

But still in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, among the Hindus we may say that the son will be of the same occupation as the father.

Conceive how strange it would be if this rule applied in England! Suppose the carpenter's son must be a carpenter, and the shoemaker's son a shoemaker, and the doctor's son a doctor, and the solicitor's son a solicitor! How strangely altered society would be. But, suppose, further, that not only must the carpenter's son be a carpenter, but he must marry nobody but a carpenter's daughter! And the shoemaker's son must marry a shoemaker's daughter, and the doctor's son a doctor's daughter! And yet this is the universal rule in India. The weaver's son must not only himself be a weaver, but he must marry a girl of the same caste—that is, whose father is of the same occupation. So the potter's son must marry a potter's daughter, and the barber's son a barber's daughter; and so on of all the different occupations in India. This marriage rule is universal. From one end of India to the other we shall never hear of a potter's son marrying a weaver's daughter, or a blacksmith's son marrying a barber's daughter, or any one marrying out of his caste.

Let us make a further supposition with regard to England. Suppose not only that a carpenter's son must be a carpenter, and must marry only a carpenter's daughter, but further if he wishes to have a tea-party, he must invite nobody but carpenters to come and take tea with him! And if the doctor wishes to give a dinner-party, he must invite nobody but doctors to come and dine with him! Yet this, too, is the universal rule in India; the potter must only eat with potters, the barber with barbers, the blacksmith with blacksmiths, and the weaver with weavers. A man of one caste never, by any possibility, eats with a man of another caste, or his caste would be destroyed. If they even take a whiff of the same pipe, the men lose caste.

These, then, are the three main rules of caste, those relating to occupation, marriage, and food. The effect is, as we have said, that the Hindus are divided into a number of separate layers, each caste having little to do with the others, and having no sympathy or brotherly feeling for them. The effect is to destroy the brotherhood of man and put in its place the brotherhood of caste. There is a man lying ill in the street—never mind, he does not belong to our caste; if we touch him, perhaps we shall be defiled somehow; this is the feeling which caste engenders. It produces pride in the upper castes and servility in the lower. The Brahmins are revered as the very gods of the Sudras, who bow before them in many parts of the country, and put their heads on the ground that the Brahmin may put his foot on their necks. The Sudras will wash the feet of the Brahmin, and then think themselves highly favoured to be allowed to drink the water in which their feet have been washed! The Shastras say: "All the universe is under the power of the gods, the gods are subject to the mantras (incantations), the mantras are subject to the Brahmins; the Brahmins are, therefore, our gods. He who does not immediately bow down when he meets a Brahmin becomes a hog on the earth." Thus Brahmins look down upon Sudras, and the higher castes of the latter look down upon all beneath them. The spirit of caste is one of pride and separation; it is, therefore, essentially an un-Christian spirit.

Caste is purely a matter of external, and relates only to certain rules, which, however, vary in detail in different parts of the country. A man may commit the most heinous crimes and be punished for them, yet to the end he retains his caste unimpaired. He may believe what he please, and his caste is untouched. He may be on the one hand an Atheist, or on the other a Christian, in his opinions; he may even give up idolatry and pray only to Christ, yet his caste remains untouched. But let him be baptized, or openly eat with a man of another caste, and his caste is at once broken.

English education and civilization is gradually undermining caste, one rule after another is being quietly dispensed with, until one day the whole system will come down with a crash. That day, however, may be farther off than we think, when we remember the enormous mass of the people of India, and the tenacity with which they hold to their customs. Still, come it will; but in the meantime we find caste presents a muliform and mighty obstacle to the success of our work.

When the early missionaries first went to Southern India during the last century, they considered caste as a social rather than a religious matter, and felt that therefore they ought not to insist upon its renunciation on the part of their converts, but should treat it as the Apostles treated slavery, trusting to the gradual influence of Christianity to dissolve and bring to naught the evil system. But as years rolled on it was found that caste, instead of becoming weaker in the native Church, seemed to become justified and solidified by the sanction given to it, and the evils consequent upon its toleration became so manifest that, in the early part of the

present century, almost all Christian Protestant bodies in Southern India decided that caste should be no more tolerated in the Church. But they found it far more difficult to exorcise the demon than it would have been to prevent his entrance at the first; it is easier to keep evil out of the Church from the beginning than to put it out when it has once got in. To this day, the caste system is the main difficulty which the missionaries in Southern India have to deal with in the native Christian community. It is not, of course, tolerated in Church matters—as formerly, there used to be separate cups for the different castes, at the Lord's Supper—but outside the Church it still has strong sway in social life, in matters which cannot be brought under Church discipline, though the evil effects of the system are manifest. In Northern India, we have never had any difficulty in the matter. From the first, the grand Three of Serampore (Carey, Marshman, and Ward), took the right stand, that caste is an un-Christian thing, which must not be tolerated in the Church; and when Krishna Pal, the first convert in Bengal, was baptized on the last Sabbath of the eighteenth century, (December 28th, 1800), he left his caste in the waters of the Hooghly. All who, since then, have become Christians in Northern India have entirely renounced caste; and the Christian Church there is a casteless community. This has made our progress slower, than it otherwise would have been, but surer. Here and there, no doubt, a certain amount of caste, spirit, and even practice has remained secretly; but it is an unrecognized thing, and when discovered is disavowed.

Caste prevents that homely union between Christians and heathens which might tend so much to the spread of the Gospel. We cannot, as here, invite people to tea-meetings; we cannot make a feast for them, as Levi did for his fellow-publicans; we cannot drop in and have a friendly meal with them; we always have to be careful lest we inadvertently offend their caste rules or prejudices; our touch, and even our shadow, would so pollute their food that they would throw it away, and break the vessel, if earthen, in which it was. It will be easily understood how all this tends to prevent that union and sympathy which would be so helpful to our work. Few things so bind men to one another as eating together, but this bond of union between Christians and non-Christians is simply impossible in India.

Yet there is a bright side even to this caste question. It puts an ordeal at the door of Christian profession which prevents the Church deluged with hypocrites. If it were not for caste rules thousands of persons would become Christians in the hope of getting something by it. Again, for every one who braves the consequences and openly embraces Christianity, we know that there are multitudes who are more or less favourably inclined towards it, and many of whom, we hope, are true believers, but who still remain in the Hindu community. In many cases such persons have given up idolatry, read the Bible, and worship Christ, but as they have not been baptized their caste remains untouched. This class of people is steadily growing, both in numbers and in the strength of their Christian propensities. But more of this when we speak of the results of Christian missions.

Another encouraging thought is this, that the very tendency to "follow the multitude," so strong in India, which now keeps men back from open profession of Christianity, will, in due time, bring them over to it in a mass. As Mr. Arthur ("Mission to the Mysore") says: "In no country will individual conversion, in a given locality, be slower at first than in India; in no country will the absorption of masses from the 'great mountain' be so vast or so rapidly successive."—Missionary Herald.

The Brahmo Somaj in India.

Dr. Murray Mitchell says: "I have been profoundly interested in watching the doings of the Brahmo Somaj, which is split into three strongly antagonistic sections. I have twice seen Keshub Chunder Sen. On one occasion the conversation occupied two or three hours. He is as eloquent as ever, and apparently as full of hope regarding his own work. But his position is thoroughly illogical, and I believe he must soon advance towards full Christianity or recede from it. There ought to be much solicitude and prayer in connection with this remarkable man. Crowds still hang on Keshub's lips whenever he comes forth with one of his set orations. Yet in Bengal, and especially in Calcutta, he has certainly lost influence; and this chiefly in consequence of the marriage of his daughter with the Raja of Cooch-Behar, in circumstances and accompaniments entirely irreconcilable (so his opponents assert) with his own strongly avowed principles. I have also met with the most influential man in the Sadharan Somaj. The body at present professes an expansive Theism; but there is, I fear, some danger lest this degenerate into a contracted Deism."

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1882.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson IV.—APRIL 23, 1882.

CHRIST WALKING ON THE SEA.

Mark vi. 45-56.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 47-50.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."—Isaiah xlii. 2.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

I. The Lesson, Mark vi. 45-56.

T. Peter Walking on the Water, Matt. xiv. 22-33.

W. Reproving Worldly Hearts, John vi. 22-39.

T. Christ's Peace, John xiv. 15-27.

F. The Coming Renovation, Rev. xxi. 1-8.

S. New Heavens and Earth, 2 Peter iii. 1-14.

S. Christ and the Universe, Col. i. 12-20.

CHRIST THE MASTER OF NATURE.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Christ in Prayer, Vss. 45-47. II. Christ Lord of the Sea, Vss. 48-52. III. Christ the Healer, Vss. 53-56.

QUESTIONS.—Vss. 45-47.—What miracle had just been wrought? What danger threatened the Saviour's work? How did he avert it? How did he spend most of the night?

Vss. 48-52.—Where were the apostles? When and how did Jesus come to them? What frightened them? What comforted them? What does Matthew relate concerning Peter? What miracles after Jesus entered the ship? What can his presence do for his people now?

Vss. 53-56.—To what land did they come? Where was it? How did the people show faith in Jesus's power? What had Christ to do with creating and governing the universe? What power has he now?

SPECIAL SUBJECTS.—One Bethesda, or two? Ghosts and apparitions. These miracles as related to the laws of nature. The goal to which nature is advancing.

The effect of the miracle, of the last lesson, was other than Jesus desired. The people (see John vi. 14, 15) were eager to make him king, and even contemplated forcing him into this position—a movement with which his apostles evidently sympathized. Hence he sent the latter away, while he dismissed the people, and thus avoided what was but a renewal of Satan's temptation in the wilderness—an endeavor to secure to him the kingdoms of the earth, without the humiliation and pangs of the cross.

NOTES.—I. After Work, Prayer, (Vss. 45-47).

Constrained. Affected by the enthusiasm of the hour. Other side. The western side of the northern extremity of the lake. Capernaum was their destination, (John vi. 17); but they were to touch at Bethesda, which was at the point where the Jordan flows into the lake, and there wait for Jesus. Sent away the people. On account of their determination to make him king. This required tact, authority, perhaps superhuman influence. The sent them away, in verse 46, is a different word from that in verse 45—the sense of which is properly given in New Version—after he had taken leave of them. He retired to pray. In what mountain, is unknown. When even was come. The period after sunset. The disciples were on the lake in their boat, on their way across; Christ was alone on the land, spending the night in prayer.

II. Walking the Waves, (Vss. 48-52).

Vs. 48.—The disciples had a toilsome time of it. The distance to Bethesda was only about seven or eight miles, but the wind was contrary. It seems to have been a strong northeasterly, or head wind, which blew them out of their course; and at the expiration of some nine hours they had not made more than half their journey, (John vi. 19). Jesus kept watch over them even in the darkness of the storm, and saw them distressed in rowing; i. e., wearied in body, and anxious in mind. Fourth watch. The Roman reckoning is here given. The Jew's division was into three watches, of four hours each; the Roman into four, of three each. The time would be three o'clock, A. M. Walking upon the sea. The winds could not keep him from his disciples in their need. Would have passed them. To test their faith. See Luke xxiv. 28; Gen. xxxii. 26.

Vs. 49, 50.—A spirit. New Version, apparition; a phantom. A different word in the Greek from the one usually translated spirit. Cried out. In fear. They were not yet free from the superstitious notions of the times. All saw him. Evidently recognizing the likeness to Jesus. (Luke xxiv. 37). Troubled. Agitated, alarmed, as if the vision portended evil to them. Therefore, immediately he talked with them. Not

only did he re-assure them by the tones of his voice, but also by his kind greeting. Be of good cheer. Not words of reproach for their fear and lack of faith, but the one stirring, thrilling word of comfort, tharsete, cheer up; to which he adds, as the ground for good cheer, It is I. Not a spectre, but their Friend and Master. Compare Luke xxiv. 39. How fitting the appended exhortation, Be not afraid.

Vs. 51, 52.—Not only did he speak comforting words, but he gave them his presence also. He went up unto them in the ship; and John adds what is self-evident; "They willingly received him." Only Matthew relates the rash attempt of Peter to walk the waves, like his Master. The wind ceased, and, (John vi. 21), the boat immediately came to port. Sore amazed. Rather, extremely amazed, with a surprise that argued unbelief on their part, as the next verse intimates. Beyond measure, and wondered, omitted in New Version. They considered not, etc.; or, understood not. Their heart. Spoken of as the seat of the understanding, as well as of the affections; and it is in the former sense that it is used here.

III. Healing the Sick, (Vss. 53-56).

Having returning to the west side of the lake, they came into the land of Gennesaret—a small district south of Capernaum, noted, according to Josephus, as possessing a fertility and loveliness almost unparalleled. From this region the lake derives one of its names. There they anchored their boat, and went on shore. But there could be no privacy for Jesus. The people saw and knew him; and then was re-enacted the scene with which we are familiar in studying this Gospel. The people, full of excitement, ran through that whole region round about, and carried the news of the Healer's coming, and brought their sick in beds, or pallets (see ii. 4), into his presence. Nor was this confined to the one locality; but as he journeyed through their villages, or cities, or country, it was ever the same. The literal rendering of country is fields. The one common need was felt by townsmen, villagers, and laborers in the fields. Social distinctions were, for the time, obliterated, as all households brought out their sick for healing. Streets. Rather, market-places, which were places of public resort.

SUGGESTED LESSONS.

The Lord keeps watch over his children in the thickest night and greatest dangers; and deliverance is nearer than we think.

We are not to be surprised at difficulties, even in the path of obedience.

The Gospel of Jesus is the word of Good Cheer. It says to us: "Be not afraid."

The boat struggling in the waters against contrary winds, is a fitting type of the Church of Christ beset by many perils. But it cannot sink with Christ on board.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

It is not wonderful to walk, but it is very wonderful to walk on water!

Would you not like to know just when Christ walked on the sea? It was the night after he had fed the five thousand. After Jesus had fed the five thousand, the people wanted to make him king? Jesus did not come to be an earthly king. He came to suffer and die.

When Jesus saw that the people wanted to make him king, he sent his disciples away in the ship, and he sent the people home. Read verse 46; the children repeating it, in a low tone, after the teacher. In like manner, the narrative is continued—every detail being noted, as children are especially interested in particulars. Why was the water so rough? Because the wind was blowing? After Christ came on board the disciples had a frightened look no longer?

Believe that the presence of Jesus is now just as real, and of so much greater value. No promise is so sweet as this of our text.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Our fellow creatures can only judge of what we are from what we do; but in the eye of our Maker what we do is of no worth except as it flows from what we are.

Kind looks, kind words, kind acts, and warm hand shakes—these are secondary means of grace when men are in trouble, and are fighting their unseen battles.

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt," adds the apostle. "Salt." Do not mistake vinegar for oil, or pepper for salt. "Seasoned with salt." Let it be tasteful and savoury.

Temperance.

Boston has increased her temperance agencies by a new "Coffee Palace." It is situated in the immediate neighborhood of several liquor saloons, whose influence it is designed to counteract; and is fitted up in a very attractive way with tastefully painted walls, colored glass windows, etc. A piano and billiard tables form part of its furniture, and all the principal newspapers and magazines are to be found on its tables. Mr. Samuel Shapleigh is the conductor; and the venture already promises to be a success. A correspondent sends the following encouraging note: "Last night one of the friends went out to seven of the liquor saloons near by to see how many customers they had. He found but five in the seven saloons. He then went to the Coffee Palace and found a hundred and three persons in attendance,—'hard looking fellows,' but quiet and orderly. Every paper was being read, and the attendants were busy dealing out coffee and sandwiches."

"MY SMOKE-HOUSE."—A man who lives in Albany, and whose business is that of a clerk, said that he had lately built a house that cost him three thousand dollars. His friends expressed their wonder that he could afford to build so fine a dwelling.

"Why," said he, "that is my smoke-house."

"Your smoke-house? What do you mean?"

"Why, I mean that twenty years ago I left off smoking, and I have put the money saved from smoke, with interest, into my house. Hence I call it my smoke-house."—Selected.

A DRINK CENSUS.—A very striking census has been published by the Western Daily Press, showing the number of persons who entered all the public-houses in Bristol on a recent Saturday evening between 7 and 11. The number was 104,000, and comprised 54,000 men, 36,000 women, and 13,000 children. A Sunday evening worship census, taken by the same journal a few weeks ago, showed that about 60,000 persons were present in the churches and chapels of that place. These are very suggestive facts. They are certainly not creditable ones. Whatever may be said for taking a regulated amount of alcohol, it is certain that a public-house is the worst place in which to take it. There is absolute unanimity amongst medical men in thinking that spirit, beer, or wine should not be taken except with food, and that the money spent on alcohol put into an empty stomach would be better thrown into the nearest river. There are two other reflections that occur to us. One is the appalling number of women and children involved. The other is the amount of substantial food which might have been purchased by the money spent by the 104,000 persons in public-houses. We leave the moral aspects of the drink census to the ministers and the public of Bristol.—Lancet.

We often hear of a woman marrying a man to reform him; but no one ever tells us of a man marrying a woman to reform her. We men are modest and don't talk about our good deeds much.—Plainfield Bulletin.

It certainly is a feather in a man's cap to be a teetotaler, and very often it is one in his wife's bonnet as well.

Taking a man into a saloon to "treat him" is what is called ill-treating him. Pray let us call things by their right names.

A teetotaler's arguments are pretty sure to be sound, for he is certain to make use of nothing which will not hold water.

Many people think teetotalism is all moonshine; but if they will only try it they will find it is nearly all sunshine.

We know not which is the saddest reflection the number of men drink has made thoroughly bad, or the number it has prevented from becoming good and great.

Dr. Willard Parker says: "To license shops that beget murder, and then to punish the murder that the State itself has begotten, is indefensible from a moral point of view."

The consciousness of duty performed, gives us music at midnight.—George Herbert.

The greatest thought that ever entered my mind, was that of my personal responsibility to a personal God.—Daniel Webster.

Educational.

A serious outbreak lately took place in Dalbeth Roman Catholic Reformatory, about two miles from Glasgow. On Monday night, January 23rd, when the boys were being served with supper, the warders observed a restlessness among them, but took no notice of it. They were asked, as usual, to say grace but instead of complying they commenced stamping the floor with their feet and singing the choruses of several popular music-hall songs. The warden present attempted to restore order, but their efforts were unavailing. The boys then commenced to break the windows and shout and sing. The governor was at once apprised of this conduct, and immediately put in an appearance. The boys marched off to their dormitories, many of them shouting at the pitch of their voices, "We will be game, Up till midnight they continued singing and shouting, but the warders prevented any further destruction of property. On Tuesday morning the lads, on resuming work in various shops, began to break the windows. A detachment of police was sent for, and their presence seemed to have the effect of quelling the turbulent spirit of the rioters. The Governor ordered eight of the ringleaders to be apprehended and flogged, and others were lodged in cells; but they were released, and allowed to resume work. The disturbance, the governor thinks, is traceable to the fact that on Sunday a number of boys were allowed a holiday and on returning on Sunday they circulated a story about the riot in another Glasgow reformatory.

An influential meeting was recently held at St. James's Palace presided over by the Prince of Wales, for the purpose of considering a scheme for the foundation of a Royal College of Music. Among those present, and who took part in the proceedings, were the Duke of Edinburgh, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Prime Minister. The idea is to found a college for the thorough musical education of promising students, to be provided gratuitously; while those who can afford to pay, and show themselves competent to profit from the instruction given, and willing to go through the course of study prescribed, may also be allowed to attend as paying pupils. The college is to be supported by voluntary subscriptions, and from the way in which the matter has been taken up there is little doubt but that the amount needed will be readily raised. We are, in all probability, soon to possess a college worthy the name of national. As expressed by the Times, "It seems that, so far as London is concerned, and so far as the musical profession is concerned, an end will be put to the haphazard system, or want of system, on which the musical education of this country has till now been conducted."—London Schoolmaster.

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