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tion. Besides, when he—the first native of rank and influence, who had ventured to break through the inveterate prejudices of centuries—arrived in England in 1831, he was present when the famous memorial “affirming that the act of the Suttee was not only a sacred duty, but an exalted privilege, denouncing the prohibition as a breach of the promise that there should be no interference with the religious customs of the Hindus, and begging for its restoration,” was sent by Lord Wm. Bentinck to the Privy Council. When presented to His Lordship, he had refused to rescind the act, but offered to transmit it to the Privy Council. Ram Mohun Roy’s presence in England at the time was a good antidote to the memorial, and no doubt helped in its defeat, as did also the influence of Lord Wellesley, Grant, and others.

Those early days in India were stirring times of which there is little history and little reliable data; but it was the birth time of the reform thought that has spread all over India. Only here and there, now, can we find much trace of it; here an article written by some enthusiast on the condition of widows, and there a strong denunciation of child marriage, or of some other evil that enthralled women.

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Dr. Duff one evening found the subject of debate in a debating society of some fifty Hindu students to be "Whether females ought to be educated." As to the theory of the subject, they ended in being unanimous. One married youth exclaimed, "Is it alleged that female education is prohibited, if not by the letter, at least by the spirit of some of our shastras? If any of the shastras be found to advance what is so contrary to reason, I, for one, will trample them under my feet." Says Dr. Duff's biographer: "It was of societies where such questions were discussed, that a vernacular newspaper exclaimed: 'The night of desolation and ignorance is beginning to change its black aspect, and the sky, big with fate, is about to bring forth a storm of knowledge which will sweep those airy battlements away that have so long imprisoned that tide of thought.'"

The next in order is ISHWAR CHANDRA VIDIASAGAR, who led the agitation out of which rose the bill for the remarriage of widows, in 1855-1856. He was the learned and eminent principal of the Sanskrit College in Calcutta. He was the son of a poor Brahman, but he had a remarkable mother, and it is said that it was from her that he received the inspiration to work for widows.

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On one occasion a child widow came to her house, and she was so moved with pity that with tears in her eyes she said to her son: "Thou hast read to the end of the *shastras*, and hast thou found no sanction yet for the remarriage of widows?" This question first turned the attention of her son to the great subject that engrossed much of his life, and led finally to the passing of the above Act. His espousal of the cause of women was very earnest, and his proving that the refusal of remarriage to widows had no Vedic sanction had great weight because of his reputed position as a Sanskrit scholar. In a pamphlet on the subject of the remarriage of widows he pathetically exclaims, after speaking of the power mere custom has: "When men consider the observance of mere forms as the highest of duties and the greatest of virtues, in such a country would that women were never born. Woman! In India thy lot is cast in misery!" Such language to-day would be called sentimental and exaggerated. But so far as we can learn, Mr. I. C. Vidiyasagar remained a most orthodox Hindu all his life, and to him, possibly more than any other man, is due the existence of the Act whereby a widow can remarry, provided she and her friends are brave enough.

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His statue was recently unveiled at the Government Sanskrit College, Calcutta. The unveiling of the statue is a significant incident inaugurating a new phase of public life in India in commemorating the lives of useful men, and of making a link between the past and present. But considering the fact that the majority of Hindus still practically refuse remarriage to their widows, there is a touch of irony in the action. The abolition of the custom would have been a more enduring and fitting monument to his name than any block of sculptured marble.

Later on came the wonderful career of KESHUB CHUNDER SEN. In 1870, on his return from his visit to England, he inaugurated a number of reforms. When in England the *Times* and the *Echo* had struck him with the irresistible power of English public opinion in exposing wrong, encouraging right, and educating the common people. With the ready instinct of a true reformer, he started the *Sulav Samachar* (*Cheap News*) in November, 1870. It was a weekly *pice* paper, the first enterprise of its kind in India, and it made a great sensation, meeting with unexpected success. Three or four thousand copies were sold weekly, and classes who had never handled a newspaper before, began to eagerly

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read and pay for it. This stimulated repeated imitation, not only in Bengal, but all over India, till, at the present moment, cheap journalism has become a widespread institution, and has created a public opinion which the government itself is obliged to respect."¹

Keshub Chunder Sen was so delighted with the intelligence and refinement of the women of England that he did all in his power to raise the status of women in this country. He started a normal school for native ladies, which was attended daily by nearly fifty high caste Hindu ladies from the Zenanas. Government was so pleased as to give an annual grant of two thousand rupees toward its support; and the improvement of women's condition took on a new impetus from that time.

A kind of Ladies' Club was also started, in which ladies read and discussed papers. Similar societies now exist in Madras and Bombay. Perhaps the most important measure he brought about, that affects women, was the Brahmo-marriage Bill that was passed largely through Mr. Sen's efforts, on March 19th, 1872; which is practically a way for the performance of a civil marriage between any two natives regardless of

¹ "Life of Keshub Chunder Sen," by Protap Moozamdard.

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caste or society. The only drawback to it is that the marrying parties have to declare that they do not profess the Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, Parsee, Buddhist, Sikh, or Jain religion. This has kept it from being more popular than it is, though a number of very interesting marriages have been made possible by it. On December 2d, 1898, a most interesting intermarriage occurred at Madras, which was possible only through this Act; and which we hope will prove to be a forerunner of many more. The brave couple, of different castes, were Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu, M. B., C. M. (Edin.) Medical Officer to His Highness the Nizam's Imperial Service Troops, Hyderabad; and Miss Sarojini Chattopadhyay. As an illustration of the possibilities of present day reform, we quote a paragraph from an Indian newspaper:

"Mrs. Ram Mohan Roy, a Brahmo lady of culture and refinement, acted as the bridesmaid and added grace and beauty to the solemnity of the occasion. The ceremony opened with a prayer by Mr. S. Somasundaram Pillai, B. A.; and after the prescribed rituals had been gone through, Rao Bahadur Pandit Veerasalingam Pantulu Guru, officiated as the minister for the sacred occasion. After the minister's charge to the happy couple regarding the responsibilities of life, Dr. Aghorenath gave away the bride and united the pair in holy wedlock in due form, the marriage being solemnized in the presence of Mr. F. D. Bird, the Registrar of Marriages of Madras Town. Rao

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Bahadur Pandit Veerasalingam Pantulu Guru then pronounced the benediction. Before the several guests dispersed, some refreshments were served and partaken with very great cheers amidst toasts and replies in perfect harmony without any distinction of caste. During the short time they spent in the Brahmo Mandir the couple received the hearty congratulations of all friends present and drove off to Capper House Hotel, where Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu has been staying. Dr. and Mrs. Govindarajulu left Madras for Hyderabad on Sunday evening.

"This interesting event must be regarded as unique in many respects, and as marking an epoch in the history of the reform movement in this country. The bridegroom belongs to the Balija community, whereas the bride is a Brahman by birth; the former is a Madrasi, whereas the latter is a Bengali; and both are England-returned Hindus. Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu, M. B. C. M., completed his medical course in England, and his wife, a Matriculate of the Madras University, spent a couple of years there to receive higher education."

Mr. Sen also set on foot another agitation on the subject of ascertaining the proper marriageable age of Hindu girls. As President of the Indian Reform Association, he addressed, in April, 1871, a circular letter to the most eminent medical authorities in India wishing to have their opinion on the question. This agitation and the medical opinions obtained were most helpful in educating public opinion on the subject. In a speech in the Town Hall in Calcutta, he thus summarized the views received:

"The medical authorities in Calcutta unanimously declare that sixteen is the minimum marriageable age of girls in this

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country. Dr. Charles makes a valuable suggestion : he holds that fourteen, being the commencement of adolescence, may for the present be regarded as the minimum age at which native girls may be allowed to marry, and may serve as a starting point for reform in this direction. In conformity with his suggestion, and the opinions given by the other referees, we have come to the conclusion that, for the present at least, it would be expedient to follow the provision in the bill which makes fourteen the minimum marriageable age of girls in this country, leaving it in the hands of time to develop this reform slowly and gradually into maturity and fullness."

Thus, under the Brahmo-Marriage Bill, that was afterward changed to the name of the Native Marriage Act, (and is in substance a Civil Marriage Bill) the husband was bound to complete the age of eighteen, and the wife fourteen; and also under this Act, bigamy, polygamy and infant marriages were made impossible in the Brahmo-Samaj.

The tide of reform kept swelling until 1881, when a new reformer appeared on the scene. This time not a Hindu, but a Parsee, MR. B. H. MALABARI, who right royally espoused the cause of women, especially in respect to "enforced widowhood and child marriage." The next decade, 1881-1891, forms what we feel has been so far the "golden age" of social reform in India. "It was the widow," wrote Malabari in 1885, "who first set me thinking about the whole

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question." It will be best to let his biographer tell his story.

"Malabari was not a Sanskrit scholar like Ram Mohun Roy, or Vidadiasagar; and he was not a Hindu. But he felt vividly the sin, the folly, the unnaturalness of this custom of infant marriage, and traced the woes of widowhood to this cause. How this pernicious custom could be abolished was a question which long perplexed him. He knew full well the economy of Hindu homes; he was not unaware that many of these were happy homes in a way. But was there not a large amount of misery which could be easily avoided? And was not this practice a dead obstacle in the way of female education and of national progress? The evil was universally admitted; and surely it could not be an evil without a remedy?

"He was thoroughly familiar with the tremendous difficulties of the Hindu reformers and the fate which had overtaken some of them. A Hindu sovereign could have easily put an end to such practices if convinced of their illegality from the Shastric texts. But an alien government was a *Kumbha karan* (A Sleeping Giant) in social matters, extremely difficult to awaken to a sense of its responsibility; while the strong-

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hold of Hindu usage and superstition was harder to conquer than *Ravan's Lanka*.

“What, then, was an outsider to do for the victims of these baneful customs? Was he to fold his arms, and do nothing because he was an outsider? Had humanity as a whole any outsiders *within itself*? . . . Was it not the plain duty of every man to do what lay in his power to mitigate the hard lot of his brothers and sisters? Were not the suffering child-brides, and the suffering Hindu widows, with their heads shaved for the sin of losing their husbands, his own sisters, though he was a Parsee? . . . Was it not clear that female education would never make any appreciable progress so long as girls had to be married in their tender years? Had not Keshub Chunder Sen proved by the opinions of medical experts in India that infant marriage led to an unnaturally early development of functions that were in the long run ruinous to the physical, and therefore to the mental strength of the nation? Was it not infant marriage again that led mainly to enforced and unhappy widowhood?

“Having resolved to devote himself to the eradication of these evils, Malabari next thought about the ways and means, and about the plan

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of his campaign. He knew who had abolished Suttee and Infanticide. He was averse to legislation on the subjects which had interested him so deeply; but he thought the moral support of the State was essential. Jotting down his thoughts in the form of 'notes,' he presented himself one day in May or June, 1884, to Lord Ripon the Viceroy, at Simla."¹

Mr. Malabari received a most sympathetic hearing not only from the Viceroy but from other members of the government. He had a large number of his "notes" printed and circulated among official and non-official persons. The press discussed them freely, and they were translated by the native papers into almost all the vernaculars of India. For the first time the wrongs of Indian women were thus put before all India, or that which would be representative.

In September, 1884, the supreme government forwarded the "notes" to all local governments for their opinion, and that they might consult representatives of native opinion. In October 8, 1886, government replied in the negative to the measures proposed for legislation in his "notes," some of which, after a lapse of years, seem unpractical, and justify the negation. Government

¹ Life and labors of Mr. B. H. Malabari.

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in its reply, after stating the case, and its usual policy in all such matters, added:

"Although there is much to be said in favor of each of these suggestions, the Governor-General in council, as at present advised, would prefer not to interfere even to the limited extent proposed, by legislative action until sufficient proof is forthcoming that legislation has been asked for by a section, important in influence or number, of the Hindu community itself."

The events that followed the publication of Mr. Malabari's "notes," from 1884 until 1891, have had no parallel in any period of social reform in India. In the following January, 1885, came the Surat widow's appeal to the Nagar Shett; the Nowsari widows' appeal to the Gaikwar in April; the campaign of Malabari in the Punjab in September and October on these subjects. The effect produced by the revelations of Mr. Stead, in November, led to a series of articles in the *Indian Spectator* by Mr. Dayaram Gidumul, which called attention to the Indian Criminal Code on the same subject, pointing out its defects, and proposing that the age of consent be raised, which Mr. Malabari afterward published in pamphlet form; and their distribution throughout India elicited a large number of opinions in favor of the proposal. Then followed the strong advocacy of legislation on the

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subject of Infant Marriage by Justice Renade in December, in an able preface to a collection of papers bearing on the enactment of Act 15, of 1856. The following February (1886) Mr. Malabari made another tour throughout the northwest. This led to the memorial of Sir T. Madhavrao and other leading citizens of Madras to the Viceroy (Lord Dufferin), in March, 1886, for fixing the marriageable age of Hindu girls at ten; and the Meerut Memorial, in August, 1886, praying that the limit of age be fixed at twelve for girls and sixteen for boys; the Madhav Bagh meeting in Bombay, in September, 1886, to protest against any legislative interference; an interview of the *Shastris* with Lord Reay, a few days later, on the same subject: The publication of an article on the Hindu widow by Mr. Devandranath Das in *The Nineteenth Century*, and another in *The Asiatic Quarterly Review* by Sir William Hunter; the final resolution of the government of India on Malabari's "notes," refusing legislation in October, 1886: the publication of the opinions of Hindu gentlemen consulted on the subject in the form of *Government Selections*, in January, 1887; the attacks on Mr. Malabari and Justice Renade, by some of the Poona lecturers in February; and the publication of opinions given to Mr. Malabari in

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the form of a companion volume to the *Government Selections*.

We must not forget to mention the efforts of Mr. Madhavdas Raganathdas, the first Guzerati Hindu to marry a widow in Bombay; his persecutions from his castemen; his brave stand in opening the Widow Remarriage Hall; and his financial help and social protection of other couples who wished to remarry. These events, keeping up an intense public interest in these questions proposed for social reform, were generally accentuated by the celebrated case of Rakhmabai that occurred in 1885, stirring all India, and bringing into great prominence the whole question of child marriage; also, the forming of the National Social Congress of India, held for the first time in December, 1887, in Madras; and public interest culminating in the awful case of Phulmani Dasi in Calcutta. This led to the famous memorial of the lady doctors to government, which was in itself a great public educator; and the memorial of the fifteen hundred native ladies to the Queen; Mr. Malabari's visit to England that helped to rouse English public opinion; and finally the passing of the Age of Consent Bill, in 1891, whereby the age of consent was raised from ten to twelve, which completed a

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decade of public agitation on the subject of child marriage and enforced widowhood such as India had never seen before; and, we add with sadness, has never seen since.

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SINCE 1891

IN the preceding chapter we were able to give only the merest outline of reform activities, giving only the names of the prominent leaders, and leaving unmentioned many men whose names are very familiar throughout India on these subjects, and whose writings and words are quoted as authoritative. But we would not altogether overlook the individuals, often unknown to the general public, and unsupported by any of its favor, who in personal matters have made attempts to live out their convictions.

Some years ago, a Brahman friend of ours kept his little girl unmarried till she was twelve years of age, an unheard of thing at that time in so small a place. When he desired to marry her, a bridegroom of the kind he would have liked, and which his position would have entitled him to procure, could not be found, as the girl was too old to be an eligible match. So he married her to a boy of poor but respectable parentage, and then had him educated at his own expense.

We know of a well-known Bombay gentle-

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man who kept his daughter unmarried till she was sixteen; and of another marriage that was a real marriage for love, and an ideal one, and which we trust will prove an earnest of what is yet to be in India. Her father was one of India's most enlightened men. She was widowed at fifteen. Three years later an Indian gentleman saw her and sought her hand in marriage. But the parents and the girl had not the courage for the difficulties that the remarriage of a widow in their family would plunge them into. But the man, Jacob like, waited patiently seven years for his bride, and finally consent was gained. The bride at marriage was twenty-five and the husband thirty-five. It can be said of them that "they were married and lived happy ever afterward;" for it has been a happy union.

After ten years of wonderful activity, the curtain dropped with the closing act, the raising of the age of consent, in 1891. Since 1892, the curtain has risen again on different scenes, and with different actors on the stage. There is a very evident retrograde movement in matters of social reform; and matters political and religious have taken their place. Government, since passing the Age of Consent Bill, has been intensely conservative and disinclined to move in matters

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social. The Mysore and the Malabar Marriage Bills have been the only special advance steps. The Madras Marriage Bill unhappily was rejected. In place of agitation there is on all hands a feeling of discouragement and conservatism. Looking over the English columns of the files of a number of leading native journals in Western India, for last year, we found not a half dozen references to matters of social reform in them.

What has been the cause of all this change of front? What has caused this retrograde movement? Up to the close of 1891-92, so much was hoped from the reformers. Everything seemed ripe for a great movement. How did it happen that the reformers lost so great an opportunity?

Since 1891, almost another decade has been completed, and we believe a key to the situation will be found in reviewing the events of these years.

In 1894, came the great and cruel religious riot in Bombay, between the Hindus and Mohammedans; and the spirit it engendered throughout the country between these two races resulted in one or two smaller riots in other places. It was a time of great anxiety, and was probably treated by government as an illustration of what might take place if there was legislative interference

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with customs that were held as religious by the people, no matter how necessary the reform might be.

The interests of the years 1895-96 were chiefly political. A great stir and a great deal of feeling was caused by the Exchange Compensation Allowance that was sanctioned by government to English officials. It was looked upon as unjust to native interests. Then in Western India, Lord Sandhurst, the Bombay Governor, refused to have any further dealings with the *Sarwa Fanik* (Universal) Sabha, because some of the signatures to a memorial from it to government were not genuine. During this period the National Congress was more influential than now, and heavily criticised the government expenditures both military and civil, which, it was said, impoverished the country.

There was also at this time, in Western India, a marked revival of the Gunpati festival, which had both a political and religious significance. Mr Tilak, the editor of the *Mahratta*, made a public lament that the place where the body of Shivaji—the founder of the Mahratta kingdom—had been cremated had been allowed to go to ruin. He upbraided his countrymen for want of patriotism, and suggested that it be repaired.

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This proposal the governor thought might be a good thing, and favored it. The anniversary of Shivaji's death, occurring near the Gunpati festival, was incorporated into it, and both were celebrated with unheard of display, and also became the occasion of speeches and songs, that, to say the least, were not flattering at times to the government. The religious element arose out of the riot of 1894, when the Hindus determined if possible, in the Gunpati festival, to outrival the Mohammedan *Mohorrum* festival. The movement is now dying away, but it was an episode the widespread impressions of which were not altogether pleasant or helpful. At the close of 1896, the famine, which like a great vulture had been hovering over the country for many months, finally settled down upon it.

In 1897-1898, the famine and the plague overshadowed every interest; discouraged, disheartened and paralyzed all movements; and for the time quite engulfed all other questions. Add to this, the distressing earthquakes in Eastern India; the murder of the two European officials, Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst, in Poona; the arrest of Mr. Tilak, the editor of the *Mahratta* for seditious writings; the detaining of the Nathu brothers in custody without trial; the frontier

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war; the measures taken by government in regard to the plague, which greatly irritated the people and led to another riot in Bombay; the execution of Damodar Hari Chapakar, and the recent arrest of his two brothers, and their confessions concerning the Poona murders which have made all parties shudder; and, it is feared that the cold-blooded murder of these officials has put back the cause of national and social progress for a quarter of a century. These events of the last three years, with the plague still stalking about and threatening the whole country, have absorbed the attention of the people and the papers, and have so taken up the attention of the government that the miseries and wrongs of woman have almost seemed forgotten.

Some of these events have had a most disastrous effect on the relations between the government and the people. Government has suspected the people of disloyalty; and the people, for many causes, have been much irritated toward government.

Then another cause, which these events have only accentuated, has been a growing desire for individuality as a nation, and to be recognized as such by the civilized nations of the earth. The liberal Western Education that government has

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so freely given, has been one of the factors in bringing this desire "for a conscious political whole" into prominence; while contact with the outside world has made it inevitable.

This state of mind has made possible the entrance of another disastrous check to social reform, in the beginnings of what is now called a "Hindu Revival." It has arisen from a variety of causes, but the most prominent actor in it, at present, is Mrs. Annie Besant, an English lady, who has already passed through a variety of religious beliefs previous to her present career.

On her visit to India, in 1893, we believe, she is reported to have said in Bangalore "that she was a Hindu in a former birth, and is visiting her own land after a sojourn in the west, where she was reincarnated to know the nature of materialistic civilization of the west;" and in Tinnevely she is reported to have said: "Western civilization, with all its discoveries in science, is nothing compared with Hindu civilization."

In her present visit, she has settled at Benares, and has been the means of starting the Hindu college there. In a letter to the *Statesman* (Calcutta), she speaks of the "religious revival in which I am myself sufficiently fortunate to be allowed to take a part;" of a "truly national

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Hindu education;" and of the college she says: "The movement is one of national importance, combining western culture and religious and moral teaching according to the Hindu *shastras*; that the college aims at reproducing the ancient type of the Aryan gentleman; pious, dutiful, loyal, strong, brave and industrious; with healthy body and well balanced mind." The college is a fact, while the hope exists of starting similar colleges all over the country. Says the *Indian Witness*:

"We imagine the leaders of Hindu society must have deep searchings of heart these days in contemplation of the straits to which their religious and social system is reduced. The herculean efforts of Mrs. Besant to galvanize somnolent Hinduism into some degree of animation must appeal to the sense of the humorous in thoughtful Hindus. Imagine the situation: a foreigner, a *woman!* seeking to avert the chill of death from the body politic of Hinduism! A *woman* endeavoring with might and main to extort from apathetic Hindus the funds with which to start a Hindu college which is expected, among other feats, to extirpate all disloyalty from the bosoms of young Hindus!"

Then came the arrival of Swami Vivekanand,

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in 1896, who was received in India as a conquering hero by many, and his journey from Ceylon to Calcutta was a sort of triumphal march. We consider his notoriety a free and unsought gift from the Parliament of Religions to India; for he was practically unknown till then, and the success he was reputed to have achieved in the West has won him reverence here. Two disciples have joined him. One, a Miss Noble, said to be an American, and who has recently been advocating the worship of the goddess *Kali* in Calcutta; the other, a very recent arrival; Miss Marie Louise, or Swami Abhayananda, a lady who is said to have had as many spiritual changes as Mrs. Besant, and who has been described by a native journal as "French by extraction, American by domicile, Shaiva by faith, Vaishnava in neck ornamentation, Vendantin by philosophy, and a *sunnyasin* (ascetic), in her mode of life."

We do not see any public utterances on the part of these ladies concerning the condition of the women of India. Being ladies, we should expect they would be deeply distressed at the social condition of women in this country, and the disabilities under which they suffer. We should think the first question that would confront them, as they see the situation, would be,

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Why has not this beautiful philosophy, which we have come so far to study on its native soil, done more for Hindu women?

Where did these three ladies get their freedom, their religious liberty? Was it from Hinduism? In December, 1893, a committee of seven from the Madras Hindu Social Reform Association wrote Mrs. Besant, asking for an interview to obtain her views on these social questions. She replied that "any questions of the important character you suggest, could not be wisely made at an interview between myself and a body of gentlemen; the memory of each might easily prove unreliable, and so misunderstanding and controversy as to what was said might arise. If any questions are submitted to me in writing, I will read them, and if I wish to express any opinion on any of them, I will do so also in writing."

The gentlemen renewed their request, promising that they would furnish a competent shorthand reporter to take down what was said, and to allow her to revise what was written. They also furnished her ten written questions which she might have time to ponder over before the interview, and not be taken by surprise. This Mrs. Besant refused to do, saying, "Hasty or imperfect expression of opinion on these matters

is dangerous, and in a person whose views are so widely read, reprehensible. You must therefore permit me to choose my own time and way of expressing my thoughts on these subjects, and to decline to express them in answers which would necessarily give a very imperfect, and therefore misleading idea of my attitude toward these problems."

The question began with a preamble stating "that ninety-nine per cent. of the Hindu women in all castes are illiterate. Among the Brahmans, girls are, on peril of excommunication, married before they reach puberty, often very much before. They are married between the ages of three and twelve. Once a marriage takes place it cannot be dissolved under any circumstances, as far as the woman is concerned. Thousands of girls are widowed before they attain age, and cannot re-marry without social ostracism. In some of the non-Brahman castes these conditions also prevail. Is the position of women in these respects consistent with your conception of what the position of women ought to be ?

2. Is it right for a man to take a second wife when the first is living, on the sole ground of her being childless ?

3. Is it proper that girls below twelve years

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of age should be given away in marriage by their parents or guardians to men of fifty, sixty or seventy years of age ?

4. Is it desirable that a class of women called dancing girls, who are invariably prostitutes, should be given a status in Hindu temples during worship, and in Hindu homes on festive occasions, as singers or dancers ?

5. What do you think of the system prevalent in parts of this country called the zenana-system, by which women are compelled to keep out of sight of all men except their husbands, and their nearest male relatives; and are not allowed to move about except in closed carriages, or when veiled from head to foot ?

After two or three other questions as to caste; the condition of low-castes; and voyages by Hindus; the list was closed with the following pertinent question: "Is there any connection between spiritual greatness, and greatness in politics, commerce, literature and science; that is, does the latter depend on the former? As they are at present situated, which of the two countries—India or England—is spiritually superior? If the former is superior to the latter, how is it that Indian is inferior to England in politics, commerce, literature and science?"

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A month ago, one of the seven told us that as yet no replies had been received. Considering that the condition of its women is the test of a nation's civilization, we wonder at the silence.

In a recent London paper, in response to the question whether she was a Hindu or not, Mrs. Besant is represented as replying: that she was *almost* a vegetarian; and that when she lived in Benares, she lived as a Hindu, *excepting as regards certain laws and restrictions which apply to women!* What better reply to these questions do we need than this?

We hear a great deal nowadays, about "the spiritual supremacy of India," and "the gross materialism of western civilization." There has been a great stimulus in later years to the study of Sanskrit literature, partly due to the researches of English Oriental scholars and the translations they have made; and partly to the enthusiasm awakened by the return of Vivekanand from his visit to America and the parliament of religions. Every year new translations of the sacred books into English and the important vernaculars appear in an increasing ratio. There is also much talk of the glorious past of the Aryan age, and of a desire for a national religion.

Says a recent Hindu writer: "We do not un-

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derstand the claim of spiritual supremacy that is made on behalf of India. Mrs. Besant, with her usual assurance, proclaims on public platforms that India has been ordained to be the spiritual teacher of the whole world. Her teaching on this point is, that our mother-land was the religious *guru* of the world in the past, and if the present generation of Hindus will accept her teaching, and mould their actual lives by it, India will once again resume her old position. . . .

Was India a teacher of the world in the past? Was the *Adwaita* philosophy, on which Mrs. Besant's teaching rests, ever accepted by the *whole* of India? . . . From the history it has been possible to get out of the mass of Indian literature, *India was at no time an integral whole, either politically, it seems, or spiritually.*"

Another, an Indian writer, refers to this revival of the Hindu religion, and asks, "Is it not a fact that as the revivalist sentiment has spread wider in the land, a sort of anti-foreign feeling has also deepened?"

In spite of the absorbing subjects of the years which we have enumerated, which have filled to so large extent the public mind, and eclipsed the interest in the condition and position of women,

there is still a root cause why the reformers are not more successful in their efforts. *They have no moral motive power.*

When one uses the word reformer, the mind instinctively turns to men like Wycliffe, Luther, the Huguenots, the sturdy Hollanders, the Pilgrim Fathers, Wilberforce, Garrison and others. Visions of flame come before us, enfolding in its fiery embrace, men like Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer. The dictionary says a reformer is one who *effects* reform. How shall we define the word in its usage in India? It is often applied to all the educated class indiscriminately. A man may possess the highest culture, and yet be far from the ranks of the reformers. Some men are prepared to suffer a little for the cause of reform, but not too much. Until Indian reformers are willing to suffer even to the loss of all things ; to order their own lives according to their convictions ; to do right because it is right, regardless of consequences ; we do not use the word in its legitimate sense. Some one has said, that India has never yet seen a real reformer.

An instance of the hollowness of some so-called reform is illustrated by the four reformatory methods enunciated a few years ago by a well-known Indian reformer in a public meeting :

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1. By the *Shastras*. When they agree with the reformers, quote them.
2. Interpretation. Interpret the *Shastras* so as to make them agree with you.
3. When interpretation fails, appeal to reason and conscience.
4. When that fails, ask for legislation.

We also have the anomaly of men who are M. A.'s and B. A.'s, some of whom have studied abroad and have also travelled in other countries, who are versed in all the modern questions of the day, and yet some of them have wives who have been mothers at twelve and thirteen, a wrong against which all present-day education and civilization must unceasingly protest. We knew of a government official, gentlemanly and popular, who drew a salary of five hundred rupees per month, yet when he died suddenly in the prime of life, he left a young widow of eighteen who had three children, the eldest being five years of age. We do not see how men can ever be happy or retain self-respect, who do not live up to their own convictions.

Again, we repeat, that we feel the reformers fail for the lack of a moral motive power which would give them a spirit of real sacrifice, true courage and perseverance, and make them examples of their teaching. A lack of conformity

Since 1891

to our talk makes it useless. The Social Congress is accused of *only* passing resolutions. The highest moral influence that can be exerted by any being is through *example*. Advice, precept and sanction, all have moral power, but are only rendered operative by example. The world has this moral motive power manifested in the atonement of Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" for its redemption; and it is argued, "*Hereby* know we love, because He laid down His life for us; *and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*"

The protest is often made that Europeans are not patient enough with the reformers, and do not understand their awful social difficulties and complications. We believe we do understand these sore difficulties; but we fear the reformers will never rise above them until they come into such relations with God as will enable them to meet the conditions laid down by Christ when He said: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." "Whosoever loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me:" and "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, *but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.*"

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Nothing but the love of Christ gives men power to suffer for others, and compensates them for the loss of all things. This is the moral motive power that has made reformers and martyrs in Christian lands, and without which the reformers will never accomplish any thorough or lasting amendment in India.

XVI

WHAT THE MISSIONARIES HAVE DONE

THERE is a tradition that the apostle Thomas first brought the gospel to India. There are three places in the neighborhood of Madras that claim his grave. The Syrian church on the Malabar coast numbering four hundred thousand, claim to be the descendants of his converts and of the Syrian colonists who joined them. They stoutly cling to that tradition, and are often called the Christians of St. Thomas. If this tradition be true, then the movement that formed the Syrian church, or in other words, Christianity in India, is older than Christianity in England. Rev. George Rae, in his book, refutes this claim, and asserts that the Syrian church is an offshoot of the Nestorian church in Persia, whose missionaries came to India in the fifth century; thus making the Syrian church fourteen centuries old; and the missionary, Thomas, who is said to have suffered martyrdom at St. Thomas, a suburb of Madras, lived several centuries after the apostle.

About 70 A. D., there was a sea-trade established between Egypt and the Southwest coast of India,

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famed for its spices. At this time, the rulers of the several independent states of South India wisely encouraged the settlers who came to them and enriched them in many ways. Some Indian merchants, probably Jews, who went to Alexandria in Egypt to sell their spices and gems, found there something far more valuable—"the pearl of great price." They became acquainted with the way of salvation through Jesus Christ. A petition was addressed to the Bishop of Alexandria, about 180 A. D., for a Christian teacher to be sent to India, and he wisely selected Pantænus for such an important field. How long he was in India, or how far inland he travelled, or when he returned to Egypt, is not known. He found among the Christians the Hebrew gospel of Matthew which formed the basis of the present Greek gospel. About a century later, Theopolis, surnamed Indicus, visited India, where he found Christianity already planted in several places.

The year 1500 has been fixed upon as the date of the founding of the Roman Catholic Missions in India, along with the advent of the Portuguese. Vasco de Gama discovered the maritime route to India, landing in Calicut, May 20th, 1498; and within the next half century, the Portuguese had

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planted trading forts along the Northern coast of India. With them came the priests, but it was not till the arrival of Francis Xavier, in 1542, that anything was done beyond the limits of the Portuguese settlements. It was he who gave the great impulse to Roman Catholic Missions in India.

Akbar, the Mogul Emperor, ascended the throne in 1556. One of his wives is said to have been a Christian. The Jesuit missionaries went as far as Nephaul, which they entered in 1661. There are now Roman Catholic missionaries all over India. Their directory for 1894 gives the number of European (Catholic) missionaries in India as six hundred and nineteen, while the census of 1891 gives the whole number of Roman Catholics *of all races*, European and Indian, in the whole of India (by which we include the French and Portuguese possessions as well as British India) as 1,594,901.¹

The beginning of Protestant missions in India came from the heart of the good king of Denmark, who sent two young Germans, Ziegenbalg and Plutschau, to the Danish settlement at Tranquebar, on the southeast coast, in 1705. In 1750

¹ The author is greatly indebted for these statements to Dr. Murdoch's *History of Christianity in India*.

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these brethren were followed by Schwartz, one of the most useful men that ever came to India. "From the baptism of the first convert in 1707," says Smith, "and the translation of the New Testament into Tamil, till the death of Schwartz in 1798, the foundations were laid around Tanjore, Madras and Tinneveli of a native church that now numbers over a half million." These Danish missions were never permanent, but were later taken over by the English agencies. They were a John the Baptist movement, "a voice in the wilderness," that preceded the establishment of our modern missions of the nineteenth century.

During the last year of Schwartz's life, God was preparing another missionary who was destined to begin a new era in the history of mission effort, not only in India, but in all lands. This was William Carey, the founder of modern missions. As he sat in his work shop and made and mended shoes, he studied a rude map of his own making on the wall, and thought and prayed how the heathen nations of the earth might be reached.

How little he dreamed of the way in which his prayers would be answered! The East India Company was singularly hostile to missionary

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effort, and claimed that their preaching would create a rebellion, so that Carey, when he arrived in 1793, had to take refuge under the Danish flag at Serampore, thirteen miles north of Calcutta. Some missionaries were not even allowed to land. Wilberforce, at the renewal of the company's charter in 1793, tried to insert a clause

SECOND)(HAND
SHOES)(BOUGHT
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that would make such despotic proceedings impossible, but he did not succeed till its renewal in 1813, and then in spite of great opposition. "But it was not till 1833," says Bishop Thoburn, "that the last restrictions were removed, and every Christian missionary in the empire was clothed with the freedom which is now enjoyed by all persons bearing the Christian name."

Carey was a sort of John Knox to the officials of the East India Company, and he did much to

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purify English life in India; while his letters, his appeals, his writings, his work and his life, were the seed whose fruitage we now behold, and for which we praise God. With him the English Baptist Society has the honor of being the first to enter India. This was in 1793. The English Congregationalists, or London Missionary Society came in 1798; the Church Missionary Society in 1807; the American Board in 1812; the American Baptists and English Methodists in 1814; the Scotch Presbyterians in 1830; the American Presbyterians in 1834; the Irish Presbyterians in 1841; the American Methodists in 1856; and from year to year other societies have entered, the largest societies of later years being the Christians and Missionary Alliance in 1892; the Kurku and Central Indian Hill Mission in 1892; the Ceylon and Indian General Mission in 1893; and the Poona and Indian Village Mission in 1895; in all over seventy societies and associations. There are 2,797 missionaries, and at a census in 1890 there were 648,843 Protestant Indian Christians, and if they increase at the ratio they did the last decade, fifty-two per cent.; in 1900 there will be over 1,000,000 of Protestant Indian Christians.

In view of all this, we may well ask, what

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have the missionaries done for the women of India?

1. Through the representations of Carey and his fellow-workers, the custom of throwing children into the Ganges forever ceased.

2. The abolition of the *Suttee*. Early in his missionary life, Carey witnessed the burning of a widow. He begged the woman not to throw away her life. "After remonstrances," says his biographer, "which the people met first by argument, and then by surly threats, Carey wrote: 'I told them I would not go, that I was determined to stay and see the murder, and that I would certainly bear witness of it at the tribunal of God.' And when he again sought to interfere because the two stout bamboos always fixed for the purpose of preventing the woman's escape were pressed down on the shrieking woman like levers, he adds, 'We could not bear to see more, but left them, exclaiming loudly against the murder, and full of horror at what we had seen.' The remembrance of that sight never left Carey. His naturally cheerful spirit was inflamed to indignation all his life through, *till his influence, more than that of any other one man, at last prevailed to put out forever the flames of the murderous pyre.*"

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He and his fellow-workers spared no labor. They enlightened the minds of the English and Indian public on the subject ; statistics were carefully gathered; with the help of his pundit he searched the Hindu shastras, and the results of his researches were laid before the government, and the recent enactment prohibiting the sacrifice of children was quoted as a precedent for further reform. Had Lord Wellesley remained Governor-General a year longer, Carey would have succeeded in 1808. But he had to wait twenty long years, and as "he waited and prayed, every day saw the devilish smoke ascending along the banks of the Ganges." In 1829, when Lord Bentinck's prohibition was ready to be published among the people, the crown of all Carey's efforts was the privilege of translating it into Bengali. He is said to have been preparing his Sunday sermon for the afternoon when it was handed to him. He sent for another to do his preaching, and taking his pen in his hand, wrote the official translation, and had it issued in the *Bengali Gazette*, that not another day might be added to the long black catalogue of many centuries.

3. During the agitation over the Bill for raising the Age of Consent, the awful case of Phulmani Dasi occurred at Calcutta. An American

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medical missionary, Mrs. Mansell, seized the opportunity, got up a petition to government in which were cited a number of similar and almost equally awful cases that had come under the notice of different lady practitioners, and this petition was signed by nearly all the lady doctors in India, the majority of whom were missionaries, with the result that it greatly aided in forming public opinion, and helped to win the day.

4. Missionaries, from the beginning, have greatly moulded public opinion upon all phases of the treatment of women; and perhaps eternity alone will reveal the influence that the home-life and the lives of lady missionaries have had in this respect.

5. Missionaries have been the pioneers and the chief promoters of education for women in India. This fact is generously and unreservedly conceded by government and all Indians. To Mrs. Hannah Marshman belongs the honor of having started the first effort. She established a day-school for girls in 1807. In 1819, a company of young Eurasians who had been educated by the Baptist missionary ladies, formed a society for the education of Indian women; and in three years they had six schools and one hundred and sixty pupils. What became of this juvenile so-

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ciety we do not know; but we believe it to have been an earnest of what God meant to have done through this race for India.

In 1818, the Calcutta School Society was started, and was composed of both Europeans and Indians. They were appalled at the fact that, among the 40,000,000 women that then constituted British India, only about one woman in 100,000 could read; and, in 1819, they appealed to the London British and Foreign School Society to send out a lady to form a school for training female teachers for further effort. William Ward of Serampore was at home when the appeal reached London, and added his influence to it. A Miss Cooke heard him make an appeal to the ladies of Liverpool, and volunteered for the work, reaching Calcutta in 1821. Her work was changed and precipitated very soon after her arrival by a touching incident.

On January 25th, 1822, as she was going to one of the boys' schools to improve her pronunciation, she saw a little girl outside the school-room crying. On inquiry, she found that the child had for three months besieged the master with her desire to be taught, only to be driven away. This so moved Miss Cooke that, the next day, she started a girls' school. The work

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spread rapidly, until in 1825, thirty schools had been formed with four hundred pupils. Both Lady Hastings, the wife of the Governor-General at that time, and her successor, Lady Amherst, took the deepest interest in these schools. It is said that the Marchioness of Hastings, in her zeal, traversed the gullies and back streets of the city in which some of the schools were situated, and thereby produced a great impression on all classes.

At this time, 1825, the wives of the American Board missionaries in Bombay opened a similar work; and, four years later, they were followed by Mrs. Stevenson and Mrs. Margaret Wilson. Because the Mahratta people are not hampered by the zenana, and the Parsees by caste, the work here, for a time, seemed to make greater strides than elsewhere, and was an encouragement to other parts of India.

In the different presidencies, too, boarding-schools for Indian Christian girls were started; also orphanages, which are continually multiplied over India by the periodical famines that occur, and orphan and render homeless thousands of children.

But to return to Calcutta. The day-schools for Hindu girls had only touched the lower castes. How were the upper-class ladies hidden behind

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the *purdah* in the zenanas ever to be reached, was the constant burden on many hearts. In 1840, Mr. T. Smith of the Free Church Mission, proposed a scheme for the home education of women of the upper classes, but at that time it met with no practical response. In 1850, Hon. Drinkwater Bethune, a member of the Legislative Council, opened the Bethune Institution at his own expense; provided a closed carriage to bring the girls to and from their homes to the school; paid for a lady superintendent; promised that no Christianity should be taught; and hoped by this to reach many of this class. For many years it was not very prosperous, and could not have been. Here and there, in isolated instances, missionary ladies taught the families of the more liberal-minded men. Some of them taught their own families; English education began to spread; and interesting incidents were constantly occurring that added momentum to the slowly accumulating public opinion on the subject.

Soon after the establishment of the Bethune Institution a thrilling event occurred: "The highly educated son of an influential Hindu gentleman had privately instructed his gifted young wife, with whom he read, among other books,

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the English Bible. He was under promise to his mother never to become a Christian: but he read the Scriptures because they were interesting as an historical study. The entrance of the Word gave light to the heart of the young wife, and she besought her husband to accept Christ as his Saviour. A widowed cousin of fourteen read with them, and she also believed, but the husband resisted. The young wife grieved and died—died trusting in Jesus for salvation,—the husband's heart yielded and he and the cousin were baptized. These conversions made a deep impression on Christian hearts, and, combined with other circumstances, led to effective effort which took the form of founding an institution for training the daughters of Eurasian parents born in India and familiar with the language. It was believed that such teachers for Hindu ladies would ere long be needed, though at that time they were still inaccessible."¹ In 1852 the Calcutta Normal School was established.

In 1854, Rev. John Fordyce, of the Free Church Mission, enthusiastically took up a scheme for zenana education. He persuaded two or three Hindu gentlemen to open their houses to, and to pay for, the instructions of his ablest teacher,

¹ *The Women of India*, by Mrs. Weitbrecht.

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a European governess who knew Bengali perfectly. He also printed "a series of fly-leaves which were widely circulated throughout India. They contained short, strong and striking appeals to Hindu husbands and fathers, and produced an impression which deepened year by year; so that, at first one by one, and afterward in increasing ratio, zenana doors flew open until the question became, how to supply laborers, instead of how to get in."¹ Mrs. Sale, Mrs. Mullens and other devoted ladies developed the scheme by their special fitness for it.

In 1861, "The India Normal School and Instruction Society" was formed in London, to coöperate with the ladies in Calcutta; and in 1862 sent out its first zenana missionary. In the same year Miss Brittian came from New York to Calcutta, the representative of the Women's Missionary Union, an undenominational Ladies' Society for work among women. "In ten years she reported eight hundred women under the instruction of the missionaries of that society, while nearly seventeen hundred were being taught by missionary ladies of other societies."²

¹ *The Women of India*, by Mrs. Weitbrecht.

² *The Orient and its People*, by Mrs. Hauser.

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The result has been truly phenomenal. In a quarter of a century from that day, nearly all the Woman's Boards and Societies especially engaged in work for women were formed, and zenana instruction became a part of the work of almost every mission. Dr. Duff's constant theory had always been that a generation of educated men, that is educated after the English model, must be the precursor of a generation of educated women, "and," says his biographer, "even 1850 was the day of small things in girls', as 1830 had been in boys' education in Bengal, but the boys of 1830 had become the fathers of 1850, and made the time ripe for advance."

In 1830 Dr. Duff opened an institution in Calcutta, in which English was taught instead of Sanskrit and Arabic, as in the government colleges. Lord Macaulay, then in India, adopted Dr. Duff's views and did much to put education in India on its present basis.

The despatch of Sir Charles Wood, in 1854, marks an important epoch in Indian education. Complete Educational Departments were to be organized, and a national system to be commenced. In 1857, the Universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were founded; to which the Punjab University was added in 1882, and

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the Allahabad University in 1887. These are simply examining bodies.

A network of schools has been extended over the whole country, rising gradually from indigenous schools to the highest colleges. Missionaries were the inspiration to government for establishing girls' schools, as well as to Indian effort.

Miss Carpenter first visited India in 1866, and urged government to open training schools for the training of mistresses for girls' schools. This they did, but they were not all a success. She also originated the National Indian Association which seeks to foster and help private efforts for female education as one of its objects. The Parsees control their own schools for their girls. They have seven high schools in Bombay. There are only two or three B. A.'s among them, and about a dozen lady graduates from medical colleges. About seventy-seven per cent. of the girls can read.

As an evangelizing agency, we feel that the high hopes of Dr. Duff and the promoters of zenana education have never been realized; and that, sooner or later, education will pass into the hands of government and the Hindus themselves, and missionaries will largely confine their



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LUCKNOW COLLEGE

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efforts to the education and training of the ever increasing number of Christian young men and women, though such non-Christians as prefer a Christian school will not be refused.

It would require a separate volume to write the history of female education in India as it should be written. We must omit much that is deeply interesting, skip over many years, and give a peep at the present situation. It is needless to say that the Christians, though the fifth race in India, have led the way in all matters of female education; and the Parsees, the smallest of the Indian races, come next.

There are two Christian Colleges for women in India, the Lucknow College in North India, an institution of the American Methodist Mission; and the Sarah Tucker College in Palamcottah, South India, under the Church Missionary Society. There are a number of high schools with college classes. Of the Lucknow College, Miss Thoburn its founder and principal, says: "There were, here and there, Christians in good circumstances whose sons were studying in high schools and colleges, reading and talking English, and living in touch with the new life of the empire. They asked for a school where their daughters might have like opportunities. Some

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of them lived in remote places, hence a boarding school was necessary. They were not rich, but had money enough to pay boarding fees and all incidental expenses. We opened the school for such children. The mission, with a grant from government, has paid for teachers and buildings." This school is ideal in that it has received all pupils sent without regard to race or language; and has combined in one happy family, Hindustani, Bengali, English and Eurasian girls; while all are trained to work for Christ. This school is affiliated with the Allahabad University, and the Sarah Tucker with the Madras University.

The Bethune Institution, formed in 1850, became in 1879 Bethune College, and is affiliated with the Calcutta University in Arts up to the B. A. standard; and is the only fully equipped college in Bengal for the higher education of women. Its principal is Miss Chandra Bose, an Indian Christian lady, a B. A. and M. A. It is not a religious but a government institution, and the number of students average from twenty-five to thirty girls. There are two lady graduates on the staff of teachers, in charge of such subjects as English literature, mental and moral science, ancient and modern history, and bot-

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any. It has not been possible yet to carry on the work without the coöperation of gentlemen lecturers. Twenty young ladies have graduated from the college with the degree of B. A., three of whom have taken the degree of M. A. from the Calcutta University, and two from the Allahabad University. Forty-three passed the first examination in arts. Of all these young ladies, none are Mohammedan; about one-half being Bengali Christians, and the other half Hindu girls of the Brahmo Somaj.

Then there is the Maharajah's College for girls in Travandum, in the native state of Travancore. There are many excellent high schools throughout the country. The majority are missionary institutions. A few were started by government, and a number are private enterprises. A number of these high schools have college classes, and may, at no distant day, blossom into full-blown colleges. To some of these, like the Dehra Dun High School, (American Presbyterian Mission) which has had a career of forty years, and the Ahmednagar High School (American Board Mission) and others, we are indebted for some of our best Christian women.

The most unique Hindu school that we know of, is the Maharani's Caste girls' school in

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Mysore (a native state). It has at present an ex-missionary lady as principal. Four Brahman girls from it have passed the entrance examination of the Madras University. It is a high school, and is steadily working up into a college, having this year a college class of two girls; but caste and early marriage will no doubt be for some time yet a great hindrance. This school closed last year with an enrollment of three hundred and eighty-six students. Of these, thirty-two were widows, besides eight widow teachers—all Brahmans! The majority of the girls above the fourth class are mothers, as are almost all the widows. In fact almost all the girls, except the infant classes, are married. The school edits a paper in Canarese and English. The school is of purely Indian enterprise and management, and a more interesting school, considering the social conditions of India, it would be difficult to find.

Then there is the Victoria High School in Poona, the founder and principal being an Indian Christian lady—Mrs. Sorabjee. It is an English school that receives all races, Hindus, Moham-medans, Parsees, Jews and English; and has been a great success. Ramabai's High School for widows, and her farm school for her orphan