

and we are very glad when, after five or ten minutes, up walks Mr. Rhodes, an old Church Army officer, and plays a few bars on his faithful companion, the concertina. The crowd comes fast enough now, and before it has time to disperse again the first of our Indian brethren has attracted their attention, for they know that he once followed the Sikh religion himself, and they respect also his white beard, snowed with forty years' preaching of Jesus Christ in this one city of Amritsar.

There is no idol in the beautiful Temple close behind him, but there is a book written three or four hundred years ago and containing a great deal of good advice written in very good poetry. The Sikhs are so proud of this book that they come and offer their worship to it, instead of to an idol, but unhappily they are not nearly so ready to follow its teaching. Their religion is all on the outside; they bow with their knees before the book, but they harden their hearts against the good which it commands; they wash their bodies in the sacred reservoir, but within they continue foul and unclean. Now we will listen to our preacher. "Suppose," says he, "that you send your dirty clothes to be washed. The *dhobi* throws them all into a big wooden box. Now see him*: he shuts it up; he carries it to the tank; he takes soap and scrubs and scrubs the wooden box on the outside, *but he never opens it*. You go to him and say, 'My friend, that will never clean the clothes inside.' 'Oh,' he answers, 'but this is the way my fathers always did their washing, and I am going to do the same.' You argue with him, but it is of no avail. His forefathers, he says worked this way, and he will not change. Foolish man! those clothes will never get clean so. And yet that is what *you* are all doing. Washing and washing your bodies in this holy water, and not noticing that all the time your hearts remain full of lying and impurity and selfishness."

We look round the audience now, and they are all listening intently. The fine old grey-bearded men from the villages, who have come in to the market, look at one another and smile and nod their heads; and then the preacher goes on to tell them of the true Fountain open for sin and uncleanness, and to invite them to come and wash in it and be clean. Alas! how many go away with just the words of his parable on their lips: "Our fathers always practised these things, and we do not want to change." Some also try open opposition, or start a rival preaching a few yards off. But "other seed fell on good ground." Some receive the word, and it springs up and bears fruit. Rather more than a year ago a Sikh farmer

was baptized along with his four sons, the eldest of them a fine young man of six feet high, and the youngest a boy of eleven or twelve. His conversion was greatly due to what he heard in the Amritsar street preaching on his visits to the market and the bank. He needs our prayers, for he and his sons have suffered a great deal of persecution in their village home, but God has been with them to help them.

But it is time for us to hurry away to Lahore, and there the preachers will be the young students of the C.M.S. Divinity School, and the audience will be composed largely of Mohammedans. Some have come to listen to *us*, and especially to those three or four of our number who used to be Mohammedans like themselves. But some I fear have come to listen to *their own* voices, if only they can find an opportunity for interrupting us. We try not to give them the opportunity, but they are very quick, and very obstinate too, and will sometimes go on interrupting till we have to leave our subject and answer them. Let us listen to one or two of their questions, "You say," says one, "that the Prophet Jesus was sinless. But in your own Gospels He said, 'Why callest thou Me good?' And besides, if He was good, why did He curse the fig-tree?" When we have answered this question up comes another man with a New Testament in his hand. "Listen," he says; "in Mark xvi. 17 and 18 it is written that those who believe in Jesus shall cast out devils, and speak with new tongues, and take up serpents, and lay hands on the sick so that they recover. You say that you believe in Jesus. Do these things and we will believe too." One man once offered to bring me a cobra that I might let it bite me! Then we try to show them how all these things were fulfilled in the Acts of the Apostles, and how the Bible itself teaches that certain gifts were to pass away after a time, but that greater than all these is the gift of charity, which remaineth. But that is a gift which Mohammedanism knows very little about, and often they go away angry.

One hot evening last summer we had just begun preaching at one of our usual places in the city, when a Mohammedan started off preaching almost opposite to us. This is against the law, but as the only police on the spot were Mohammedans, we knew we should have no help from them. So he preached and we preached, and whenever his crowd began to grow too large we exchanged preaching for song, and they almost all left him and came over to us. He could not reply with music, for there is no true joy in Mohammedanism, and so there are no hymns. So his helpers instead replied with bags of dust and dirt. I was glad of that day's sermon, for I am sure it

*In India they have washermen instead of washerwomen.