

me. Can I find a place where it will be removed?"

"Yes, many places."

"Tell me of one, and the nearest, that I may go at once, for it seems that I must die if relief does not come soon. And if I die, must my soul bear this load forever?"

"My poor friend, I am glad that I can tell you a way to be rid at once and forever of that load. Go to the river Ganges; wash in its sacred waters, and your sins will disappear—your burden be gone forever. Then come back and tell me."

"Oh, thank you! Thank you! I shall be only too glad, when the burden is gone, to come back and show you my gratitude."

Some days later the poor sinner returned, disappointed, sad, and burdened heavier than ever. When asked if he had bathed in the Ganges, and with what results, the man answered:

"I entered the sacred water and washed my whole body from head to foot, but found no relief. Again I entered the river and bathed more thoroughly than before, but in vain. For a short time I sat weeping on the bank, and was asked by a stranger why I mourned. When he knew, he advised me to plunge into the water again, and remain beneath the surface until exhausted. Obeying, I remained until death was near, hoping thus to destroy sin, but it was useless. The burden was heavier when I came out than when I entered, and has grown ever since. It will crush me unless relief be gained soon. Can you direct to a better place? Is there something, no matter how difficult, that I can do? If you will only tell me I will do it, and forever after thank you for your wisdom and kindness."

"Yours is no doubt a very, and unusually heavy load, and cannot be removed by the ordinary means. There is another, a far better, but much more trying and painful way; and a way that cannot fail. It is so severe and painful, that only men of great courage and determination dare try it. Are you willing to endure great suffering that you may be rid of that load?"

"Oh, sir, tell me what it is, and I will try at once. It cannot give worse suffering than I endure now. And shall I fear to endure the torture of an hour, a day, a year, if I may be rid of this overwhelming load and agony for a life-time—no, an eternity?"

"Are you willing to swing for hours in the air with an iron hook thrust into your back, and holding you before the gaze of thousands?"

"Willing, yes; and glad to do that or anything else. But will that save me? Will that take away my load of sin?"

"Without doubt it will, if you can endure the suffering."

"It is but a question between a few hours agony and of an eternity. I will go at once. When my load is gone I will return to thank you."

With an iron hook thrust into his back, the poor wretch hung for hours from a pole swung in the air, and patiently hoped thus to gain pardon and peace to his soul. People looked on and wondered. They praised his courage, and declared that he would some day be one of the holiest of men; and that through this sacrifice and suffering he would win an untold amount of merit with the gods.

But when the poor creature was lowered, and the hook removed from the bleeding, mangled muscles of his back, the old burden remained; and the pain of soul was greater than that of his wounded and torn body. People little thought his groans were because of sin rather than bodily suffering.

Weak and exhausted, he set out again for the Brahmin's home, but before reaching it saw a piece of paper in his path. Picking it up, he read among others these words:

"And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

He stopped, read again and again the precious truth. What did it mean? Who is Jesus Christ? Who His Father? How could he get that blood applied to his soul? Would it give relief? He had tried other things in vain; would not this prove as helpless? Where could he learn more?

Taking the scrap of paper to a foreigner who happened to be a missionary, he soon learned all he wished to know. And, what was far more to him, he found Jesus Christ; and when the blood was applied, the poor man found pardon, peace, and joy such as he had never known before. Instead of the overwhelming load, he was nearly overwhelmed with delight. He could hardly keep from shouting his joy and telling everyone he met what Jesus had done for him.

One day the happy soul sought the Brahmin. With face glowing, and heart full, he met his former adviser and was gladly welcomed.

"Ah, you have come, and you took my advice and found it good, I see. Is the load all gone?"

"Yes, all, and forever. I am so thankful. I never was so happy before in my life, and the joy grows as days pass."

"Yet it was a painful remedy."

"Oh, you mean the hook? Yes, I did try it, and that load was heavier than ever. No, not the hook. That gave agony, but no relief. I have found something better. It took all my sin away. It is the only thing that can do it. It is the only way." After telling about the piece of paper and the missionary, he repeated: "It's the only way, the only way. The missionary told me of the blood of Jesus I went to Him, and His blood washed all my sins away. The Ganges will not do it; the hook will not do it. Nothing but the blood of Jesus will. It is the only way. It is the only way."

—"The Presbyterian."