

are dripping with human blood. The magistrate of Benares ordered all these dangerous animals sent to the jungles, but still tame ones are found ascending and descending the steps of the temples along with the worshipers. This deep regard for life led to special reverence for its origin. Their conception of its origin was of the most sensual sort, and the symbols under which they worship the Creator are too gross and vile to be mentioned. Yet these symbols of Mahadeo are found in every temple and shrine, women and men mingling together in paying homage to them. Their sacred books abound with stories of the amours of this god—of his all-consuming lust. I would fain suppose that his worship was originally born of a mind not licentious, but that conceived of the source of life in the simplest way without thoughts of its grossness, yet the sacred books are so vile as to make one hesitate to entertain so charitable a thought. Such being the divinity worshiped, we are prepared for the universal impurity of the people. Girls are married to the gods, and their wages of vice go to support the temple. Priests, in some places, are the incarnations of gods, by whom offspring is especially desired. Look at it as one may, woman is everywhere degraded, and woman's place always gauges the moral tone of a nation. The women of the well-to-do are never allowed to be seen, and those who are seen are the very poor or the very vile. A well-dressed native woman, who was of good character, unless she were a Christian, we have not seen since we have been in India. It is vice which arrays itself in jewels and costly apparel, and is subsidized for the uses of the temple.

Before leaving Benares we enjoyed an elephant ride. Some gentlemen traveling with us sent their cards to the Nawab of Tonk, a native prince under the English eye at Benares, and he sent them an ele-

phant for a ride through the city. Bishop Marvin and I were invited to take seats in the howdah. The mahout, seated on the elephant's neck, pressed his pointed spike into his monstrous head as a signal for him to kneel. After a little delay (for great bodies move slowly, as becomes their dignity), his hind legs bent under first, and after they were fully bent he brought his fore legs into position. Even then we could only mount by means of a ladder, which is always carried with the howdah. Firmly seated, we each clung to the side of the howdah as his highness rose to his feet. He rose as deliberately as he kneeled, and we were for several seconds seated on his back while it was at an angle of forty-five degrees. Now he moves off, responding to the spear of the mahout firmly seated on his neck, and to the attendant with another one who trots by his side. The motion seemed slow, but it was evident from the gait of the attendant that it was faster than a man could walk. But what a way of riding! I prefer to be on a ship in a storm, provided the storm is a moderate one. The rolling motion of an elephant's gait is worse than that of a ship, and is equally liable to produce vertigo or seasickness. The elephant seemed under the perfect control of his driver, who used his spear mercilessly, often driving it an inch or two into his head. The elephant would respond with a slight bellowing, and quicken his pace or change his course according to the will of the mahout, or driver. After riding several blocks we returned to the hotel and dismounted by means of the ladder, but not until we had the monster kneel so that the ladder could touch the ground.

We subsequently remounted to have a photograph taken. Some preferred to stand by the elephant's side, but he kept them in constant dread, as he would insist on squirting water on them in the en-

deavor to cool himself. He would insert his trunk into his mouth and draw out considerable quantities from a water-reservoir somewhere down in his stomach, and then came the shower-bath. He had just moved his trunk for another when the artist was ready to close his camera. He accordingly looks in the picture as if he had no trunk, but those who were sprinkled will certify to the contrary.

It will not be surprising, after what we have seen of Benares, to learn that it is a peculiarly hard field of missionary labor. The missionary must here attack Hindooism in its stronghold, where there are over twenty thousand Brahmans, or priests, who minister at its altars and guard its interests. Holy city as it is, like Ephesus, its principal business is connected with the temples and the manufacture and sale of idols. Many an image-maker is ready to lead a mob rather than submit to the loss of his gains by the invasion of Christianity. The pilgrims who buy these images and carry away holy water from the Ganges do much other business as well, and leave the plethoric pockets of the merchants yet fuller for every festival. Under these circumstances most of the one hundred and seventy-five thousand people of Benares are connected with Hindooism as a trade as well as a religion. It is made to the interest of the people to remain true to the ancient faith. Woe betide the man who, becoming a Christian, thus sets himself against the commercial interests of the place! His experience must be read in many of those texts of Scripture which have no significance to us in a Christian land. It implies often the giving up of houses, lands, father, mother, children, and having as one's foes persons of his own household.

What a few have already done more are ready to do, were it not that the cost is so great. They are a timid people, and lack the courage to do their

duty. Many of them are disgusted with their religion, seeing at the same time its holy city and the vile practices which prevail there, but they prefer to appear faithful to it, though despising it, to being despised for renouncing it. While commenting on its vileness in the presence of our Hindoo guide, he, with the badge of his morning idolatrous worship still upon his forehead, said with an emphasis and a sincerity which were unmistakable, "*Our religion is a humbug.*" When we asked him why he did not renounce it like a man and accept the Christian faith, his reply showed that the cost was too great. We learned that many others in Benares were of the same view. Thus is the leaven of the truth at work in the Holy City of the Hindoos.

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