

HOW A YOUNG TIBETAN FOUND CHRIST.

By Charles Smith, a native of Tibet.

How John iii. 16 led the son of a High Lama to leave home and country, and risk his life in an effort to find a missionary.

Being born in the year 1884 in a small village near Ohamalari, north of Bhuban, or on the borders of India, I attended a small lama school at the age of six, where I was taught for my priesthood. At that age, my father, who was a Tibetan high lama, and my Hindoo mother put me into confinement for two years. The lonely cave, through which ran a stream of water, was the only room I had for two years. It is believed that when anyone goes into this cave he shall never fall ill, for this stream, given by Cheunaisi, the great god, shall take away all diseases to itself.

Unlike the rest of the world the Tibetan father begins at a very early age to train up his child for lamahood. In the cave, where the candidate has taken up his abode, is an aperture through which the servant passes his meals. The servant and the boy are not supposed to see each other. The servant brings the meals, and, as he approaches the aperture, he turns his face away from it; suddenly throwing in the meal, he runs away. Many a time my tea and rice fell into the water, but no murmur came from my lips. The happy thought of being a great lama hereafter suppress the sadness.

At the age of thirteen, a missionary, disguised in the Tibetan costume, came into our country. Seeing that she had some curios with her which we never saw in our life, we exchanged a few night's lodging for them. The bargain was agreed on, and we ushered her into a room. Next day we heard some men who had come from afar tell us that they heard a woman who was introducing some unknown doctrine.

She was brought before my father, and he, standing on a rock, after having read his Bible, asked what should be done to her.

"Kill her" said one. "Throw her over the rocks" said another. At last one, who was the aged leader of the crowd, said: "Bring a spiked saddle, and we will make her ride on it; without a torture there is no forgiveness." Being an elderly looking man, his advice was taken. A spiked saddle was brought and she was thrown across, but here starts my conversion.

While she was being thus tortured a Bible

fell off her arm. It was an English Bible. Father threw it into the fire. But from the Bible there fell a slip of paper, which did not attract attention; and, seeing this slip of paper fall, I made up my mind I was going to see what was on it. After conducting the horse round and round I gave it to a lama friend, who took the woman to the borders of India but not on the spiked saddle. After going round and round this slip of paper I suddenly dropt my praying wheel, and when I went to pick up this praying wheel, I picked up the slip of paper at the same time. It was black with mud from the tramping of over a thousand feet. I rubbed off the mud and read as follows: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

This interested me, for our god, Cheunaisi, does not give us everlasting life, and I made up my mind that I was going to find out about this "For God so loved." So, seeing one of my dear fellow mates, I asked him if he could go with me in search of this new God we had found. Oftentimes we went near a cave and read this John iii. 16. Finally, we made up our minds that we would go and learn from this missionary where this God was, and then go in search of Him. We heard from some lama that she had gone on the borders, and so to the borders we went. We were arrested for trying to desert our homes.

Again I started out, going in a different direction, and I suddenly came across some of the Tibetan robbers. They seldom spare your life. Now, these robbers stript me of everything, and one of them was going to take my John iii. 16, which was on a slip of paper, but, with some sleight of hand trick, I managed to put it in my ear, after making a ball of it. I was about to go home when I started reading this paper again. Instead of going home I kept on going to see this missionary.

One day I felt a little warm; I sat down on a rock to repeat John iii. 16, when low! what should I see at the back of me but one of those Himalayan black bears making straight for me. I had no stones, no bamboo to protect myself with, and no place to hide. I had only a few seconds left. The bear was hustling to tear me, and my courage failed. Just then I looked around me, and at my right side I discovered a