces of both being averted during the giving and taking—and then she ran away to divide them among her young companions; and the good man at once asked, 'May the banns be published on Sunday?'

And so the banns were published, and the day for the wedding arrived in due course, and both bride and bridegroom looked very happy; and when the service was over, they returned to 'afternoon tea' with their missionary friends; and after prayer, conducted by the Rev. Dr. Imáduddín (whose name has already appeared in these pages), they went away to their own little home. This happened less than two years ago, so we have not much more of the history of these young people to give, but we are glad to be able to add that they are exceedingly happy, and are striving together to live for the glory of God. Their confirmation took place at the same time, only a few weeks before their marriage, and they have by their humble and consistent lives given joy to those who watched over them at that solemn time with prayerful interest.

For a while they worked together among the lepers, but Niroda's health again gave way, and they are now in the village mission, where she does what she can, but she is never very strong. Her short life—she is still under twenty—has been eventful, and we cannot but praise God for His goodness to one who was only a little heathen waif, and who is now a happy Christian wife.

We revert to the leading thought of this chapter, and earnestly plead for workers with hearts all on fire with love for God, and for the souls for whom Jesus died, to live in India, and help in seeking out the hidden ones, in lifting up the fallen, in rescuing the little homeless children, and bringing them up for God.

Great is the honour put upon those who are called by the King of kings to this service for Him!

Great is the blessedness of those who do His bidding!

Great is the sin of those who refuse to obey His call!

‘There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the KINGDOM OF GOD'S SAKE, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.’

Prayer.

O GOD, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, and who art able to bring souls out of darkness into light by wonderful ways of Thine own past our finding out; We humbly beseech Thee to use us Thy servants in this work, to give to each of us something to do for Thee, especially in the things which Thou art

so graciously bringing to pass for India's Women. Grant us all a share in the blessed service of searching out these Thy Daughters ; and may Thy Name, which is great, wonderful, and holy, be magnified in many sanctified and happy lives in that land of darkness and the shadow of death. Let Thy Word have free course, and be glorified in that and in every other heathen country ; let Thy Missionary servants go forth full of love, energy, and prayerful zeal ; let those who are ordained unto eternal life be sought and found ; let the Kingdom and the coming of our Blessed Lord be hastened : For His sake, and in His name, we ask this ; and to Him, with Thyself and the Holy Spirit, be all glory, honour, dominion, and power, for ever and ever ! Amen.



GROUP OF CONVERTS AT AMRITSAR HOSPITAL.



CHAPTER IX.

Scattered Seeds.

*Let us watch awhile the sowers,
Let us mark their tiny grain,
Scattered oft in doubt and trembling,
Sown in weakness or in pain ;
Then let Faith, with radiant finger,
Lift the veil from unseen things,
Where the golden sheaves are bending
And the harvest anthem rings.*



EVERY ONE is familiar with the figure of seed-sowing as applied to missionary enterprise of all kinds, and we have the highest authority for making this special application of this particular work in the natural world. Our Lord Himself, in the parable of the Sower, has not only parabolically spoken, but He has also definitely explained the truth that His Holy Word is seed, and that human hearts are the soil into which it falls, the results depending on the state of that soil.

Much of the seed sown by the servants and followers of the great Sower, the Son of Man, is most anxiously and carefully watched over, and the first signs of its springing up in the tender blade are ardently looked for ;

but there are also many cases of which we might more aptly say that it is as if it should be cast into the ground, and the sower should go his way, and it '*should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.*' The labourer indeed is not unmindful of what he has sown, but he passes on to other fields, and often knows not where his efforts have been successful, and where some little precious seed is germinating. This is the case, for example, in the work of itinerating in heathen villages, where the missionary comes and goes, and perhaps never is able to revisit places where he has preached once. And this may happen even in large towns and cities where the missionary preaches to crowds, in which may be persons passing through on a journey, who will never have the opportunity of seeing or hearing that preacher again, and of whom he knows nothing, so that he is quite unable to think of them as having received the seed of the Word into believing hearts.

A striking illustration of this may be given from one of the most valuable books¹ we have on Indian missionary subjects, by a veteran missionary now gone to his rest. It is a story so full of interest and encouragement to those who are sent forth to scatter seed, and to those who help to send them, that it may indeed be considered well worth quoting in full. 'The itinerating missionary betakes himself occasionally to those great idol-shrines to which myriads of pilgrims at stated times resort. Ganga Saugor, the spot at which the Ganges falls into the sea, is one of these noted places of pilgrimage.

¹ *The Trident, the Crescent, and the Cross*, by Rev. J. Vaughan.

Many thousands congregate there from all parts of India. On one occasion a missionary was preaching there to a crowd of pilgrims; a man of respectability, who, like many others, had gone up to that place with a troubled conscience and with an undefined yearning after peace, stood outside that crowd and listened to the Word of Life. He hardly knew how to account for the impression made on his mind. He at least knew that a painful sense of restless doubt came over him. The idolatrous services which he had gone to attend had no attraction for him; he shrank from an interview with the missionary; he returned to his distant home. It would appear that his object was to get rid of the disquiet which the missionary's words had awakened—he wished to forget the whole thing. The effort was fruitless; night and day the strange message haunted him; the desire grew strong for more instruction; he set out for Calcutta; said he, "I will there seek some one to tell me more about this wondrous story of love." He knew not a soul in the city; but God knew him, and knew the errand on which he had come.

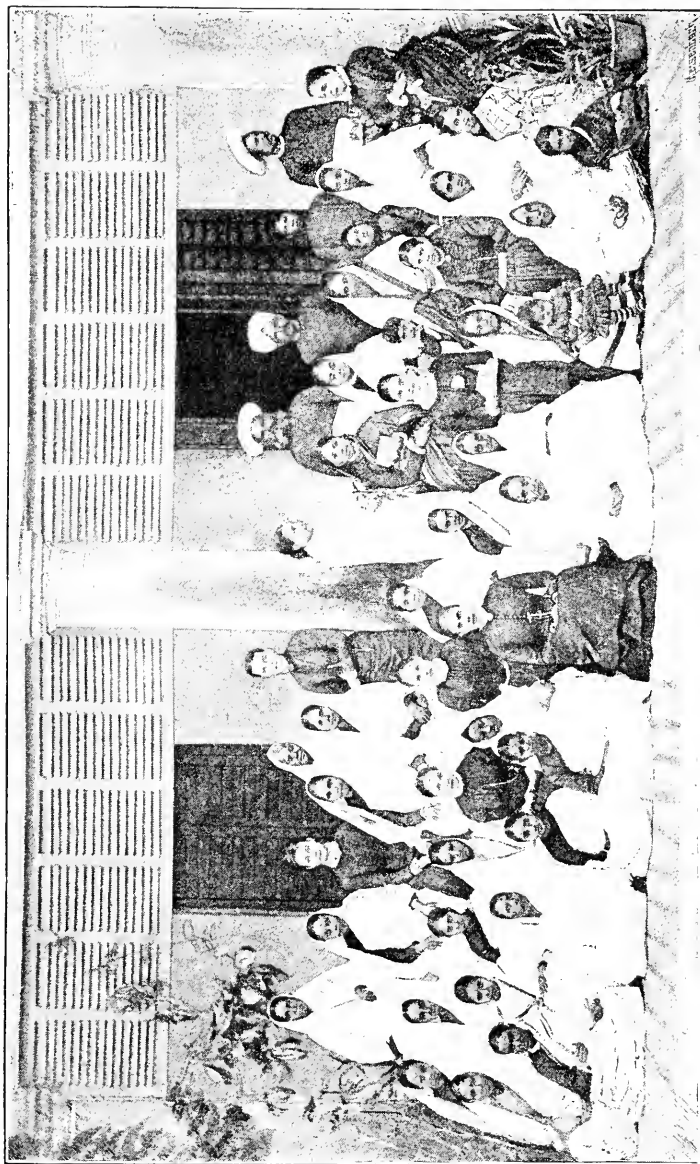
'The morning after his arrival he was wandering along the streets, not knowing whither he went, but hoping some chance might bring him to some Christian teacher. His steps were directed towards our Mission Station in that city. It happened that, as he was passing by, a Christian was reading aloud in his cottage doorway the Bengali Bible; the inquirer paused and listened, then accosted the reader, and told his desire for instruction.

'He was brought to us; nothing could be more

pleasing than the earnest spirit which he evinced ; during a short period of instruction, he drank in the Word with thankfulness and avidity. He was then admitted into the fold of Christ by baptism, and went on his way rejoicing. Who the preacher was at whose lips he first heard the saving Word, no one knows.'

To this we may add an illustration from work among women, and show how a faithful and earnest labourer may do her part in the field to which the Lord of the Harvest sends her, and may have passed away to enter into the joy of her Lord, and *afterwards* that which she sowed may yield fruit unto life eternal.

Miss Good, of the Church of England Zenána Mission, in Barrackpore, wrote in the year 1881, when she was so desirous to establish the present charming Converts' Home, which has since been so greatly blessed : 'Amongst the pupils in the Zenánas in Nyhattie, I have had one who, some years ago, when Miss Gomez was working here, was taught, and who then had earnest desires to become a Christian, but was hindered by family circumstances and the opposition of her friends. The seed then sown by the labourer long since entered into her rest, has been watched over by a faithful and prayer-hearing God, and is now bringing forth fruit. In January 1880, I heard of this old pupil earnestly wishing to read the Bible again, and I began to visit her weekly. The hour or so that I could spend with her was spent over God's Word, which she read with deep interest and feeling, and she soon began to speak of her wish to be baptized.



GROUP OF MISSIONARIES AND ASSISTANT WORKERS, WITH CONVERTS, AT CONVERTS' HOME, BARRACKPORE.

‘ For my part, whilst assuring her that Christ was indeed the only Saviour, and that she *would* assuredly receive salvation by laying hold of Him, I advised her not to be in too great a hurry about taking the final step of coming forward for baptism, knowing how much this involved, and fearing what she might be called upon to suffer. And I advised her to wait upon God, and ask Him to show her the path she should take, and help her.

‘ Much prayer was offered for her, and I rejoiced over her increasing earnestness week by week. And in May I felt I could not say again anything about waiting longer, especially as about that time she said one day, “ Perhaps if I do not come now, the desire I have may pass away.”

‘ She sometimes used to say to me, “ Why cannot you baptize me yourself ? ” and was particularly anxious to know whether there was any fear of her being rejected because she was not better educated. It was such a joy to be able to say to her, as Philip said to the eunuch, “ If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest ; ” and when she asked, “ Can you tell me for *certain* that I shall get a blessing ? ” to be able to point her to some of the Lord’s own words, that those who trust in Him should never be put to confusion. She often asked me to *take* her from her home, but I said, “ No ; the act must be your own, you must come to me ; ” and though it seemed very difficult, as she lived more than ten miles from our house, I could still say, “ If you trust in God, He will help you.” At last one day she came ! She could get no one to bring her in a boat ; but on she came, “ running nearly all the way.” Only when she neared Barrackpore

did she succeed in getting a conveyance, and thus reached our house.

‘ Next morning I was taking her up to Calcutta, travelling alone, not apprehending any trouble on the way ; but at the station we were stopped, and not allowed to proceed. Some distant connection of hers had found out she was with me in the train, and accused me of “ kidnapping.” A great crowd assembled, and we were obliged to go to the police station.

‘ There, before the Magistrate, N—— gave calmly and simply her reasons for leaving her home. “ I am a Christian,” she said, “ and I wish to be baptized ; then I will go back if I am allowed.”

‘ I then stated the facts of her coming, and showed it was her own act. Then the Magistrate, seeing there could be no question as to age, declared she had a perfect right to be a Christian, and that no one could interfere. We were accordingly allowed to go quietly on our way. After about a week’s further preparation, N—— was baptized.

‘ It was a happy day for me, and I trust she experienced that she did indeed “ get a blessing.” We took her to her home afterwards, but found it would not do to leave her there, so I brought her back with me to Barrackpore, and here she has remained ever since.

‘ For this *one* gathered out of heathenism this year we do indeed thank God, and wish to give Him all the praise, for if the change in her is a real one, it is His work. May it indeed be so proved, and may she be kept by His grace through faith unto eternal salvation !’

The distribution of *God's Word written* is a very important part of the missionary's work.

The Bible can often be left in the hands of a person who can read, when perhaps the opportunity for conversation and teaching is not permitted.

When the heart is not yet open, the seed can, as it were, lie near, waiting for its softening, or for some yielding of the surface, which shall let it find a germinating place.

Missionary Societies must thankfully acknowledge the aid of secular education. It is no part of their work to *give* it without Scripture teaching, and they should indeed earnestly pray that it may not be carried so far unaccompanied by true religion as to result in a nation of well-educated infidels! But in as far as it prepares a way for the Gospel, all friends of Missions may well *thank God*, one anxiety being to reach every person who can read, and supply him with the Word of God. It is for this, without doubt, that the great and gracious Disposer of all events has permitted the present quite extraordinary wave of education to pass over India. There is an immense difference between now and five years ago; so many more *women* can now be found who can read some language, and the number of men and boys who are really good readers is very large. In driving about the streets of a large city, it is wonderful how many applications one gets for books, and when one begins to give away tracts, or portions of the Bible, it is remarkable how many hands are eagerly thrust into the *gári* to get one.

Probably scores of these men and boys dare not be

seen receiving such a thing at home—they would be *afraid of the women!*—but out in the street, lost in the crowd, they will venture to take, and we have heard several of them at once beginning each to read his own in an audible undertone, as he turned away from the *gári*, so bent upon becoming master of the contents that he forgot the presence of the others, and became unmindful of the jostling and shouting of the crowd in the narrow street. So the precious words of life get disseminated. What becomes of the books? We cannot tell; but we know God has said, ‘My Word shall not return to Me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.’

We have no such assurance for our own words; but for *His*, how full and how blessed the promise!

Some Zenána ladies were once visiting a sick Cashmíri girl, whose husband and father-in-law could both read. They were all very poor, being weavers and workers of the beautiful shawls whose price is so great, but for the work of which so scanty a pittance is obtained by the poor workers.

But they were nicely behaved, intelligent people, and always gave their missionary friends a welcome. The husband was not often present, but his father always was, and his eager, yet gentle, manner when listening to the Bible, and his wistful questions, made him an object of great interest to the visitors. At length one day he said he could read, and he added, anxiously, ‘Could I have a copy of that book?’ He was soon supplied, and began steadily reading it. His son did not at all approve of

this proceeding, but he also began to read the Bible, in order to be able to argue about its contents! Several times they were visited and conversed with, and the old man seemed much affected by what he heard, and said he believed a good deal of it, but wanted more light; he also expressed a desire to attend a Christian service. This was too much for the son, who at once took care that the visits of the missionaries should be discontinued; every time they called, it was said every one was out, or all the family were eating, or sleeping, or keeping a fast or a feast, and so, for two years, that house remained closed against influence from *without*; but *within* there was the Bible! After two years, one of the same band of workers happened to be calling at another house in that very galli, and the old man caught sight of her, and took her into his house, and began eagerly asking questions about the Bible. It then proved that he had been all the time reading it, and that his interest had deepened, but that now his son had taken it away, and he asked so touchingly, 'May I not have one for myself, separate from him?' This, however, the son prevented, but promised to let the poor old man have the book 'sometimes.'

After this he was seen on several occasions, and one day after a long and interesting talk about Isaiah liii., with Acts viii. 26-40, he looked at his son, one of whose cavilling questions had been answered beyond dispute during this reading and talk, and he said to him, with almost a look of triumph, as if he were on the Christians' side, 'Now, what can you say to that?' It was a moment of joy to the missionary, but joy a little damped by the

strong persuasion, 'I shall not be allowed to come here again!' The hard and angry look of the younger man made her feel quite sure that he would henceforth prevent her visiting them. She therefore gave once more, and with all the earnestness she could command, the loving invitation of Jesus Christ to the weary and heavy-laden. And then she left, to see him no more at present. Next time she called, the door was closed against her.

Whether, in some wonderful way, that door will again be opened, we cannot tell; perhaps the same workers will not have the joy of the harvest in this world.

But there is the seed!

Let us think of it with *the expectation of faith!*

A few years ago a call came to the Medical Missionaries living in Amritsar to go to a State at some distance and see the daughter of a gentleman there. One of them prepared for the expedition, and, taking with her two Christian servants, was soon on her way. She had not taken the precaution to wait till a *written* request was sent, but had started at once on receiving a verbal message. She had a very long drive from the nearest railway station, and arrived at dusk on an exceedingly wet evening. The first thing she heard was that she had never been sent for—it was all a mistake! And although she found the house of the patient's father, and confronted him with his messenger, he only said over and over again that he knew nothing about it. It was such a very wet and cold evening, that some place of shelter was most desirable; and the missionary asked for the

Travellers' Bangalow. She was told there was none, and that she could not with safety remain all night unless she were some one's guest.

The driver of the *gári* utterly refused to return, and it was rapidly getting dark. What could be done? Again the missionary addressed the father of the sick girl, 'Come now, confess you *did* send for me, and I will forgive you; and as you are a gentleman, you must treat me as a lady should be treated, and find me a suitable place to stay in.'

Thus appealed to, he owned that he *had* sent, and added, 'When I had asked you to come, then I became frightened, because you are a missionary; but if you will not tell any one I asked a Christian to come to this place, I will get you for the night an *empty Zenána*.'

Friends in England will think that this was not a very tempting prospect. But it is necessary for the missionary to acquire the habit of being easily pleased and made comfortable; and, without any misgivings or anxiety, the lady to whom this apparently barren prospect was offered, followed her host down the narrow, wet, and darkening streets of the city.

Yes, it was a veritable 'empty *Zenána*'—there was no mistake about it. It was a set of rooms on the roof of a large house, and their mud floors and very dirty walls looked anything but inviting.

But now the host began to do all in his power to make up for what he called 'the little mistake in his manners.' He went away saying he would send everything necessary for comfort, *and* an English dinner!

And still further, he gave a promise that in the morning the English lady should go and see the women of his family.

In a very little time a room was made quite comfortable. It is really wonderful how quickly these things are done in India. There were table and chair, carpet and *chárpaie*¹—travellers carry their own bedding—and, to make all cheerful and bright, a portable stove called an *angíthi*, full of blazing charcoal. This is the way in which *Zenánas* are always warmed, and it is very common to find these convenient little stoves put under the beds of sick persons in whose case fever is coming on, or who are too old or feeble to resist the severe cold of the *Panjáb* winter.

And lastly, according to promise, came the ‘English dinner.’ It was very abundant, consisting of two roast fowls and many other dishes, with a few specimens of *Panjábi* delicacies, as different kinds of curry, and some varieties of *pilau*.² With the dinner came the message—intended to be most polite—that it was hoped it would be enough for one! However, there were three to partake of it, as by this time the two servants had become very hungry. After dinner, some time was spent in prayer for that dark city, and then the missionary quietly and happily rested in her strange quarters, and woke in the morning with the pleasant anticipation of seeing the *Zenána* ladies, and bringing her visit to a profitable end. But alas! there came first a delay in the way of an earnest request

¹ Bedstead.

² A favourite dish, made of rice with many spices, and either meat or raisins and sugar.

that she would just eat another 'English dinner' (as breakfast), and she was afraid to offend by refusing, so waited patiently for a long time. After this breakfast came the father of the patient, and said, 'Madam, I am very sorry, but in the night all the members of my family *suddenly* had to go a distance of a hundred miles to see a relative.' Those who know the customs and habits of Indian ladies will smile at the absurdity of a whole party of them starting quietly and suddenly at night on a journey of a hundred miles!

For the missionary there was nothing left but to accept the apparent disappointment, and recognise it as *His* appointment.

She left the Zenána where she had sojourned, and went into the streets. No women of any class were visible. She scattered text-cards everywhere in the streets and lanes, and went away. Some time after this the patient was brought to Amritsar for treatment, and by God's blessing a perfect cure was effected, and the girl and all her family became very grateful.

One day her mother sent out a servant to see the city, and bring her word what could be bought in the shops. He returned, and told her that there were shops of all kinds, and he finished his account with the mention of the Christian Book Depôt.

'The very thing I want!' she cried; 'go again and buy me the Christians' *Injil*.'¹

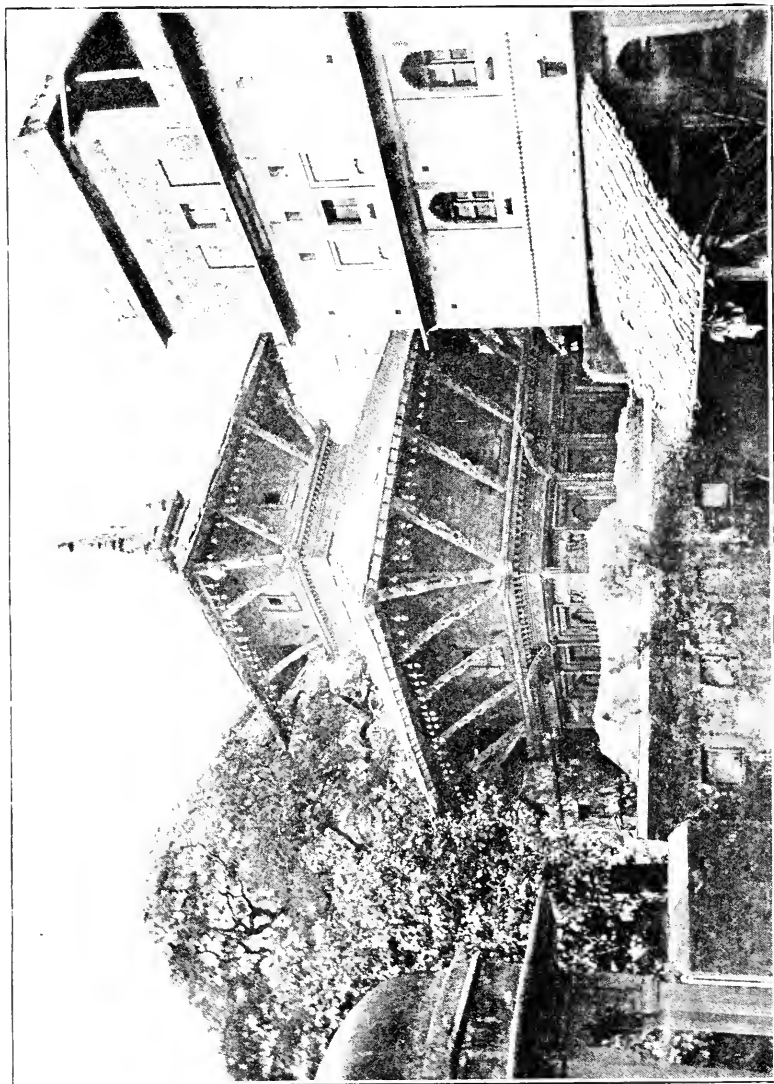
It was brought to her, and one day her missionary friend saw it lying on the patient's bed. 'Oh, you can

¹ Gospel.

read?' she asked. 'No,' answered the mother, 'I cannot, and I do not know how this book came here.' The lady took it up and began to read, and soon found that the old woman was eagerly looking over her shoulder. She hesitated intentionally, and said a word wrongly, and she was instantly corrected! Then she said, 'Why did you not speak the truth when I asked you if you could read?' 'Oh, my old servant was in the room then,' was the reply, 'and I did not want her to know, because she would tease me, so of course I told a falsehood—what is the harm of that? But now she is not here, I can tell you that I sent for the book; I have a great desire to read it through, and I am going to take it home.' Well, she took it home, and a few months later another worker from the same Mission, who went to that State to visit another family, was sent for by this old lady and her daughters-in-law, who listened well to her reading, and allowed her to talk to them quite freely on the subject of religion; and she found that the Bible was being read carefully through. There it is—another instance of scattered seed. We cannot trace the story to its end, for the harvest is not come—only the seed is sown.

Will not readers of this incident pray for this Bible, that it may be greatly blessed in that dark State, where not a Christian teacher is living!

On another occasion, the same missionary lady took a journey to a more distant State, and spent some hours in the *Zenána* of a gentleman of good position there, attending to two or three sick ladies. Just before leaving, she was sitting in the little room of one who was too ill



NEPAULESE TEMPLE, BENARES.

to be with the others, and trying to impress upon her the importance of listening to the Voice of God, calling her to repentance and offering her life eternal. 'The answer was, 'I can read; can you give me some book to teach me more about this?' A copy of the Scriptures in Hindustani was left with her, and often remembered in prayer as the days and weeks passed away. After some months another medical visit was paid, and when others in the family had been seen and long conversed with, the poor invalid, who was still obliged to keep her own room, was quietly visited alone for a few minutes. In the course of conversation she drew the Bible from under her pillow and said, 'I have read it half through, and *it is very good.*'

It was suggested that she should do nothing without telling *him*—(the polite way of speaking of her husband)—and she replied, 'Oh, he knows, and he says I may read it!' Just outside the Zenána that day the missionary met 'him,' and he said, 'I have a great desire to read some good English book; could you give me one?' The lady answered, 'I can give you the *best Book* in the *best English.*' He smiled, and said, 'I see your meaning; you mean your sacred book. Well, I *do* want to read it, so I will take it.' He received a copy of the Word of God in English, and promised to read it through.

Again we must say the harvest is not come; the seed is only sown. Will not readers of this narrative pray for these two Bibles, that they may accomplish in that State some great purpose of God, and prosper in the thing whereunto He has sent them?

We may add to these experiences of seed-sowing a

few lines from the pen of one of the Indian ' Daughters of the King,' a Bible-woman in Madras, and her description will illustrate the way in which these humble women go from house to house, taking every opportunity of scattering the precious imperishable seed of the Gospel, which they have proved for themselves to be ' the power of God unto Salvation.'

She says: ' To-day I met with five widows in one house. Three were very young, the other two were old. One of the three was a stranger to me. She wanted to know the reason of my visiting them. The others told her: " Ammah is a Christian; she comes here to read God's book, and to explain it to us. It is much better to hear her read and speak, than to pass our time in idle talk." Then I said to the stranger that I had brought a good message to her also. " What! a good message to *me!*" she exclaimed. " Yes," I said, " to you and to all these friends here. Listen; here is my message—This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. The great and holy God, the Lord Jesus Christ, came to save every sinner. Are you a sinner? If so, the message is for you. " Yes, I am a sinner—a sinner," she said in a deliberate manner. " I was born a sinful creature, and therefore *this has been my fate,*" meaning her having become a widow while so young, and suffering the miseries of widowhood. I explained what the word sinner meant; that all people in the world are sinners, by birth from Adam; that we commit sin in thought, word, and deed, before the holy and righteous God; and

that sinners deserve His wrath and punishment ; but that He, seeing the wretched state of mankind, in mercy sent His Son Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of the world ; that He came and bore the punishment due to sin, and so redeemed our souls from eternal death. “ Is not this,” I said, “ God’s great love to mankind ? Will you not accept this great Salvation, which He so freely offers through His Son Jesus Christ ? Does not this message make you feel happy ? Earthly joys will fail ; they never last long. You see for yourselves how soon all the comforts and happiness of your married lives came to an end, but those who have a friend in God, by believing in Jesus, become the children of God and heirs of eternal life.” All the five widows were very attentive, and seemed much consoled, especially the stranger, who seemed deeply affected, remarking in her simple way, that God was merciful to her, having brought her there to hear this message from me.’

And we cannot help being struck by the words of a Zenána missionary, who tells how in one house the evil one waits *to snatch away the seed* where it has been for some weeks faithfully sown ; how the head of the house says firmly that, unless she will consent to give only secular teaching, his door must be closed against her visits, for the teaching about Jesus Christ is sometimes the cause of much trouble ; *it seems to take such hold upon the people*. (These are remarkable words !) But while thus obliged to turn away from this house, she is able to do so with the prayer of faith, and to rejoice in the fact that the seed *has* been sown. And again, she

tells how in another house there had been signs leading the sower to hope that there would be at last, after many years' work, an abundant harvest ; but the enemy does mischief again, and one day she finds her pupil's face sad and troubled, and has to listen to a confused story from her trembling lips, of how she had made up her mind to leave all and follow Christ, come what would, but friends, hearing of her determination, had given her books to show that one religion is as good as another, and these books having had the desired effect, the poor deluded woman adds, ' Now I believe in nothing, and must live and die as the beasts that perish.' Still the house is not closed, and the seed-bearer continues her visits, and tells us how the message is still listened to, and so she prays on hopefully that this withered plant may yet revive. And the same worker introduces us to another house where she is received with smiles of welcome *until she begins to give her Gospel Message*, when at once some cooking or other neglected duty is suddenly remembered, and her hearers are scattered ; there seems to be no heart in the house prepared for the message. She recalls how, not so very long ago, they appeared to hear with joy, but now other things seem to have entered in and choked the Word. Like every other seed-bearer, however, she can add something cheery about some *good-ground hearers*, and we give from her own pen the sketch of three very hopeful ones, over whom she is rejoicing :--

' We receive,' she says, ' a hearty welcome from an intelligent-looking woman of middle age, who has for

many years been a hearer of the Word. The death of her much-loved only son has been the means of the heart-change we believe to have taken place.

‘The especial message for her to-day is St. Matthew x. 32, 33. She tells us she is longing to confess her faith by baptism, but that her husband says, “Wait a little, until my old father dies.” But she adds, “I said to him only yesterday, ‘Your father is old, I know, but still, you or I may die before he does : our boy has gone, and we are both here. Why delay? Surely true peace of mind, which neither of us can have until we do what we know to be right, is worth more than all beside.’”

‘After committing her and her loved ones into the Saviour’s care, we go to a house in the next lane, where we believe the seed has taken root in the heart of a young mother. From her own lips we learn that she is clinging by faith to Christ, and loves, in her simple way, to tell Him all her wants. She gladly joins us in earnest prayer that grace may be given her to let her light shine brightly in her home, even though she should meet with persecution.

‘There is one other who will be expecting us, a bright young Bow, whom we hope one day to have the joy of receiving into our midst. She is now under age, but has fully made up her mind that, when at liberty to act for herself, she must confess Christ openly. In her bright way she tells how she has just returned from a visit to some relations, and that every evening she used to gather the little ones of the household together on the roof, and tell them all about “her Jesus.” She was so

delighted, because they had loved to listen and always begged her to tell them more. Surely He will bless this effort made by His lowly servant! Ay, surely, the sower

“ Cannot toil in vain ;
Cold, heat, and moist and dry,
Shall nourish and mature the grain
For garnerers in the sky.”

There is another kind of seed which must be sown. The sowers themselves must follow the example of Him who, being Himself the great Giver of life, yet fell into the ground, and died lest He should abide alone; and, dying, He brought forth much fruit. ‘The seed is the *Word*.’ ‘The good seed are the *children of the Kingdom*.’ Which of us dare *abide alone*, bring none to glory—avoid the humiliation, the toil, the death to self and the world, and lose the blessed joy of living for Him who died for all, and of bringing forth for Him ‘much fruit’?

Shall we not pray that it may be true of *us all*—
‘They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever’?

‘Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the
KINGDOM of their Father.’

Prayer.

ALMIGHTY and Most Merciful LORD of the Harvest; We plead, in the name of Thy blessed SON JESUS CHRIST, the promise which Thou hast promised us concerning Thine own living Word. Thou hast said it shall not return to Thee void. Thou hast gracious purposes to fulfil. Thou hast sent it forth into the world for the accomplishment of those purposes. Now, we beseech Thee, water with the dew of Thy heavenly blessing the precious seed wherever it has been

sown. Let it germinate in hearts which have already received it ; let not the devil snatch it away ; let not thorns choke it ; let not want of the power and grace of Thy HOLY SPIRIT cause promising plants to wither and die ; let fruit be found in every case where the seed has been sown—the fruit of righteousness and true holiness—to Thy honour and glory.

Prepare more hearts for hearing and receiving the truths of Thy Word. Gracious God, prepare hearts in dark Zenánas in India, and then thrust forth labourers into that field, and endue them with holy faith, and heavenly power, and joyful patience, to scatter the seed far and wide, in the full assurance of hope.

Hear our prayers on behalf of every sower and every reaper in Thy great Harvest-field, and hasten the glad time when he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together ; for the sake of our Blessed Redeemer, JESUS CHRIST. Amen.





CHAPTER X.

‘I am debtor . . . I am ready.’

*‘Yes : the sorrows and the sufferings,
Which on every hand we see,
Channels are for tithes and offerings,
Due by solemn right to Thee ;
Right of which we may not rob Thee,
Debt we may not choose but pay,
Lest that Face of love and pity
Turn from us another day.*

*Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to yield Thee
Gladly, freely, of Thine own ;
With the sunshine of Thy goodness,
Melt our thankless hearts of stone :
Till our cold and selfish natures,
Warmed by Thee, at length believe
That more happy and more blessed,
'Tis to give, than to receive.’*



At the end of accounts such as those contained in these pages, of the crying needs of India's Women and the efforts which are being put forth by the Church of Christ to meet those needs, it may seem almost superfluous to say anything in defence either of Missions generally, or of Zenana Missions in particular. But alas! even in England, and even to day, it is too common for the earnest energetic worker in the cause of Missions to be

smiled at as an enthusiast, and to be met with many objections to the enterprise for which he pleads.

Arguments against foreign missions are often so cleverly worded as to render it exceedingly difficult for those who have not seen the work to be ready with an answer, and many are the trials and disappointments of collectors, and holders of working parties, and friends who arrange meetings, or are striving in any way to help on the good work, who find those whom they ask to assist primed with apparently good and sufficient reasons against doing so. There is so much plausibility in what is said that it is no wonder if sometimes the most courageous and ready in the defence of missions has to confess, ‘I really didn’t know how to answer them!’ But these arguments and reasonings are only *apparently* good; they are like the ghosts of our nursery days, which it only took a *bright light* and a little *common-sense*, to ‘lay.’ It is a pity that any worker should be troubled with these idle and vain excuses, and it may be well to furnish them with answers gathered from experience in the mission field.

We may take three leading objections to mission work in general, and in particular to that among India’s daughters now being undertaken by English women, and find in these all minor arguments included.

OBJECTION I.—‘*After all, there is no great need.*’

‘We see,’ say some people, ‘the urgent need of helping the poor of London, we hear the bitter cry of its dark places, we know that dispensaries and soup-kitchens

and schools are required here badly enough, but as to looking after *the heathen*, we cannot see the need; they are all very well as they are;’ or, as some one has lately ventured to write, ‘I often think that a great deal too much money is sent out of the country for missionary work. There are wards in many hospitals which are closed for want of funds, and the genuine unemployed are starving for the want of money wasted on Hindus and Chinese.’

And not only will this class of arguers maintain that we are not called upon to give to other lands out of the abundance of our spiritual and temporal blessings, but they will go to the length of asserting that the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Mohamedan will all get right at last, and that there is *no need* for us to upset their time-honoured religions and to give them our Western notions. God is merciful, and if a man lives according to his light he will be all right. Nay, more, there is something so beautiful in these several religions that what reason have we to suppose they are not as good as our own; or, at any rate, if the religious creed is not as good, the morality and goodness of the people are often equal to those of the Christians. Why, then, trouble ourselves to disturb them? Of course we can at once make answer that even if we could see ‘no need,’ even if we could not understand the reason why; we should still go and carry the news of salvation by Jesus Christ all over the world, because He, the infinitely wise, the Omniscient One, *told us to do so*, and faith questions not the reason of His commands, asks not for explanations, stays not to consider results, only

says, 'I am blind, I see not Thy reasons, I know not why this should be done ; nevertheless at Thy word I shall do it.' But this does not satisfy our opponents, they want reasons, and we are glad we can give them what they ask.

We might answer by pointing to China's millions, and to other lands where Buddhism has sway. We might show there—(1) the grossest idolatry, Buddha being worshipped as an incarnate divinity ; and (2) the grossest immorality, the influence of Buddhism being in this respect pernicious almost beyond belief. For example, just as polygamy exerts its baneful soul-destroying power among Mohamedans, so are Buddhists debased and demoralised by polyandry, which is among them legally established. This consideration will surely detract from the so-called 'beauty' of this form of religious belief.

We might turn to Africa or to the islands of the seas—we might remind our readers of teeming millions living in the unchecked indulgence of sinful passions, worshipping devils, sacrificing human beings, or practising cannibalism as so terribly and vividly described by the late Bishop Patteson in his account of the 'pristine state' of some of the islands of the Melanesian group. He relates how one old chief had fifty-five wives, and almost absolute power over an island with 6000 inhabitants. If any one offended this chief he was killed and divided, the trunk being given to the slaves, and the thighs reserved for the chief's special eating. A young girl who refused to marry him was killed and eaten, and if any person omitted to crouch on coming into his presence, the penalty for the offence was *to be devoured* ;

in fact he seems to have made excuses for executions in order to gratify his appetite for human flesh, which was considered as particularly dainty fare. We might go on to show the changes wrought in those islands by nothing but the power of the Gospel of Christ; we might linger with praising hearts before the beautiful picture of men walking in the footsteps of that beloved and honoured Martyr Bishop, and preaching the Gospel he had brought to them; men who were once little ignorant wild boys, gathered by his loving care into the fold of the Good Shepherd, but who, had it not been for his work and the work of others like-minded, would have been blood-thirsty savages; and we might show many other such islands where that all-transforming Gospel power has not yet been known, and where *to-day*, while Christians talk of 'no need,' the terrible atrocities and wickednesses above described are constantly practised.

But our special subject is to prove the needs of India's women. The value and reality of any religion are seen in the *homes* of its people. We would ask those who say there is no need to interfere with Mohamedanism, or with Hinduism, whether they can defend religions which result in *unholy homes* and *unhappy women*. We only truly estimate the evils of these false religions when we go behind the *pardah*. One great curse at once meets us—plurality of wives, with its attendant envy, hatred, malice, and heart-burning jealousy. And beyond this, in many Mohamedan families three or four wives are not enough, and as the Mussalman cannot get as many more as he likes allowed him by

special revelation, after the fashion of his great prophet, there will often be the slave-girl, whose children play with the children of her master and mistress, and in future—if they are girls—hold the same position with regard to the sons of the family as she has held with their father; not the least terrible proof of the hardening and demoralising effect of all this upon women is the fact that the lawful wife or wives will be quite comfortable about such a state of things, and look complacently on at what causes the visitor, *not only as a Christian but as a woman*, to recoil with horror. Yes, all true womanhood is stamped out in such cases, and everything like decency and honour is cast away to satisfy evil passions.

Unholiness in the home is indeed one of the first-fruits of Mohamedanism.

Nor does Hinduism come short in producing similar effects. Its first great social evil is child marriage, which is not merely nominal, but real, children being actual wives at ten, and sometimes mothers at twelve or thirteen years of age. We start back with feelings of inexpressible horror from the bare imagination of the tiny child-wife, of her never having been in reality a child, of her premature knowledge of womanhood with its sorrows and sufferings, of her life a burden from its very beginning, of the absence of love, of childish joy, of play, of innocence. The picture is too terrible, and we perhaps say we would fain hope it is not a true one. But *it is true*, and true to life in the case of many thousands—yes, it is true that thousands of innocent little children are actually wives in India.

And, of course, hand in hand with the terrible evils of child-marriage go those of widowhood, concerning which it is enough to say here—as the subject has been more fully entered into in another place—that the cruel wrongs and degradation of the Hindu widow are beyond description, and can scarcely be pictured by the most fertile imagination.

While in a country which owns our sway, whose people are our fellow-subjects, and amenable to our laws to a great extent, the case of women and female children is so awfully sad, and apparently so hopelessly beyond relief by the aid of any existing laws ; while we can tell of thousands of child-widows entering upon their life of misery and shame, and frequently of compulsory sin, just at a time when our own merry English girls are entering their boarding schools, we tremble to think there can be English men—and even *women*—callous enough to say *there is no need to go and care for the women of India.*

It is true that in so vast an undertaking, in such an uprooting the customs of ages, individuals and even communities may well feel powerless ; and, truly, the power is not ours but God's, 'He can work, and who can let it ?'

But something He gives us to do ; we can promote by every means movements in the right direction, and encourage those Hindu gentlemen who are themselves beginning to advocate later marriage, and the remarriage of widows.

And we can *pray* ! We speak of Suttee and other atrocities as having been abolished by law ; the fact is

they were abolished by prayer! How many faithful men of prayer poured out their hearts to God in these matters we know not. Let the same mighty agent be tried on behalf of the child-wives and widows. 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.'

And, beyond these terrible social evils, there is the thought of millions needing the very elements of education—of millions needing nursing and tending in sickness—of millions in whose case the word home, as applied to the places in which they live, sounds like satire—of millions who are strangers to all that makes the name of wife, daughter, sister, so precious to the Englishman—of millions who sin blackly without knowing what sin is, and who have never heard of forgiveness, or the possibility of virtuous and honourable lives—of millions uncared for and unrescued passing out of a miserable existence in time into the gloom of a hopeless eternity, while nominal Christians, who perchance frequently go through the form of bending their knees in cushioned pews and saying, 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done,' settle themselves down comfortably among their own privileges and blessings, and meet the missionary with the words, 'There is no need to go to the women of India.' And it is almost unfair to the heathen not to add—while we thank God for the bright and beautiful Christian lives of many Anglo-Indians, and their noble faithfulness to Him as well as to Queen and country—that the need of carrying the Gospel to the women of India has been, if possible, *intensified* by the conduct of some of our countrymen in that land. Perhaps some

would rather we should draw a veil over the too terrible fact that poor degraded victims of the evil passions of professing Christians from Europe may be counted up among Mohamedan and Hindu women by many a hundred. Who slew all these? The Searcher of all hearts will one day rend away that veil. Ah! may He not even now be saying, 'Shall I not visit for these things? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?'

Need! The need is awfully real; there is work here for earnest faithful women almost without number. Let us for ever close our ears to the pitiably paltry reasoning which would try to persuade us *there is no need*.

But perhaps as soon as we have fairly established the fact of the necessity of carrying to the women of India the message of eternal life, we are met with--

OBJECTION II.—' *There is no success!*'

It is well to pause a moment and consider the meaning of the word success. What is it? We may answer negatively. It is *not* being able to report a certain number of converts from among the heathen; it is *not* the flourishing schools, the filled churches, or the increasing number of baptisms. These things are elements of success, they are not success itself. These are not the objects for which the missionary labours; he works not for success in the general acceptance of the word, but for his Master.

We may say that every life truly lived for God is in itself success. Let us take, for example, the life of Henry Martyn. Many and many a time has it

been said that here was a man prematurely cut off, dying when he should have been in his prime—dying without knowing that he had accomplished anything as a missionary; surely this was a wasted life! Have we ever cast a stone into a lake and watched the first tiny circle round the spot where it parted the waters, and then the next circle a little larger, and the next and the next, ever widening and increasing, on to the very edge? Mark, *to the very edge!* for no matter how large that lake may have been—no matter if its boundary was so distant that the eye could not reach it, the circles could not end till they touched the water's utmost limit; they themselves may have become too faint, too indistinct to be any longer traced, but short of the bank they could not cease. Just so was that noble life; it was gone out of sight prematurely, as we foolish mortals call it, and then came a circle. What was it? The conversion and baptism of one man who had been brought to God by means of Henry Martyn's preaching, but of whose change of heart and faith the missionary never had the joy of knowing. And then, circle after circle, thirty-nine Hindus being brought to holy baptism through the instrumentality of this one convert. And how far will the influence of these reach? We may be certain that the circles of good and blessing caused by the life and death of Henry Martyn will never cease as long as there remains any missionary work to be done in the world; and 'the day will declare' what was the true success of that one life.

If success is to be measured like this, then how utterly incompetent are we to pronounce on the fruitfulness, or

otherwise, of any individual missionary or any solitary mission, or to declare concerning any instrument which God is using in His own omnipotent hand that it has no success!

Yet we can show that for the strengthening of faith, and for the comfort and encouragement of His people, God does graciously allow, not only success in His own grand way, and in the sense in which we have said that every life lived for Him is in itself a success, but also signs and tokens of prosperity, proofs that the labour of His servants is not in vain. Is it not a fact worth knowing that at the present time there are in India *half a million* Christians of the people of the land (without, of course, counting Eurasians and country-born Europeans), and still further, that out of this half-million more than 145,000 are communicants?

One story may show how God has worked in bringing in these thousands one by one; how, in some cases, He has used many of His servants in the bringing out and teaching and building up of a single convert. In every case there have been wondrous ways in the movings of God's providence; and to form anything like an adequate estimate of what has been accomplished, we must try to think not of the five hundred thousand in the aggregate, but of the individual cases. We must allow ourselves to dwell in thought on the individual *missionaries*, too, who have been used in the work; on their separate talents, character, and influence—on the sorrows, struggles, disappointments, the prayers and tears in sowing, the joys in reaping, of each. The record of all this is on high.

Many of these faithful labourers have gone to their rest without realising how surely they themselves had been a centre of good and light, and now before the end of a century and a half from the time when Protestant Missions may be fairly said to have been established in India, we are able to look upon half a million of the population as Christians.

God has richly blessed all that has been done, and in reply to the statement (which is quite true) that the number ought to be greater, we must remind any who wonder that there are *only* half a million of Christians of the paucity of the effort put forth by the Church in proportion to the gigantic amount of work to be done. We shall see much in the history of each life of a convert which we may study to make us exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!'

Between sixty and seventy years ago Golakn ath Chatterji was born; he was a Kulin Brahman, and was strictly brought up according to Hindu law. It is said that at one time, when in the province of Bengal the religion of the Hindus had fallen to a very low ebb, a king in that province sent to the King of Kanouj, begging him to send a number of high-caste Brahmans to restore it. They were sent, and were successful in reviving the dying devotion of the people; but they themselves became divided into many sets or families, altogether one hundred and fifty-six. Of these, fourteen were called noble or *Kulin*. Of the Kulin Brahmans there are again six principal divisions, and of these Chatterji is one.¹ The

¹ See *The Trident, the Crescent, and the Cross* (Rev. J. Vaughan), page 29.

position of a Brahman boy can scarcely be realised by those who do not know India. He is a sacred being; he must be kept from every kind of contact with those of other caste; he must be respected, honoured, worshipped in a way which seems to us perfectly marvellous as an exponent of the audacity and arrogance of the Brahmans. It is very wonderful that in days of progress and civilisation these boys should be allowed to mix with other students, but the eager desire for learning is *daily* more and more relaxing the stern laws of separation, and is doubtless being used, among countless other circumstances, as an agent in the powerful hand of God for the final overthrow of caste. When Golakn ath Chatterji was young the most strict care was taken in sending boys of his high caste to school, and he was allowed to go only to a school for Brahmans; but he had a great taste for English, and this was overruled by the God who loved him, and who was about to call him and use him. He was allowed by his parents to go to the school opened by Dr. Duff in 1830, and the reason he succeeded in getting permission to go there was that he so ardently longed to read English; his parents were unwilling to deny him the advantage, and he could have it only at Dr. Duff's! In this school he became acquainted with a student who was a Christian at heart, though not then by profession; and this young man was attending, and persuaded Golakn ath to attend, a course of lectures delivered by Archdeacon Dealtry in his own house, for the benefit of young educated Hindus. It was here he got his first favourable impression of Christianity, and the plan of

salvation ; he became very interested, and he has been known to describe himself as one upon whose soul the light of truth broke suddenly, leading him to be utterly regardless of consequences, and to talk freely about salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ to all his friends and neighbours.

At first they laughed and scoffed, but finding that of no avail, they joined together to prevent his attending any more of those lectures ; and later on, when he still persisted, they persuaded his parents to keep him away from Dr. Duff's school. They would no longer eat with him, and he found he was becoming an outcast from their society. In those days in Calcutta the difficulties and *dangers* in the way of becoming a Christian were very great ; even now there is a terribly heavy cross for the Hindu convert to take up, but it is light compared with what it was fifty years ago. In the year 1835 he left Bengal, and began a long and tedious journey, the greater part of it being taken on foot, a journey of a thousand miles, to the Panjáb. It is long and tedious now, with a railway ; what must it have been in those days ? His first principal halting-place was Benares, where he became acquainted with some Hindustani Christians and some missionaries, who encouraged and cheered him. He thence proceeded to Allahabád, where he was introduced to Judge Morris, of whom he speaks in terms of tender regard as a very pious, devoted Christian. This good man sent him to a missionary, and did all he could to help him ; but he did not stay long in Allahabád, as he had no means of subsistence. He made another short

pause at Cawnpore, and then proceeded to Delhi. In Delhi he had an acquaintance, a munshi, who was a great traveller, and who had accompanied Captain Burns in an expedition to the Caspian Sea. This munshi received the traveller very kindly, promising to befriend him, and they began to journey together to Bokhara ; but finding that the munshi tried to dissuade him from Christianity, Golaknath left him, and declined to have any further help from him. He obtained a post in Delhi, and remained there some time ; but his convictions of the truth of the Gospel would give him no peace, so he proceeded to Karnal in search of further teaching. There he was very kindly received by the chaplain, who also introduced him to some other Christian gentlemen. At Karnal he opened a school, and he was placed under a C.M.S. Hindustani missionary named Anand Singh. He soon found his position a peculiar one, for among the Christians he was considered a Christian, among the Hindus a Hindu. When he reflected on this state of things he saw his own lack of moral courage, so he took the whole matter into grave and earnest consideration, and decided to become a Christian indeed. At this juncture he was greatly helped by reading the *Pilgrim's Progress* with the chaplain. Soon afterwards he went to Lodia, where, after nine month's teaching, he received baptism. This was in the year 1837. At his baptism he finally threw away his Brahmanical thread, and afterwards joyfully exclaimed that he felt he had with it thrown away the world and all his burden of guilt! Soon after he married a very worthy woman, and began the happy and

useful life of a missionary to his own countrymen. He has lived for many years in Jullundur. His school has long been so famous that one meets with men of good education in different parts of the Panjáb whose acquaintance with the truths of the Bible, and general favourable impressions concerning Christianity, induce one to ask where they were educated, and the answer is almost sure to be, 'At Pádre Golaknáth's school.'

It is not known—it never can be known in this world—how far-reaching are the effects of this one good man's preaching and life, or how many actual converts he can number as the result of his labours; but of one Mohamedan whom he baptised, and who owes much to his spiritual instruction, we can say that he in his turn is a preacher of righteousness, and a good man shining for his Master in the place where God has placed him, and that he has given one daughter to the Zenana Medical Mission, in which she is now a valued missionary, being a well-trained medical worker in dispensary, hospital, and house to house practice, and also a faithful and earnest teacher of the way of life to those of her still dark countrywomen with whom she is brought in contact.

A few extracts from the autobiography of the Rev. Dr. Imáduddín, may be allowed to illustrate the gracious dealings of the same all-powerful and merciful God in the case of a very different man, a Mohamedan of the Mohamedans, as Golaknáth was a Brahman of the Brahmans. He writes: 'When I was fifteen years old I left my friends and relatives for my education, and went to Agra, where my brother Moulvie Karímuddín was the

head-master in the Urdu language. I remained there a long time under him to receive instruction; and as my only object in learning was, in some way or other, to find my Lord, as soon as I had leisure from the study of science, I began to wait on faqírs, and pious and learned men, to discover the advantages of religion. I frequented the mosques, and the houses set apart for religious purposes, and the homes of the Moulvies, and carried on my studies in Mohamedan law, the commentaries of the Korán, and the traditional sayings of Mohamed; and also in manners, logic, and philosophy. Even when I was a student, and knew nothing of the Christian religion, I had some doubts in my mind respecting Mohamedanism, in consequence of intercourse I had had with some Christians; but the taunting curses of the Moulvies and Mohamedans so confounded me that I quickly drew back from all such thoughts.' He next tells how his great friend Safdar Ali earnestly warned him against reading Christians' books, and tried to keep him as rigid and bigoted a Mohamedan as he was himself. But such are the marvels of God's grace! This man Safdar Ali was *first* brought to Christ, and was baptized before Imáduddín. On the day of Safdar Ali's baptism, he was found weeping so loudly and bitterly that his Christian friends thought he was beginning to regret the step he had taken, but he explained that his sorrow was because his friend Imáduddín was still a Mohamedan. The missionary and all the other Christians of the station—Jubbulpur—agreed to pray daily for Imáduddín's conversion. Within a few months the prayer was answered, and Imáduddín had

become 'Christ's faithful soldier and servant.' But before this happy point was reached, he had been many years an earnest seeker after God, undergoing trials and privations, and undertaking religious duties, the severity of which cannot but strike one with wonder and amazement. At one time he says he 'read steadily day and night, and continued doing so for eight or ten years, under the conviction that all knowledge was a means of acquainting himself with the Lord. He next describes how he entered into *mysticism*, and he says: 'The Mohamedans always at first, and for a long period of time, set forth before the inquirer after truth the outward rites of their law, and their bodily exercises and unprofitable stories, and the affinities of words used in their controversies. They then tie him by the leg with a rope of deceit, in order to make him sit down and rest contented, by telling him that what he has already learned consists merely of the *outward* ordinances of Mohamedanism, and the science of their common-place book; but that if he wishes to prosecute his studies, and investigate the realities of religion, and thus attain to the true knowledge of God, he must go to the faqirs and the Mohamedan saints, and remain in attendance on them for many years, because they possess the *secret* science of religion, which has been handed down by succession, from heart to heart, amongst the faqirs from the time of Mohamed, and which secret science is the fruit of life. . . . As soon as I was entangled in this subtle science, I began to practise speaking little, eating little, living apart from men, afflicting my body, and keeping awake at nights. I used to spend whole

nights in reading the Korán. I used to shut my eyes and sit in retirement, seeking, by thinking on the name of God, to write it on my heart. I constantly sat on the graves of holy men, in hopes that by contemplation I might receive some revelation from the tombs. I went and sat in the assemblies of the elders, and hoped to receive grace by gazing with great faith on the faces of the Soofies.¹ I used to go even to the dreamy and intoxicated fanatics, in the hope of thus obtaining union with God. And I did all this besides performing my prayers five times a day, and also the prayer in the night, and that in the very early morning and at dawn; and always was I repeating the salutation of Mohamed and the confession of faith. In short, whatever afflictions or pains it is in the power of man to endure, I submitted to them all, and suffered them to the last degree, but nothing became manifest to me after all except that it was all deceit.'

Following the directions of a certain book of devotion given him by his Mohamedan spiritual guides, he began to practise yet more severe austerities than any he had attempted before. He writes: 'The celebrant must first perform his ablutions on the bank of the flowing stream,² and wearing an unsewn dress, must sit in a particular manner on one knee for twelve days, and repeat the prayer called Jugopar thirty times every day with a loud voice. He must not eat any food with salt, or anything

¹ A peculiar sect of Mussulman devotees.

² He reached this sacred stream, after wandering as a faqir 2500 miles 'without plan or baggage.'

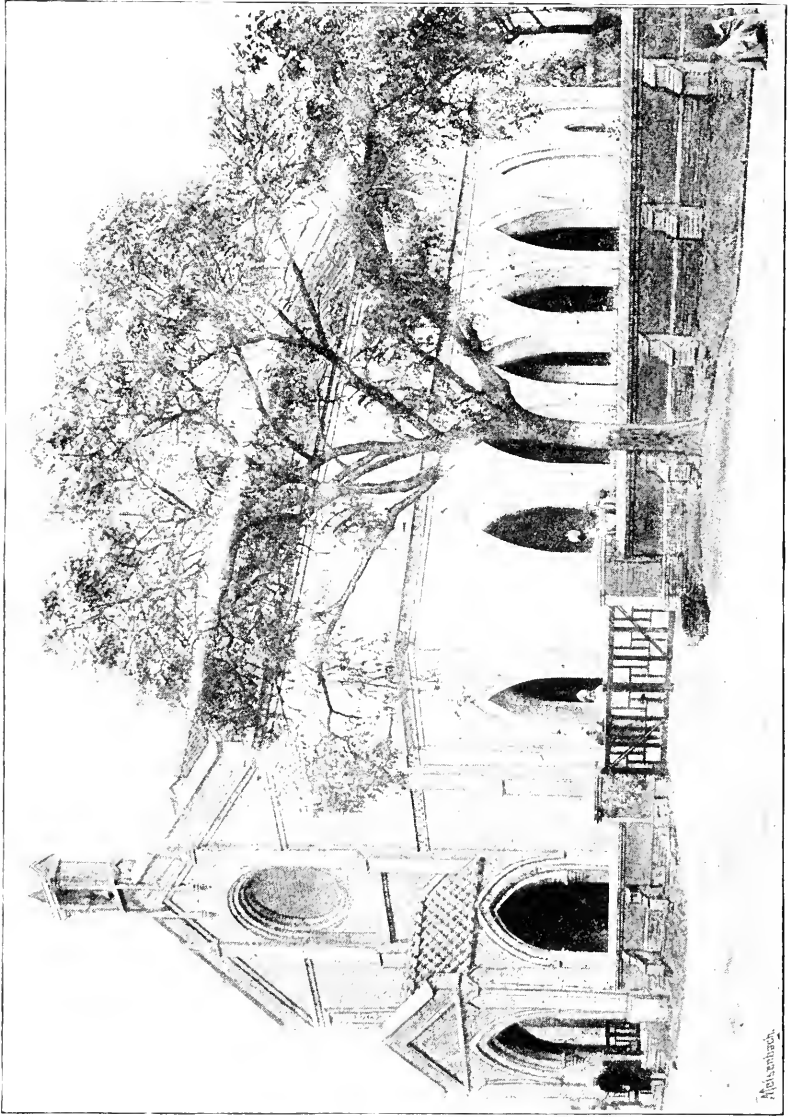
at all except some barley-bread of flour lawfully earned, which he has made with his own hands, and baked with wood that he has brought himself from the jungles. During the day he must fast entirely, after performing his ablutions in the river before daylight; and he must remain barefooted, wearing no shoes; nor must he touch any man, nor, except at an appointed time, even speak to any one. The object of all this is, that he may meet with God, and from the longing desire to obtain this, I underwent all this pain. In addition to the above, I wrote the name of God on paper during this time 125,000 times, performing a certain portion every day; and I cut out each word separately with scissors, and wrapped them up each in a ball of flour, and fed the fishes of the river with them, in the way the book prescribed. My days were spent in this manner; and during half the night I slept, and the remaining half I sat up, and wrote the name of God mentally on my heart, and saw Him with the eye of thought. When all this toil was over and I went thence, I had no strength left in my body; my face was wan and pale, and I could not even hold up myself against the wind.' Eight or ten years passed away, during which he had 'growing abhorrence of the law of Mohamed,' and he at length persuaded himself that there was no true religion at all. At length he heard of the baptism of his friend Safdar Ali, and *in order to be able to dispute fairly with him about the step he had taken in becoming a Christian*, he began to study carefully the New Testament, the result of which was *his own conversion!*

The Rev. Dr. Imáduddín, as he now is, is a clergy-

man in Amritsar. His preaching is very able; and his earnest, burning words on behalf of the cause of Christianity—his faithful, eloquent pleading with sinners, and proclaiming of the simple Gospel message, cannot but fill the hearts of his hearers with deep thankfulness.

Many Mohamedans come to church, and the Zenána Missionary is frequently met during the week by thoughtful men, still bound fast in the terrible chain of Mohomedanism, but seeking to know the truth; and such men will sit with her when she visits their wives in their Zenánas, and, with open Bible, talk over the sermon of the previous Sunday. Is not God working? Are Missions a failure?

‘But,’ urge the assailants of our cause, ‘*Europeans from India* tell us there is but little doing, and that what is attempted is unsuccessful.’ The first reply to such a statement is the question, ‘*What Europeans?*’ Is it fair to take the opinion of those who, living in India with all their thoughts and time otherwise occupied, have never inquired concerning Mission work? If we desire information on any subject, as, for instance, painting, music, literature, we go to the man who has mastered the subject, as the artist, the musician, the man of letters; and shall we be less wise when we are studying the concerns of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ? If we desire to understand their progress, we must go (not necessarily to missionaries only, but) to those who love Him, who love His Kingdom, who love His work, and who watch with thrilling interest everything which



HINDUSTANI CHURCH AT AMRITSAR,
of which the Rev. Dr. Imaduddin is one of the Clergy.

W. G. G. G.

is their Master's! *They* will know; *they* will be able and glad to tell us.

And well may we triumph in the fact that God has not left Himself without noble witnesses. The men whose names we can bring forward as supporters and promoters and lovers of Mission work are men whose names are honoured wherever known—names such as Lawrence, Edwards, Lake! A Mohamedan the other day, in mentioning these and others, exclaimed ‘ Oh that England would send us many more such men!’

We may speak of two saints of God only very lately gone to their rest—General Reynell Taylor and Colonel Martin, who rejoiced to spend and be spent in the cause of Missions; and the list might be greatly added to, but suffice it to say that these highly educated, deeply thinking men—these men of strong common-sense, and possessing such powers of forming right judgments—were without an exception foremost in their genuinely hearty support of any effort to make known the Gospel of Christ in India, not merely in the way of giving a large donation when asked for it, but by inviting Societies to send workers, urging on and encouraging the workers when sent, and voluntarily placing money with generous munificence at the disposal of those who had to find the means for sending them. And by all these, and many other thoughtful men, the pressing need of *carrying the Gospel into the Zenânas* has been felt, as all have been convinced that multitudes of young men and lads might, in the present state of education and advancement, be powerfully influenced for good, if it were not for the

tremendous opposing power of their mothers, sisters, and wives.

European ladies, not missionaries, have sometimes set a good example in voluntarily going to visit the Zenánas of such Hindus and Mohamedans as may be in connection with their husband's offices. Would that all Englishwomen living in India would thus endeavour to find for themselves healthy and interesting occupation in trying to alleviate the monotony and lighten the darkness of the lives of their heathen sisters! In a house lately visited for the first time by a missionary, it was found that an Afghan lady could speak and read a little English, and also could read Hindustani quite nicely; she could write easy words and do some simple work; she unfolded a wrapper, and took out a well-worn copy of *Reading without Tears*. It looked as if it had been used in an English nursery, and the good mother who took her own children's left-off book to a Mohamedan Zenána was pictured by the grateful missionary as the preparer of some very promising soil for future efforts. The Afghan lady could not remember the name of her kind friend; she only knew that she was the Mem Sahiba of some Sahib in a station where she had once lived, and that she had sought her out, and continued to visit her for a long time. The other women in the house had not learned to read, but all united in telling the missionary 'how the Mem Sahiba loved us,' and it was impossible not to *long*—as one saw the little pile of books and work, and the Testament which this good visitor had not omitted to give—'Oh that more would bring their books and their

work and their *love* into these sad homes!' What a good time it would be for Zenána prisoners and Zenána missionaries.

We must face one more argument, and it is by no means an uncommon one. Suppose we have persuaded our opposers that the need of India's Women is great, and the duty of carrying the Gospel to them binding upon us, and suppose we have also shown beyond the possibility of contradiction that there are results, that Missions are successful, that God is blessing and honouring faithful efforts, and that the best and noblest of Englishmen in India prove, by their words and deeds and generous gifts, that they are satisfied of the utility and power of the work, we have still to be prepared for

OBJECTION III.—' *There is so much to do at home.*'

This is considered by many to be final and unanswerable, and to settle the whole question, leaving the collector for Foreign Missions without any reasonable ground for continuing his efforts. The great enemy of all God's work never seems to succeed so well in his attempts to hinder the progress of good as when he can use for a weapon an argument in which there is some truth, and can put that weapon into the hands of one of God's own children.

It is so in this case. It is *true* that there is much to do in England. It is *true* that there are children to teach, sick to tend, drunkards to reclaim, fallen ones to be rescued, evil-doers of all sorts to be restrained. It is *true* that on every hand, placed as she is in the midst of

‘the world,’ the Church has an immense amount of work to do in nominally Christian lands, but it is *also true* that there are very large numbers of workers, that never has there been such a time of busy effort as at the present day in England, and that large reinforcements of workers may be constantly expected from among those who owing to circumstances cannot engage in Foreign Mission work. Yes, it is true that there is much to do, and it is also true, thank God! that there is much being done. In India there is *much left undone*. And let us draw a contrast. In England there are upwards of 15,000 parishes, each with its system of workers, its ways and means of reaching the suffering, sad, and sinful; and this is counting Church of England parishes only, and not reckoning the almost innumerable other efforts put forth by God’s people in a great diversity of ways. In India there is about one missionary for every 2,000,000 souls!

Admit that there is *much* to do in England; there is *much more* to do in India; and he who is so anxious to assist in the *much*, is not consistent unless he also gladly aids in the *more*!

But we may be well assured that as a rule those who need so great persuasion, and must have so many objections answered, before they can be induced to support Foreign Missions are *not* the most forward in the support of home work; and the hospitals, schools, reformatories, and many other institutions, the maintaining of which comes under the head of what *ought to be done*, would soon be closed if they depended for their support on the generosity of those who ‘*leave the other undone*.’

To the true and loyal servant of the King of kings there is but one sphere of work, and that is the whole world; there is but one object, and that is the glory of his Lord and Master; there is but one question, and that is,—‘Lord, what wilt *Thou* have me to do?’ He knows that the Gospel is ‘the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;’ and he knows that ‘faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God;’ and the *much* need for the proclamation of the truths of the Gospel in one country does not paralyse his efforts in countries where there is *more* need, but rather quickens him to redouble those efforts, and to give or to labour not only to his power, but even beyond his power, lest, through his negligence or apathy, or want of earnest endeavour, any should remain in darkness whom he might have brought into light. His ideas are not bounded by a small island, for he has heard the Master’s own words, ‘The field is the world;’ and if, to assist in reaching to the furthest limits of the field, he finds he has to give money, houses, lands, father or mother, sons or daughters, or even his own life, he is able to say with the great Apostle, ‘I am *debtor* . . . I am *ready*!’

Debtor! we are all debtors. We happy English women, who can read, write, enjoy countless different studies—we are debtors *to every woman who cannot!* There are thousands of women as intelligent as we are, who are only ignorant because they have not had our privileges; we are deeply in debt to them. We women who are free, who are placed in the social position for which God designed us, who are honoured and cared

for and loved—we are debtors to every Zenána captive, debtors to all who have been refused women's real 'rights,' debtors to all secluded, degraded, down-trodden women. Ah! to how many millions, then, are we debtors! And we women who have comforts and alleviations in sickness, who can command (as the poorest in our land can) generous and skilled surgical and medical aid, we are debtors to all who suffer unrelieved, who groan unheeded, who die unpitied. We who take dear little ones in our arms, and know the *luxury* of the clinging love of a child, we are debtors to every woman who has had her innocent playful child snatched away from her to satisfy the requirements of a vile marriage law. We who, in our own persons or in the cases of honoured and beloved mothers, have had to thank God many times for experience of the universal tenderness and kindness shown in a Christian land to widows—we are debtors to every Hindu widow in her degraded miserable life; we owe her a debt which we can only measure by the sacredness of our own or our loved one's sorrow, and the depth of the 'comfort wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God.'

Shall debtors dare to say that there is no need to pay? It is true we have of ourselves 'nothing to pay,' but He who has opened our eyes to the enormity of the debt, has put into our hands the wherewithal to meet it. His grace is sufficient, His name is all-powerful, His presence is promised. Freely we have received, let us freely give.

We shall never think there is no success if we honestly

look at *ourselves!* Every person living in the liberty of the children of God, and in the enjoyment of all the innumerable blessings of the Gospel of His grace, is himself a monument of mercy, and a proof that the worst of sinners may be forgiven and saved. Let us look on the history of our own land, or the history of our own hearts and lives, and say—That which has made us what we are as a nation, as individuals, must be omnipotent; while this grace is in the world, we need never despair of the grandest success.

May Christ, the King of glory, touch by His mighty power the heart of *each one* of His favoured Daughters in Christian lands, that the debtors may all unite in one holy effort of prayer, and giving, and going, that the debt to His Daughters in India may be lovingly and ungrudgingly paid, and thus His Kingdom be advanced and His coming hastened!

‘And the KING’S servants said unto the KING, Behold Thy servants are READY to do whatsoever my Lord the KING shall appoint.’

Prayer.

HOW many, O JESUS, of Thy sheep have no shepherd!—none to show them their danger! none to keep them out of danger! none to lead them where they may find pasture! May Thine infinite wisdom and goodness, O LORD, reveal to us the means by which Thy Gospel may be preached unto them: and prepare their hearts to receive the Truth, that they may be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God! Send them pastors

after Thine own heart, full of knowledge, compassion, and zeal ; who, pitying their sad condition, may instruct them in the ways of truth and of eternal life. Increase the number and the graces of Thy messengers and ministers ; and touch the hearts of all Christians with a true compassion, like Thine, O LORD, for all such as are strangers to Thee and the merits of Thy death, by which they have been redeemed, that they may cheerfully contribute to a work so acceptable to the Divine Majesty. And may Thy HOLY SPIRIT, by the preaching of the Gospel, add daily to the Church such as shall be saved, through Thy merits and mediation, O LORD and Lover of souls ! Amen.

May the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



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