

WHAT IT COSTS AN INDIAN TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

There is nothing the Indian dreads more than ridicule. To call an Indian "a squaw-man" is to offer him the greatest insult known.

Psait-cop-ta was a young Kiowa brought up on the reservation around Anadarko, Okla. When he first heard of the coming of the missionary among them, he was not at all glad. Indeed, like many of the others, he resented it. He was just one more of the disliked white men perhaps come to interfere.

After a while Psait-cop-ta heard of his preaching, or, rather, of "the talking" he did. It was marvellous things he had to tell the Indians; so very marvellous indeed, that Psait-cop-ta, out of curiosity, thought he would go, at least one time, and listen. For Psait-cop-ta to listen was to be convicted; the arrow of truth sped straight home to his heart. He went once, twice, thrice, then Psait-cop-ta took his heart to Jesus.

Psait-cop-ta's trials began the moment he came out of the church door, for around it were gathered many of the young men with whom he associated. They followed him, making all manner of remarks to torment him; then drawing their blankets about them to represent the skirts of the squaws, began to walk with mincing steps.

Psait-cop-ta stood it as long as he could, then he turned around in sudden fury. Another moment his hand was clinched, and he would assuredly have rushed upon them. But something restrained him. He heard again the missionary's voice. It was telling of this Jesus, this wonderful Redeemer, this Captain under whose banner Psait-cop-ta had that very day enlisted. "He was meek and lowly, and he bore many things for our sakes." Meek and lowly! that meant that he would not strike a blow or do anything violent even when sorely tried. Indeed the missionary had said so.

Psait-cop-ta turned and walked rapidly away, with the increased laughs and jeers and taunting words ringing in his ears.

But it was to be harder still for poor Psait-cop-ta. The young Indians had a hunting-club to which Psait-cop-ta belonged. It was one of the joys of life, for they not only went on famous hunts, but they had also their own councils, and debated as did the old men. In this club Psait-cop-ta had been a leading figure, for he had a bright mind and was a fine talker. He had even been chief.

A few days after that Sunday the club held a meeting. As it had long been advertised, Psait-cop-ta remembered and went. He had no sooner taken his seat than all the others arose, turned their backs upon him, and left the arbor; but not before one of the members mounted the stand, declaring they would no longer associate with a "squaw-man." But, if he would come out and show himself a real man, why, then they would take him back, and gladly.

Poor Psait-cop-ta; what a struggle it was for him! On the one side were friends, honor, peace; on the other, sneers, ridicule, abuse, and Jesus; yes, Jesus! When Psait-cop-ta came to that remembrance, he no longer wavered. Jesus! what help, what strength, it meant! "He can do all for thee," the missionary had said. Who else could? No one that Psait-cop-ta knew.

But the sorest trial of all was yet to come. His father, Ton-ke-na-bah, was a fierce and proud old Indian. He hated the white people and all that pertained to them, for had not these same white people taken the Indians' lands and driven them from their homes? He looked upon even the missionary with suspicion and distrust, and no inducement could get him within the little mission church. His wrath was therefore great indeed when he learned that his son, his first-born, his pride, had gone over to the white people and their ways.

"Give them up!" cried the old man fiercely to Psait-cop-ta. "Give them up, or else you are no longer son of mine. I want a man for my son, not a squaw!"

"I cannot give them up," said Psait-cop-ta, firmly.

"Then go!" And with fearful, cruel words he drove him from his tepee, and Psait-cop-ta knew it would never be home to him again until he gave up what his father had commanded. Could he? Never! never! replied Psait-cop-ta's loyal heart.

But what was he to do? All his life he had been so idle, for the Indian men and boys do not work if they can help it. It is considered beneath them. The squaws must do all that

He wandered about the reservation homeless, hungry, and well-nigh despairing. But all this time he did not lose faith. "When thy father and thy mother foresake thee, then the Lord will take thee up"; so had said the missionary, and Psait-cop-ta believed him.

It was when his heart had reached its lowest ebb, and the flood-tide of hope had gone out, it seemed, never to return, that help