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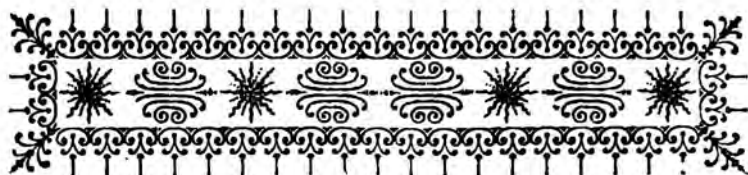
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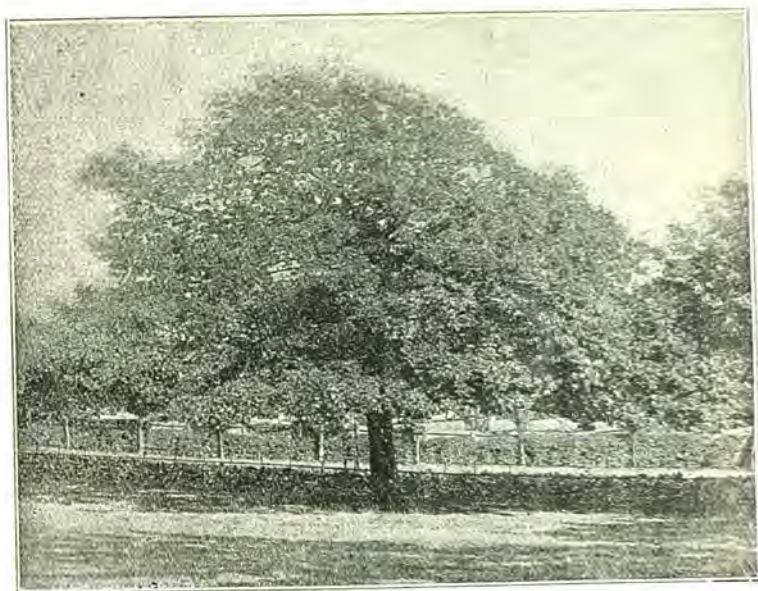
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THE
Sword and the Crowel.

JULY, 1897.



"The Question Oak" at "Westwood."

C. H. SPURGEON'S IMPROMPTU ANSWERS TO STUDENTS' QUESTIONS.

(Continued from page 256.)



STUDENT'S QUESTION.—*Is it right, in a first pastorate, to compel deacons or elders to resign because of their unfitness for the office?*

MR. SPURGEON'S ANSWER.—First, I would not advise you to try to compel them to resign, because they will not do so. Then, next, I should ask,—“What constitutes unfitness for

Fear of persecution had done its work, and the young Brahman had returned to the lodgings in the town where others of his caste resided. We went after him, and though not permitted to cross the door-step where the "twice-born" lodged, we succeeded in making him hear. "Brother, this makes us very sad," we began. Then we urged the Master's claim; and in a few minutes more, he was walking boldly by our side up the main street of that heathen town. Every eye was fixed upon us. When we reached the Hall, by the side of a public road, we found the place crowded with an excited mob. Before them all, Iyoteermoy witnessed a good confession. Prio Babu explained the rite of baptism; and brother missionaries showed their interest by taking part in the service. Directly opposite the Hall there is a large tank, excavated by the municipality for public use, and down to it is a tier of steps. Towards this open place we were followed by the excited crowd, and as we stood hand in hand, ready to go down into the water, a sudden thought awoke within me. The candidate had not been asked to give up his "poita"—the sacred thread that denotes his position. This was the great test of all. "You must forsake that poita," I said. In a moment, it was between his fingers, and snapped in two. Now the Rubicon was crossed! Caste was renounced! All that is included in Hinduism was abandoned; and this young Brahman was set free for ever! No power on earth or in hell could weld that chain of caste again and bind him. He was free indeed! As we came up out of the water, the brethren sang aloud the hymn the candidate had learned to love,—

"Jesus, my Lord, to Thee I cry;
Unless Thou help me, I must die.
Oh, bring Thy free salvation nigh,
And take me as I am!"

As we sang the words,—

"And Thou canst make me what Thou wilt,
And take me as I am,"

wondrous visions of the great things possible in a single life consecrated to God, passed before our eyes; and we saw, in the conversion of this one Brahman, the evidence that God's grace is for all classes of men.

ROBERT SPURGEON.

Opposition and Fanaticism.

THE intensity of Moslem opposition to the gospel is wonderful. We have a servant, who has been with us more than a year; he is sincerely attached to us, and has heard, with interest, the gospel message hundreds of times; yet, when a fellow-Moslem, a day or two ago, asked him simply to repeat gospel words which I had used, he absolutely refused, even though it should cost him his situation.

Another evening, it was a round-faced, jolly-looking man of about forty who opposed us. Terribly in earnest,—his head encircled with a bandage, and his face suffused with smiles, for he is a grateful patient,—he rose from his seat, and facing me at the table, punctuated his words with blows

upon my unoffending furniture as he said, "*You say, Jesus; I say, Mohammed. You think Jesus can get men to Heaven; I say Mohammed is the only intercessor. You say men will be lost without Jesus; I say they will be lost without Mohammed.*"

Afterwards, when the meeting had been closed with the prayer, "O Lord, lead us all into the *right path!*" and the missionary was wending his way home, he could not but think, "After all, there are *not* two paths, two heavens, two saviours; and when one of us is saved, where will the other be? O Lord, lead *all* these people into the right path!" But how is it to be done? I know not, save by the Holy Spirit's power within and without, the gospel in both word and work,—the Lord's own Sword and Trowel.

But the Lord *is* working; that same bigoted servant of ours, who will not soil his lips with gospel words, eagerly listens sometimes, seemingly spellbound in spite of himself; while another used to beg permission to go to the stair-head, and hear the gospel, though outwardly still careless. Several times lately, the listeners have dropped their hard opposing words, and said, "Well, well, God knows all things; He knows which is true, and He will judge," while others, though not consciously giving up their old ideas, seem to have some faith in Jesus as their Saviour.

Opposition also continues. My wife's classes for women and children, on Fridays, suddenly ceased. Not a soul came, as a report had been circulated that most terrible things would befall any who attended; and though now they have gradually returned, it has been with much fear and dread.

A failure of the wheat crop has caused considerable local distress, and reduced the number of visits to 358 and 211 respectively for the last two months. I have therefore lowered the fee we charge the patients, and trusted to the Lord to make up the consequent loss on the medicine account.

THE ISOWAH, OR, FOLLOWERS OF JESUS.

Returning from a day's preaching, we passed a court-yard, and looked in. It was crowded with, perhaps, 150 to 200 people; on the right sat the musicians, with pipes and tambourines, singing and playing their strange music; behind these, a low roof was crowded with seated forms of gaily-dressed women and girls. The left-hand side was filled with men, and in front of these stood a row of the so-called "followers of Jesus." There were about twenty in the rank, including two boys. Poising themselves on their toes, they swayed backwards and forwards, keeping time with the music, and crying, "Allah! Allah! Allah!" Two elderly men leaped about, and led the performance. Gradually the music quickened; faster and still faster did they bend, and sway, and cry, "Allah! Allah!" till they all looked wild and dazed. At length, the leader touched one, he left the rank, and rushed, wildly staggering, into the street. Meanwhile, on went the dance; and soon he returned, carrying and dragging heavy pieces of prickly pear (cactus-like leaves, covered with cruel thorns). These he threw upon the ground, he and another jumped upon them; then, casting aside all clothing save the garment round his waist, he rolled and wallowed among them till his back, all bleeding, was studded with thorns. After this, others came forth, even the two small boys among them, and amid the din of native music and the rhythmical cry, "Allah! Allah! Allah!" and the shrill applause of the women, they ran swords and iron skewers into their flesh.

Yet all this was not an exhibition, as one might suppose, but a *religious service*, by those who are called "the followers of Jesus." Do not such scenes, no less than the doings of another so-called "Society of Jesus" (the Jesuits), constitute an urgent call to all *true* followers of the Lord Jesus to help in preaching the gospel to every creature?

Sousse, Tunisia, N. Africa.

T. G. CHURCHER.