

rhythmically. One had to be polite. One had to listen to these leisurely sahibs who had such curious stories—unbelievable. . . .

"I will look into this," he said solemnly, as officials should. The leasurly gentleman undraped his legs and hurried away. I don't know just how much good his talk had done; but Pingiah's flogging was indefinitely postponed; and they tell me that the official cast an official eye at those unbelievable white-washed huts—

"So clean!" he commented.

Then twelve months passed. Twelve months are such a long time—a year. Things happen in a year; but slowly, if they happen in India. Then two years passed. Then three; four; five; six; seven; eight. And while Pingiah went here and there singing the Lord's life, the Brahman baby lengthened out into a Brahman boy, studying in your mission school, if you please (because, just then, your mission school was the best in town). And the baby who had been so democratic had lengthened out into a snob; a Brahman snob. It was therefore the duty of the Lady Teachers and the Gentlemen Teachers to inoculate him against an even worse attack of snobbery.

"We must bring his nose down from the air," smiled a certain Lady Teacher.

It was hard work. So much goes in one ear and out the other. But Christianity can't all go out the other ear. Whatever remained in his head astonished the boy so much that he told his mother. She was even more bored with her Zenana than she had been eight years before. This was news, indeed. "Get one of those people to come here and talk to me," she said.

A Lady Teacher came. White-all-over! With shoes! And a lid on her head called a hat! A most absurd person to be looked upon for the first time by a cooped-up lady draped in yards of shimmering silks and looped with jewels. But the absurdity of American clothes was as nothing compared to the absurdity of American Christianity—

"How could I believe such good news as yours?" giggled the astonished be-looped lady. "Tell me some more."

Later on, she begged: "Come again!"

It is a long while to wait eight years for such an invitation. The missionary came again—and the Hurried Man also, to cure sickness.

A whole year passed. The Hurried Man went home to America for his furlough—which is supposed to mean a year of rest, but the poor dear hurried more than ever all over the map, telling everyone about India. Another missionary left. Another was sick. So that on the morning when the Brahman official fingered the cord of his sacred poita thoughtfully and sent for a Christian teacher, there was only Pingiah to come.

You will like him for walking calmly through Brahman streets, under Brahman trees, through Brahman doorways into Brahman rooms. He sat down. He talked. It was unbelievable, unless you remembered the inoculations of the Hurried Man through eight years. Pingiah could answer all the official's questions, he could sing, he could pray. Pingiah was wonderful that day. God talked through him. And the Brahman official bowed his haughty head: "Oh God, forgive me."

So caste flew out of the doorway.

Then things began to happen on that street. The entire Brahman neighborhood was up in arms! Such a wagging of heads.

"We won't talk to a man who lets an out-caste into his house!"

"We have seen this coming on for eight years," said others mournfully.

"We will show this fellow what we think of him," they said, and in utter rage they threw stones at the new Christian as he walked down the street. They put poison in his new well. They scattered broken glass in his courtyard, where the bare feet of his family would get badly cut. The rumor spread further, and he was not able to buy food to eat, for the pressure of Brahmans had been brought to bear on the merchant caste.

Stones—poison—broken glass—no food—these are big penalties to pay for having, at last, a happy heart as far as God is concerned.

"This fellow's happiness irritates me," said one neighbor to another.