

performed. Then for the first time in my life I saw persons of the pure sex immodestly dressed. The shock to my boyish sense of decency, startled at a sight so indelicate, but fascinating, I can never forget. I stole a glance at my companions. They seemed used to it.

The result was that for nearly twenty years I have had to fight against one of those terrible twin temptations of young men, the saloon and the theatre. From drink I feel perfectly safe. But were it not for God's grace, the other, I believe, would have ruined me. Though I became a Christian, and a Christian Endeavorer, and joined the White Cross League, I dare not now break my rule never to see a show where is exhibited a woman dressed as I would not willingly have my sister seen. It has been so hard to be pure in heart. Colonel C. D. Wright truly says this is one temptation more ruinous than drink.—'C. E. World.'

### A Rice Convert.

(By the author of 'An Honorary Missionary,' in 'Baptist Missionary Magazine.')

Lying in my hammock, half awake and half asleep, I was dreamily watching a sinuous and slowly moving bulge on the white canvas cloth over my head. I knew it represented a snake, but I knew also that he would not harm me if I let him alone, and I waited to see if he would capture the rat which inspired his slow and stealthy progress across the cloth ceiling of my room. Outside, the hot and brilliant noon of India reigned supreme. Not a living thing seemed to move in its deathly and enveloping heat. Even the punkah-wallah, overcome by the noontide fervor, had fallen asleep. I was all the hotter for lack of the feeble artificial breeze he had been making, but was too hot to make the exertion necessary to awaken him.

I never could make up my mind to adopt the ingenious plan of some white men in India, who arrange a dish of water, so placed that when the punkah-wallah, overcome by the heat and drowsiness, drops asleep, and the whirring rope ceases to act, by pulling a string, the sleeper gets an involuntary bath. I always thought how little I should like it myself. Then again the dish of water would serve only once and the Hindu would fall asleep many times. So my punkah-wallah often slept at his ease, while I rolled and perspired with the heat.

The bulge in the cloth ceiling was almost to the wall of the room. A quick shake of the cloth and, a small squeak showed that my friend the snake had helped to make the number of rats in the thatch of my house one less in number. I shared his satisfaction at his success, and involuntarily turned to try again for another sleep.

As I turned my eyes toward the doorway I saw that one of the sharp, brilliant rays of sunshine which penetrated the semi-darkness of my room through every crack in door and shutter, was interrupted by some object, and with lazy curiosity I watched developments. Something was surely moving across the floor of my room. What it was and how it got there I could not tell.

As it came nearer into a little brighter ray of sunshine on the floor I saw that my guest was a man—a tall, athletic Hindu, with the stripes of his caste in the centre of his forehead, and dressed in the snowy turban and robes of his class.

'What do you want?' I sharply asked. My uninvited guest salaamed profoundly, and with deep, melodious voice replied, 'May it please the Sahib, I am a Christian.'

This was decidedly interesting. Converts

from the higher castes of India are too rare a sight to a missionary to be neglected. With a vigorous pull on the string I stirred my sleepy punkah-wallah into action, and, turning to my uninvited guest, I asked him how he became a Christian.

I found he did not believe in idols, either that they were gods or that they had any power for good or ill. He had been a fakir in the past and had learned by experience the worthlessness and hollowness of priestly pretensions, and the falseness of the claims of the Brahmans.

As, with the courtesy native to the Hindu, and with soft, melodious voice, he told his story my heart rejoiced at this new recruit for Christianity. With graceful and persuasive gestures, he emphasized his desire to leave his old religion, and to become a follower of the God of the Christians. With a caution learned by long experience of Hindu ways I began to question him.

'What will your friends say if you leave the Hindu religion and become a Christian?'

A cloud passed over his countenance as he replied: 'They will cast me off, but I will serve the mission. I shall give up my family and I shall lose my work, but I will become a servant of the mission.'

Alas! there came to light the hidden subtlety of the Hindu mind. The idea of sacrifice without compensation is unknown to the Hindu. If he builds a temple it is for merit; if he fasts it is that he may gain favor; if he walks on burning coals, lies upon a couch of spikes, permits himself to be hung by a hook from a lofty pole, or throws himself under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut, he always expects to gain more than he will lose.

My hopes failed. I explained to the would-be convert the necessity of sacrifice for his new faith. I told of the unrewarded sacrifice of Jesus Christ, how he gave himself for us, and all for our good, expecting nor gaining nothing in return. I urged the new convert to follow in the footsteps of the Saviour.

'The words of the Sahib are good, they are true. I believe them,' was the reply. 'But without work I cannot live. Can I not serve the mission?'

It never came to me before with so much force, the great contrast between a convert to Jesus Christ in a Christian land and a Christian convert in a heathen land. In the home land the convert finds everything to help. Friends cluster around him; the arms of the Church are open to receive him; he enters more fully even into the current of life in the best and highest sense.

Before the Christian convert in India there is nothing but a blank; a future, indefinite, uncertain; old ideals are broken; old friends are lost; old ways are left; old means of support fall away.

What shall the new convert do?

I tried to encourage him. I told him of the hopes which the religion of Jesus Christ brings for the future and of the comfort for the present time. I explained that being so ignorant of our religion he could not serve the mission well for a long time.

His face was sad, and he slowly turned to go away. Before he faded into the bewildering sunshine he once again turned and said, 'I am a Christian'—and he was gone.

For many days I wondered what had become of my noontide guest. He had not told me whence he came nor even his name, but everywhere I went I watched the dusky faces of those who gathered to hear the preaching of the Word to see if among them all I might again meet with my would-be convert. At times I felt that perhaps he

had come simply, as so many do, in the hope of obtaining employment. He might be simply a 'rice' Christian, seeking daily food by means of the profession of a new birth; but more often I felt that there must be something genuine behind his first confident profession, 'I am a Christian.'

One day we pitched our travelling tents on the outskirts of a large village. In the early morning we made our usual progress through the streets of the village, singing Christian hymns, giving tracts, and inviting all to come to the preaching service at the tent. In the pariah pale many of the poor people listened to the songs and received the tracts and promised to come. In the handsomer and cleaner and more orderly caste quarters of the village few listened to the songs or received the tracts, but many expressed their contempt for the strange religion, in both manner and words. Pierce threats, and even stones, assailed us, but we made a safe escape, and at the morning service a goodly number of pariahs were present, but none from the Brahman quarters. Resting through the sultry noon, when it is almost death to the white man to be exposed to the direct rays of the Indian sun, we again visited the village. As the shades of evening drew on, in some way I became separated from my native helpers and associates, and, losing my way in the growing darkness, I wandered through the streets of the village, vainly seeking the way to our encampment.

As I passed through the streets in the caste portion of the village the hatred of the morning, intensified by the preaching of the day, again showed itself. Stones began to fly about my head, and a noisy and turbulent crowd gathered on either hand. I realized my danger and hastened to escape, if possible; but the peril became more serious. In vain I tried every side street and alley which I came across. My way was hedged up by an impenetrable mass of angry people, and I saw that I was caught in a trap. Realizing that something must soon be done or my life might be the forfeit, I plunged desperately into the first narrow alley, with the resolve to push my way through at every hazard. I struggled with those who sought to detain me, and for a time succeeded in warding off the blows aimed at my unlucky head. The darkness and confusion were in my favor, but one straight blow disabled my right arm. I felt my strength failing and feared that all was over.

Just then a strong arm grasped mine. I knew vigorous blows were directed at those in front and on every side, and in the grasp of a powerful man I was hurried rapidly through the group of men who closed the way through the alley, but quickly dispersed before the vigorous assault of my unknown helper. The peril past, we hurried rapidly forward until I saw the lights of our encampment on the outskirts of the village.

Turning in wonder to thank my unknown helper, I saw that he had not escaped unscathed. Blood was streaming from wounds on his head; his left arm now hung helpless by his side. As we approached the light of our civilized lamps at the tent he made as if to go away. I turned to thank him and to ask his name—and saw that it was my noontide guest.

'Why, is it you?' I said.

He gravely smiled and as gravely said, before disappearing in the darkness:

'Sahib, I am a Christian.'

And I began to believe him.

### The Find-the-Place Almanac.

#### TEXTS IN HEBREWS.

Aug. 12, Sun.—We which have believed do enter into rest.

Aug. 13, Mon.—Harden not your hearts.

Aug. 14, Tues.—The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword.

Aug. 15, Wed.—All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Aug. 16, Thurs.—Let us hold fast our profession.

Aug. 17, Fri.—We may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Aug. 18, Sat.—Christ glorified not himself.