

THE HOLY MAN.

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For the CHILDREN'S RECORD.

Our picture is that of a holy man in India. But his holiness consists in wearing coarse clothes, covering his face with ashes, wearing unkempt hair, and living on what he begs. He has no place of abode, but travels from town to town imposing on the credulity of the poor Hindus, who look on him as very sacred. Sometimes, to add to the sensation of his appearance, he allows his arm in the air until it becomes stiff, or lies for hours on a bed of pointed nails. He usually makes a very good living out of it. I have seen three hundred of these men in one town, all being fed on the fat of the land.

I am sorry to say that, however holy in name, these men are often very unholy in character. They are usually great consumers of chang and opium; they are overbearing and cruel, often very immoral.

They have great influence on account of their supposed sanctity, and we welcome any signs among them of interest in Christianity. One of these men was found in the jungle near Barwai, who gradually became interested in the gospel. After a while he came to Mhow. The night he arrived the people came flocking around him with gifts, and erected an arch of flowers and lights over the place he sat, many falling down and worshipping him. He lived in the jungle, and came in to the mission every day to study the Bible. Finally, he asked for baptism. A day or two before he was to be baptized, a dissatisfied Christian took him over to the Roman Catholic Church,



and so wrought on his imaginative mind as to give him exaggerated ideas of the divisions between Christians. He asked to have his baptism deferred, and shortly afterwards set off on his wanderings again. Whether he was baptized elsewhere, or died of exposure, or is still a wanderer, I know not, but so strongly did he impress me that I look to meet him some day among the redeemed.

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