

must make a prisoner of one so aged and so holy.

But the rough men were obliged to obey their captain, so they brought Polycarp back to Smyrna, where an officer named Herod met him, taking the venerable captive up into his chariot and trying to persuade him to give honor to false gods, and so to save his life. Polycarp steadily refused, and Herod grew angry and pushed him roughly back into the road, so that the old man fell and hurt himself. But he made no complaint, and followed the soldiers as well as he could to the place where the public games were held, a great crowd being assembled. At this moment the brave sufferer seemed to hear above the noise around him the sweet sound of a voice from heaven saying, 'Be strong, Polycarp, and contend manfully.'

And Polycarp did 'contend manfully.' The Pro-consul tried to induce him to give up his faith in Jesus; he was so aged, he said, he must not allow himself to be put to death. 'Reproach Christ,' he added, 'and I will let you go.' But Polycarp was not to be tempted. 'Eighty and six years have I served Christ,' he replied, 'and he never once did me a wrong; and how can I now blaspheme my King who has saved me?'

'Swear then, by Caesar,' said the Pro-consul; but the captive only answered that he could not do that, being a Christian. 'But I have wild beasts at hand,' returned the governor. 'If you do not repent you shall be thrown to them to be devoured!' 'Call them,' replied the bishop calmly, 'I fear them not, and I cannot repent of a thing that is good.' 'Then I will send you to the fire,' was the next threat hurled at the prisoner; but with shining face Polycarp told his judge that for him the flames had no terrors, and bid him inflict any punishment he chose without delay.

Herod hardly knew what to do, for he was unwilling to give up the old man to a painful death, but he sent a herald to proclaim among the people 'Polycarp confesses that he is a Christian;' and then the angry crowd, like that which had raged round the judgment hall of Pilate shouting 'Crucify Him,' called out that Polycarp must die, and clamored for a lion to be let loose upon him. But the time for these terrible spectacles was over for the present, and the cruel desire was refused, so the people declared that the holy bishop should be burned alive, and began to collect wood for a fire.

Polycarp was given up to their will, and meekly took off his upper clothing and stood by the stake; but he refused to be fastened to it, saying, 'Leave me as I am. He who giveth me strength to sustain the fire will also enable me to remain in it without flinching.' His hands were tied behind him, and he prayed fervently, thanking God for the honor of being reckoned among the martyrs of Jesus; and then the fire was lighted, and was said to have made a glowing arch round the martyr's body, which glistened like gold in the furnace. This was only the wind blowing aside the flames, and before the fire could do its dreadful work, one of the soldiers plunged a sword to Polycarp's heart and released the martyr from his sufferings. The body was afterwards burned to ashes, and the bones, 'more precious than gold and jewels,' gathered up by those who dearly loved the saintly bishop, and reverently buried.

Polycarp wrote an epistle to the church at Philippi, but he was most occupied with teaching his own flock the truths he had heard from John. 'I could point out where the blessed Polycarp sat to teach,' wrote his disciple, Iren-

aeus; 'and I could repeat what he said to the people, and recall the stories he used to relate of those who had seen the Lord's face on earth. He was constantly telling what he had heard from them of the words and the miracles of Christ.'

With Polycarp passed away the last link to the Apostles; but if there were now no longer any teachers living who could remember the faces of Peter, and Paul and John, their words could never be lost, for through the apostles' lips they had been spoken by One who said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.'

The Bird With a Broken Pinion.

I walked in the woodland meadows,
Where sweet the thrushes sing,
And found on a bed of mosses,
A bird with a broken wing.
I healed its wing, and each morning
It sang its old, sweet strain,
But the bird with the broken pinion
Never soared as high again.

I found a young life broken,
By sin's seductive art,
And touched by a Christ-like pity,
I took him to my heart;
He lived with a nobler purpose,
And struggled not in vain,
But the life that sin had stricken,
Never soared as high again.

But the bird with a broken pinion,
Kept another from the snare,
And the life that sin had stricken,
Raised another from despair;
Each loss has its own compensation,
There's healing for each pain,
But the bird with a broken pinion,
Never soars as high again.

—H. Butterworth.

The Remarkable Question of a Child.

During a revival, a man who had been very worldly-minded was awakened, but for some time concealed his feelings, even from his own wife, who was a praying woman. She left him one evening in charge of his little girl of three years of age. His anxiety of mind became so great that he walked the room in his agony. The little girl noticed his agitation, and inquired, 'What ails you, papa?' He replied, 'Nothing,' and endeavored to quiet his feelings, but all in vain. The child looked up sympathizingly in his face, and inquired, with childish simplicity, 'Papa, if you were dry, wouldn't you go and get a drink of water?' The father started as if a voice from heaven had fallen on his ear. He thought of his thirsty soul famishing for the waters of life; he thought of the living fountains opened in the Gospel; he believed and straightway fell at the Saviour's feet. From that hour he dates the dawning of a new light and beginning of a new life.—Australian 'Spectator.'

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Why Hindoo Young Men Read the Bible.

'If I had remained in Midnapore my Hinduism would be gone by this time.'

It was the young man who teaches me Bengali who made this admission as he sat in my room one day. He had come to read the Bible with me, and some passage had brought to his mind the case of a young friend of his who, remaining in Midnapore, and so more directly under the influence of the missionaries, had turned from the ancient belief of his fathers, had given up home and friends, and become a Christian. The conversation which followed was exceedingly interesting, because it brought out clearly the hold that Christian thought is getting upon these Hindu young men, and the far-reaching influence of mission schools.

These two boys had been pupils in the mission school in Midnapore. One, in the face of the sorrow and displeasure of his widowed mother, who must not keep him in her home because of public disapproval, had boldly come out as a Christian. The other, though still professing to be a rigid Hindu, received such a bent in the right direction as had removed from his mind all prejudice against Christians and their peculiar beliefs, and led him, when recently he visited this young friend of his, to counsel him to stand by his colors if he believed he was in the right. We spoke of the desertion of his friends, and my pundit expressed wonder over it and an inability to understand why they should thus treat him.

'But,' one present remarked, 'of course they hate Christianity, and would naturally turn from any one who took it up.'

And then followed what seemed to me a remarkable admission from the lips of a devout Hindu. He said:

'But we do not all hate it. At one time there was a company of us who met together to study the Bible. We did not hate Christianity. It is like this. Our own religion is very hard to understand. The books are all written in Sanskrit, and we cannot easily read them. We have no means of learning it, and no one to teach us. The schools do not teach it. We do things and perform acts of worship without understanding why we do them. And so we, those among us who are naturally inclined to be religious, turn to the Bible because we want something, some religious teaching, and we can understand that.'

That Hindus do not teach their own beliefs in their own schools may occasion surprise, especially in these days when they are adopting the methods of Christians so largely, and when earnest minded Hindus see that without religious teaching of any kind young India is bound to be destroyed. A Hindu gentleman explained this lack to me when speaking of the attempt now being made to establish a college in which Hinduism shall have a prominent place. He said that it was an impossibility; that Hinduism could not be taught in college. I said that Christianity was. He admitted that, but said that the case was different, because Hinduism and the thought of to-day, which must be taught in any college, are diametrically opposed, and where the one held sway the other could not hope for a hearing.

The hoary faith which has held sway in this land so many centuries is not dead. Hinduism can be as bitter and relentless against our religion as ever they could, but it is certainly true that surely, if slowly, the light is spreading, and from unexpected quarters the evidence is often forthcoming.—Kate A. Blair, of Tamluk, India, in 'World-Wide Missions.'