

YOUTHFUL MARTYRS
IN
ANCIENT TIMES.

First Edition, 3,000 Copies.



MADRAS:

M. R. T. & B. SOCIETY.

S. P. C. K. PRESS, VEPERY.

No. 21. 1879. *One Pie.*

STORIES AT ONE PIE EACH.

- 1 The Mango Story.
- 2 Story of the King's Son.
- 3 Story of the Spoiled Child.
- 4 The Leper Cured.
- 5 The Debt Cancelled.
- 6 Story of the Fiery Furnace.
- 7 Story of a Brahmin.
- 8 Story of a King.
- 9 The Quarrelsome Women.
- 10 Story of the Liars.
- 11 Story of the First Man.
- 12 Story of a Queen.
- 13 The Child's Horoscope.
- 14 Story of the Red Berries.
- 15 The Hen and her Chickens.
- 16 Story of the First Brothers.
- 17 Story of the Great Flood.
- 18 The Wolf Story.
- 19 Shesh Acharya, the young Brahman.
- 20 The Pearl Merchant.
- 21 Little Tukaram.
- 22 The Boy Who Wished to See the Queen.

YOUTHFUL MARTYRS

IN

ANCIENT TIMES.

Eighteen hundred years ago all the people in the world except the Jews were idolaters. This was the case even among the most enlightened nations of the time. In the city of Europe most famed for its learning, idols were so numerous, that it was said to be easier to find a god in it than a man.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, became incarnate for our salvation. He perfectly obeyed all God's laws which we had broken, and died on the cross for our sins. Before returning to heaven, He commanded His disciples to go and teach all nations His Gospel, or the way of salvation by believing on Him.

The disciples of Christ went to many countries, teaching the people that idols made with hands were no gods, and that the great Creator of heaven and earth alone should be worshipped, and His

Son Jesus Christ be accepted as the Saviour.

In course of time many persons gave up idolatry, and became Christians. The heathen priests, finding their temples beginning to be deserted, and no longer receiving such rich offerings as before, stirred up kings and rulers to persecute the Christians. To enrage the people against them, they circulated false reports, as that they murdered young children, eat their flesh, and drank their blood.

A great part of the world was then under the emperors of Rome, who were worshipped as gods

throughout their dominions. Images were made of the emperors, and the people sacrificed and bowed down to them as to their other idols.

The early Christians were commanded to worship the images of the emperors and other idols, and, because they refused to do so, vast numbers were put to death. I will now tell you about two boys who gave up their lives on this account.

A Christian was carried forth to die as a martyr in the city of Antioch. "Ask any little child," said he, "whether it were

better to worship one God, the Maker of heaven and earth, and one Saviour, who is able to save us, or to worship the many false gods whom the heathen serve."

Just at that time a Christian mother had come to the spot, holding in her hand, a son about nine or ten years old. The heathen judge no sooner heard the martyr's words than his eye rested on the child, and he desired the questions to be put to him.

The question was asked; and, to the surprise of those who heard it, the boy replied, "God is one,

and Jesus Christ is one with the Father.”

The judge was filled with rage. “Oh, base Christian!” he said to the mother, “thou hast taught that child to answer thus.” Then turning to the boy, he said, more mildly, “Tell me, child, how did you learn this faith.”

The boy looked lovingly in his mother’s face, and replied. “It was God’s grace that taught it to my dear mother; and she taught it to me.”

“Let us see now what the love of Christ can do for you,” cried the cruel judge; and at a sign

from him, the officers, who stood ready with their wooden rods, after the fashion of the Romans, instantly seized the boy. Gladly would the mother have saved her child, even at the expense of her own life; but she could not do so: yet did she whisper to him to trust in the love of Christ, and to speak the truth.

“What can the love of Christ do for him now?” asked the judge. “It enables him to endure what his Master endured for him and for us all,” was the reply.

And again they smote the child.

“What can the love of Christ do for him now?” and tears fell even from heathen eyes as that mother, as much tortured as her son, answered, “It teaches him to forgive his persecutors.”

The boy watched his mother's eyes as they rose up to heaven for him ; and when his tormentors asked whether he would not now acknowledge the gods they served, and deny Christ, he still cried, “No ! there is no other God but one, and Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the world. He loved me, and I love Him for His love.”

The poor boy now fainted between the repeated strokes, and they cast the bruised body into the mother's arms, crying, "See what the love of Christ can do for him now."

As the mother pressed her child gently to her own crushed heart, she answered, "That love will take him from the wrath of man to the peace of heaven."

"Mother," cried the dying boy, "give me a drop of water from our cool well upon my tongue."

The mother said, "Already, dearest, hast thou tasted of the well that springeth up to ever-

lasting life—the grace which Christ gives to His little one—thou hast spoken the truth in love ; arise now, for thy Saviour calleth for thee. May He grant thy poor mother grace to follow in thy bright path.”

The little martyr faintly raised his eyes, and said again, “ There is but one God, and one Saviour, Jesus Christ, whom He has sent ;” and so saying, gave up his life.

A boy, called Cyril, belonging to another city, became a Christian. His father was an idolater, and because Cyril would not worship

his false gods, he treated him very cruelly, and turned him out of doors.

The Governor having heard of it ordered Cyril to be brought to him. He treated him very kindly at first, and tried to persuade him to give up the service of Christ, and sacrifice to idols. "My child," he said, "I will pardon your faults, and your father shall receive you, if you will only be wise." The boy answered, "I rejoice in suffering reproaches for what I have done; God will receive me, with whom I shall be better than with my father. I cheerfully renounce

earthly estates, that I may be made rich in heaven. I am not afraid of death, because it will bring me to a better life."

Then the governor ordered him to be bound, as if he were going to be killed; for he thought that when Cyril saw the fire, and was told he was to be thrown into it, or else be beheaded, he would be afraid. But he was not, and they took him back to the governor, who said to him, "My child, you have seen both the fire and the sword. Be wise, and return to your house and fortune." Cyril answered, "I fear neither the fire

nor the sword. God will receive me. Put me to death without delay, that I may the sooner go to him." The people who stood by wept for him. But he said to them, "You ought rather to rejoice; you do not know what sort of kingdom I am going to possess." And so he went joyfully to the place of execution.

In this country no one is put to death for being a Christian, but many have had to leave father and mother for the sake of the Gospel. They will not be losers in the end. Jesus Christ says, "There is no man who hath left father and

mother, and brethren and wife, and sisters, and houses and lands for my sake and the gospel ; but he shall receive a hundred fold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.” On the other hand, those who are ashamed to confess Christ before men will be denied by Him before the face of His Father who is in heaven.”

Some are the children of Christians, and do not need to make such sacrifices. But all are required to give up sin and every evil passion ; to accept Jesus as their Saviour, to love and obey

Him. God will help you to do so, if you ask Him ; and then, whether you live long or die early, you will be happy for ever.



MORNING PRAYER.

O Lord, I thank thee for taking care of me the past night. Forgive all my sins for the sake of Jesus Christ, and may thy Holy Spirit create in me a clean heart. Watch over me this day, and keep me from all sin. Make all men know thee and love thee. Hear my prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER.

O Lord, look down on me this night. Forgive for Christ's sake, whatever I have done wrong, and may thy Holy Spirit make me holy. Bless my friends, and have mercy upon all men. Take care of me this night; and when I die, let my soul go to be with thee for ever. I ask all in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Cyrl.