

Young People's Department.



WATER CARRIERS OF INDIA.

THE WATER TRIAL IN INDIA.

IN India it is not as easy to be a Christian as it is here. Sometimes, indeed, it is very hard, and men have to suffer for it very much. The people who are called Mahometans find it the hardest of all, because they are treated very badly by the other Mahometans when they become Christians.

One of the English missionaries tells us that he baptized a Mahometan and his whole family. He was an old man, but a man of very high order among his own people, and when any of them met him they used to bow down before him out of respect to his office; but when he became a Christian, he found he had to suffer for his new faith. As he was crossing a bridge one day in broad daylight, some five or six young Mahometans stopped him, and said to him, "What made you a Christian?"

He took a New Testament from his arm and said, "This book has done it."

Then one of the men snatched the book from him, flung it far away, knocked the old man down, kicked him, and then ran away. He and his family have frequently had to suffer in the same way.

Besides sufferings of this kind, there is what is called the "water trial," which people who become Christians sometimes have to bear. Because they are Christians, they are not allowed to step on to a well and draw water. They have to wait till the Hindus and Mahometans give it to them. Thus they are never sure of getting any water from the wells at all and, as water is very scarce, they suffer a great deal sometimes, and have to go, it may be, one or two miles to the river, to get water from it.

At a place called Poorkee, the missionary complained to the magistrate about this ill-treatment, and the magistrate gave orders that the Christians should be allowed to get water from the well; but one day a boy was seen to throw something into it. It might have been poison, so nobody dared go to it for water. Then the magistrate had it cleaned out, but that night some one burned all the framework and roof over the well, so that it could not be used.

This shows bad feeling, and makes it hard for missionaries to do their work. But so it was in early days, and so it is in other lands. We ought to pray for those who suffer, and thank God that in this our own country we do not have to suffer because we are Christians.