

LOST IN AN INDIAN PIT.

BY SERGEANT LAVERACK.

ALMOST immediately after the murder of two British officers, Lieut. Anderson and Van Agnew, by Mulraj, the Rajah of the province of Mooltan, in the Punjab, which led to the second war with the Sikhs, a powerful and warlike nation, on the North-west frontiers of India, my regiment, which was stationed at Meerut, received orders to march at a few hours' notice, towards the point of danger, and being in May, the very hottest part of the year, we were supplied with seven yards of thin narrow calico, to wrap round our pongos to protect our heads in some measure from the great heat of the sun; and, furthermore, we marched at a very early hour of the morning so as to reach the encamping ground about sunrise. We did not then pitch our tents in columns of companies as was usual, but wherever a few trees could be found, we erected our tents under them to shield us somewhat from the direct rays of the sun, and even with the side walls of the tents down or thrown loosely over the tent ropes to admit as much fresh air as possible we were almost suffocated. In this way the regiment covered a large space of ground. In the morning at the bugle-sound every man rose, leaped up his bed, etc., which were placed on the backs of camels, the tents were next struck, and safely deposited on the backs of the huge elephants, which the Government had supplied us with; and when all were armed and accounted we converged at our leisure to a spot on the main road, indicated by the burning of a torch; sometimes our tents were a considerable distance from the road, and owing to the unevenness of the ground and the darkness of night, we frequently stumbled, and sometimes were sent sprawling on the ground, or into a thorn bush.

One morning a more serious accident happened. A poor fellow of my regiment, named Timothy Delaney, who enlisted a day or two after me in Liverpool, was wending his way in the dense darkness towards the road, when he stumbled and fell into an unprotected old unused well, and in his fall broke his jawbone. When he got to the bottom, which fortunately was not very deep, he found that he was up to his breast in water; realising at once his awful position, he began to cry aloud for help as well as his broken jaw would admit, but the gushing blood almost choked his utterances. He knew that unless someone heard his cries immediately there was but little hope of him being rescued at all, and so he redoubled his cries for help; after a few minutes, which seemed to him an age, he heard the bugle-sound for the "covering sergeants" to take up their position for their companies, and now his heart sank within him, military precision demanding that every man should be ready to fall into his place at once.

Away marched the regiment. The band struck up some well-known march, but there was no music in it to the doomed man in the well. Fainter, and fainter, and fainter, still grew the sound. Every tap of the big drum seemed to sound his funeral knell, and every note as his dirge, until at length the notes died away in the distance.

But there was a hope that being missed from the "Roll Call," a non-commissioned officer might be sent in search of him, and oh! how he wished such might be the case; but no footstep was heard. The cold perspiration rolled from his fevered brow, and thus the long, long hours of that dreadful night passed slowly away.

The morning at length dawned in the east, but no ray of hope dawned upon his wretched heart. The long hours of that summer's day passed wearily away, every hour seeming a lifetime. A second morning at length broke, but no welcome voice broke upon his ear, no friendly hand stretched forth to save.

On that morning the married soldiers, together with their wives and families, followed the regiment, and some of them pitched their tents at no great distance from the well where poor Delaney was engulfed. About noon-day a woman of the detachment wended her steps in that direction, and when she saw the well she happened to look down it. At that moment poor Delaney looked up again, and oh, such a look as brought tears to the good woman's eyes. She promised him help, and away she ran as fast as she could to the tents crying out at the top of her voice, "A man in the well! a man in the well!" If we are half or a quarter as anxious about souls, some people who have no sympathy with soul-saving, cry out we are mad, but let me ask such, if the life of a man is so much prized ought we not to value the souls of the perishing around us.

Before she reached the tents every man, woman, and child had rushed out to see what was the matter, and when they knew, more than fifty men with strong arms and willing hearts, ran off at once in the direction indicated to them, followed immediately by their wives and children who, if they could not help, could pity and sympathise. One of the men was let down into the well by a camel rope, and poor Delaney was drawn out, more dead than alive.

Ah, my dear fellow-sinner, you are in the well, whether you believe it or no, whether you feel it or no. Such is truly the state of every unconverted person. You will not ask, "What must I do to be saved?" until you feel you are lost. You will not ask the Great Physician to apply the balm of Gilead until you feel you are wounded and bruised by the fall. And I so much wish you to be impressed with the thought that you are lost, and then, and not till then, will there be some hope of Christ saving you. Poor Delaney had probably looked up a thousand times, and the first time a friendly eye glanced upon him he saw it. Jesus has come not by accident, but by design. Yes, to seek and to save the lost, and it seems as if men immersed in worldliness or sin, or bemoaning their sad plight that they cannot or will not look up to Him who bore their sins in His own body upon the tree. If you look beneath you there is nothing but mire, and clay, and sinking sand; if you look within there is nothing but sin, and pollution, and misery. Brother, dear suffering brother, there is always a way upward, and you cannot look upward long before you will see the benignant glance of the tender, loving Redeemer, who has come to the very spot where you are weltering in your sin and in your blood. To seek and save you, His arm is long enough to reach you—His arm is strong enough to save you. When He reaches His long, strong, arm down to you and with a grip of love lays hold on you, you just lay hold on Him by FAITH, and that hand will lift you up out of the horrible pit and put your feet upon a rock, and established your goings.

MORE LIGHT.

"MORE light! Oh, for more light!"

It was the cry of an aged matron who had been, externally at least, a consistent follower of the Lamb of God. Overburdened by bodily disease which speedily brought her to the dust of death, and harassed by the remembrance of sins, both of omission and commission, her spirit was enveloped in a cloud of darkness. She had no need to utter the first prayer, which was once taught to a Highland kitchen-maid, "Lord, show me myself." Poor and wretched, and blind, and naked, she felt herself to be; and her urgent and often repeated supplication for more light was practically the same as the second prayer which the Highland girl learned, to her ultimate joy to offer, "Lord, show me Thyself."

A Christian friend was sent for, and speedily visited the disconsolate invalid. Discovering her need, he sought to turn her eyes away from self to Jesus, and the Father whom He reveals. As the visitor spoke of the love of Jehovah, manifested in the sending of His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him,—of the love of the Eternal Son, shown by assuming our nature, and therein giving Himself as a ransom for sinners,—of the blood shed on Calvary which cleanseth from all sin,—of the call of the Redeemer to come to Himself that we may find rest,—and of the assurance that whosoever cometh shall in no wise be cast out,—light from heaven shone again into the old matron's heart. "That's a great comfort," was ever and anon her utterance, as her friend stood beside her bed, and tried to exhibit the Highway of Salvation, free to her and all. She began anew to encourage herself in the God of all grace, and rejoiced to the end in the faithful saying, that the Son of Man came into the world to seek and to save the lost.

Do YOUR GODS LOVE YOU?—"Do your gods love you?" asked a missionary of some Indians. "The gods never think of loving," was the cheerless answer. The missionary repeated the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of St. John's Gospel: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Read it again," asked the arrested pagan. "That is large light—read it again." A third time the blessed words were repeated, and with this emphatic response, "That is true; I feel it."