

## THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

## THE STORY OF JADU BINDU GHOSE.

The Rev. Mr. Phillips, of the London Missionary Society writes:

In September, 1880, I had the privilege of spending three days with the Rev. James Vaughan, of the Church Missionary Society. He was then at Krishnaghur, the chief town of the district of Nuddea, which joins our district of Moorshedabad. One evening the name of Mr. Lacroix came up. He will be remembered as one of the most honoured pioneer missionaries of the London Missionary Society in Bengal. Mr. Vaughan said: I was with him at the time of his death. His spirit seemed much troubled, because, although he had preached for thirty years in all parts of Bengal, yet he could not point to one man and say that such a man was led to Christ by him. He would have been greatly comforted had he known but just one fact that afterwards came to my knowledge. I will tell you the story of Jadu Bindu Ghose.

"Forty-eight years ago, a boy of fourteen sauntered leisurely home from school along the road in Calcutta where now stands College Hospital. At that time there was an open space. Upon that a large crowd was gathered, and in the midst stood a missionary preaching. During the few minutes that the boy's attention was arrested, the speaker, in graphic terms, pointed out the awful nature and effects of sin and its consequences. He was surprised and vexed, and troubled to find that the preacher's words would not leave him. For years they worked upon his mind. But he left school, engaged in commerce, grew rich, and buried serious reflections. Reverses came. Misfortune woke up the slumbering thoughts of bygone days. Sin and misery, as set forth by that eloquent preacher, once more troubled his conscience. At length, he was so greatly moved that, forsaking wife, children, and all, he started on a pilgrimage to the many sacred shrines of India. For years he thus wandered about in a vain search for peace.

"Finding no comfort from such efforts he joined the new sect of Brahmos which had been called into being by Rajah Ram Mohun Roy. For ten years he held by the Brahma Somai, but yet found no true satisfaction for the deepest wants of his soul. Sin was still an awful thing, and he knew no way of escape from its power and consequences. Again he left Calcutta and wandered over India, haunted by the dread awakened in boyhood. At length he came once more to Benares, determined to make a last attempt to gain peace. With bitter toil and earnest purpose he went from shrine to shrine in that City of Temples. Many weeks it took him to make the dreary round. Night had closed in when his tired feet passed out of the last temple. He entered a lonely garden and sat down at the foot of a tree. The darkness of its shadow in the dark night was a fitting cover for the darkness of his weary heart. He buried his head in his hands and wept in bitter, hopeless agony. 'Enough,' he said, 'I will make no more journeys after peace.' Nearly forty years had passed away since, as a boy, he had lingered to hear the preacher's voice. Toil and anxiety had made him an old man at fifty. Quietly he returned to his ancestral home at Naihati, some twenty-two miles to the north of Calcutta. There he settled among his own people, revered as a saint by all except himself.

"One night, eight years ago, I was preaching," continued Mr. Vaughan, "in our chapel in Bow Bazaar Street, Calcutta. Among the audience I noticed a grey-haired man, whose eyes sparkled with such eager attention whilst I spoke of the Cross of Christ that I was greatly impressed. Whenever I looked in that direction, those wonderful eyes, like diamonds, seemed to gleam upon me. As I was walking home I found this venerable Hindu following me. I invited him to come with me. When we were seated, the old man with tears exclaimed: 'Sir! I thank God that I ever heard you this night. At last, after forty years' searching, I have found the cure for sin.' He told me all the story of his first impressions and subsequent struggles and miseries. I then learned that Mr. Lacroix, of your mission, was the preacher whose burning words had left such a deep mark upon his young mind. He wished to be baptized without delay, but I advised him first to count the cost—reminding him that those who now revered would curse—that relatives, even

his own wife and children, would spurn him, and heap scorn and bitterness upon his head. 'Ah, yes! you are right,' he said, 'I must think about it. That will be very hard.' About four months afterwards, he came to me again, said he had counted all the cost, and begged to be baptized without delay. I baptized him. Except his wife, all relatives united to drive him with scorn and curses from their midst. But his wife clung to him, and thus left him a ray of comfort amid the gloom of hatred. Since I baptised him he has been a burning and shining light. And this very night, while we are talking, he is seriously ill and will soon pass away to his long home, loved by all who knew him. Those who cursed him have long since learned to respect and love, and his last days have been cheered by the affection of those very sons who once drove him forth."

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