

**NARRATIVES**  
OF  
FIVE  
**CHRISTIAN HINDOOS,**  
ONE OF WHOM WAS  
A BRAHMUN,  
ANOTHER  
OF THE WRITER CAST,  
AND THREE WERE SHOODRUS.



The Narratives Demonstrating  
THAT THE  
**Real Conversion of all the Casts**  
IS PRACTICABLE.

—●—  
COMPILED BY  
THE SERAMPORE MISSIONARIES.  
—●—

Boston Edition, with Additions.

**BOSTON:**  
PUBLISHED AT JAMES LORING'S  
SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOK-STORE,  
132 Washington-Street.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

DISTRICT CLERK'S OFFICE.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the twenty-second day of March, A. D. 1828, and in the fifty-second year of the Independence of the United States of America, JAMES LORING, of the said District, has deposited in this Office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"Narratives of Five Christian Hindoos, one of whom was a Brahmun, another of the Writter Cast, and three were Shoodus. The Narratives demonstrating that the real Conversion of all the Casts is practicable. Compiled by the Serampore Missionaries. Boston Edition, with Additions."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the times therein mentioned:" also to an Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the times therein mentioned; and extending the Benefits thereof to the Arts of Designing, Engraving and Etching Historical, and other Prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS, { Clerk of the District  
of Massachusetts.

## PREFACE.



It is no inconsiderable recommendation of this book, that the Narratives which it presents are matters of fact, and wholly destitute of fiction. The five native Converts of whom its statements are made, were known to the Missionaries at Serampore; and the circumstances of their extraordinary conversion to Christianity and their conduct in after life, are well-attested on the most credible testimony. Their memoirs were compiled and published at the Serampore Mission Press, under the eye of the Rev. WILLIAM WARD, the gentleman who in 1820, visited our United States, and who was welcomed amongst us by all denominations of Christians. The whole is from Tracts published at the Mission Station.

The Remarks on the Success of the Mission in India, and the brief account of the Hindoo Schools for native children, are taken from Mr. Ward's Letters, and will be esteemed documents of much interest, as showing the value of moral instruction to the dark minds of degraded and idolatrous heathen.

The book is a valuable possession for our Children and Youth; for whilst it most clearly demonstrates the benefit of Missions to the whole world, it teaches them that the little contributions, which they voluntarily offer in their Sunday Schools, may be the means of producing the present happiness and the eternal salvation of many immortal souls.



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MEMOIR  
OF  
**KRISHNA PRISADA,**

*Who died at Berhampore, the 24th of July, 1806,*

Aged about Twenty Years.



KRISHNA PRISADA, a converted Brahmun, who was baptized at Serampore, on the 22d of January, 1803, and was chosen a deacon of the Serampore church on the 27th of January, 1806, was born at Bhalooka, a village near Nuvudweepa.

Respecting this brother, the brethren of the Mission cannot doubt of his final safety, and of his now standing before the throne of the Lamb, when they consider the following circumstances:

*His decided trust in Christ, and uniform Christian walk.* Trained up in the idea of procuring heaven by his own works, he was a striking proof of the reality of that change which

the gospel produces on all who heartily believe it. Though his evangelical views were more obscure at the beginning of his course, yet further discoveries of his depravity, added to family and bodily afflictions, brought him to a decided and childlike dependence on our Saviour. When once with Mr. Ward at Seetarama's in Jossore, he read to an inquirer some verses of a Christian tract in Bengalee : when he got to a description of Christ's sufferings, the tears ran down his face plentifully ; and for some time he could not proceed for grief. He had a clear conviction of the evil of all he was, and all he did, and from hence he was established in this fact, that the work of Christ alone suited his fallen and ruined condition. He saw plainly that there was nothing in all that the Hindoo gods were said to have done that would be of use in the salvation of souls. 'Be it so,' he would say, 'that Rama did this, and Krishna that, and Doorga the other. Supposing all this to be true, that Rama fought for and obtained his wife ; that Krishna killed king Kungsha and got his throne ; that Doorga killed a number of usooras ; what good do these things do you or

me? I, who am a sinner, find nothing here by which my sins will go away, and I get to heaven; but Christ bore our sins, their guilt and punishment, and hence HE is the Saviour, for his work was for *us*, and for our salvation. He came for no other purpose—not like Rama for a wife—not like Krishna for a kingdom; not like Doorga to kill usooras and drink their blood, but to seek and save that which was lost, and to become the ransom for sinners.’ In this way our brother showed his own decided preference of Christ, and exhibited the work of Christ in opposition to the Hindoo gods.

Not only by his words did he confess Christ before the brahmuns, and in the very teeth of those who hated him for Christ’s sake, but his Christian walk confirmed his testimony, that his Christian profession was genuine. He possessed tenderness of conscience, amongst a people who make sin their play-thing, and amongst whom this sentiment is universal, that sin is the play of the gods. He regarded truth amongst a nation of liars, whose very gods were liars, and whose shastrus, in certain cases, declare the innocence of lying. He was a man of in-



tegrity, amongst a nation who value themselves on their dexterity in the arts of deception and fraud. Divine grace thus changed his nature and his habits, and enabled him to make head against sin, which runs through the plains of Bengal like a mighty torrent, carrying all before it into the vortex of hell. It was time that God should work in some such way, and bring forth a seed to serve him out of the very heart of the idolaters; for idolatry, by its toleration of sin, by its easy ways of removing it, and by its public spectacles, has drawn the world after it; hence the Hindoos worship their Ramus and Krishnus, the Mussulmans their peers (saints); the native Catholics their crucifixes and Virgin Marys, and in the houses of Europeans their Hindoost'hanee mistresses carry on idolatrous worship.

The Mussulmans present offerings to these peers, and perform religious ceremonies to them as the Hindoos to their gods. The Portuguese Catholics find complete substitutes for their former idols in the images of the virgin, &c. On Palm-Sunday they present flowers and buds of the date tree to the crucifix, before which

these things are laid for a time, and the priest distributes the branches of this tree as holy things among the people who go to church. At the same time he gives them water in which the crucifix has been bathed. They take these home, and preserve or use them as sacred things, in the same way that the Hindoos carry home flowers, fruits, &c. that have been offered to their gods. The catholic priest marks the foreheads of the people with the ashes of the date tree. The Hindoos mark their foreheads with the dirt of the Ganges. The Catholics visit the shrines of saints. The Hindoos have their holy places. The Catholics have their holy water. The Hindoos sprinkle themselves with the waters of the Ganges. The Catholics pray to the saints, as persons placed betwixt God and them. This is the Hindoo idea of the gods. The Hindoo respects the name of his god, counting the seeds in his mala; the Catholic repeats the name of the virgin, counting with his bead-roll. The lower orders regard St. John as a god or saint who presides over fire, and let off fire-works to his honour.

Another feature in the Christian character of

this convert was, *his decided rejection of all that is connected with idolatry, and strict adherence to Christianity as a system of faith and practice.* Krishna Prisada was never known to lean to idolatry in any one instance. He did not give up the domestic manners and innocent customs of the Hindoos. He was no advocate for making the converts Englishmen, for he knew that this would be a fatal impediment to the reception of the gospel; as the very dress of the English is offensive to the Hindoos. Though in these things, however, he was a Hindoo, yet he was never known to have the least desire to give either the forms or the doctrines of the gospel an idolatrous complexion. Though it was impossible for the Missionaries always to be with him, yet, from the knowledge they had of the state of his mind, they firmly believe, that at the time of bathing he never performed any ceremony concerned with idolatry; and that when he saw an image, he never bowed to it. Mr. Ward has heard him declare, that the repeating of the gyttee\* never came into his

\* A secret incantation that takes away all sin.



mind from the time of his coming to Serampore. He gave a copy of this infinitely more than free-mason's secret to the Missionaries, as an old rag. He renounced his poita† of his own accord, and all the honours attending the wearing it. He not only abstained from all the idolatrous shows and night-poojas, dances and songs, himself, but was the means of restraining others. He once said to Mr. Ward, "Till I got the pamphlets, I did not know that the gods had been guilty of such abominations: I had merely heard that there was such and such gods, and that to worship them was the certain means of salvation. Thousands and thousands are still in my case, carried down the stream without knowing where it is carrying them."

Krishna Prisada was also enabled to appreciate the value of the Christian system. He admired its doctrines. The doctrine of the fall, of the Divinity of Christ, of his incarnation, sufferings and death, and of our complete salvation on the reception of Christ, through the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit—these doc-

† A thread thrown over the shoulder, the distinguishing badge of the higher casts.



trines were cordially received by him as the foundation principles of the gospel. He was a conscientious observer of the times of preaching, prayer and praise. Mr. Ward caught him and two other Christian families, whose houses joined each other, more than once, at morning family worship, when no one expected that he would call; and this brother has heard Prisada lament his being sometimes obliged to attend to business early, as it interfered with family worship. In his attendance at the Lord's table he used to show the greatest reverence for this solemn ordinance. The missionaries endeavour to avoid laying an improper stress on the Lord's supper; but they have found it difficult to raise the devotional feelings of some of the native members to a proper pitch on these occasions. Little familiarized to a spiritual life, and to the drawing of spiritual doctrines from the elements of food, like the Corinthians, all converts recently turned from heathenism are, perhaps, in danger of underrating the importance and solemnity of the Lord's supper. After the real design of the ordinance, and the many spiritual benefits to be derived from a devout attendance

upon it, had been explained to this convert, he generally sat in his place with his eyes closed, and, abstracted from all around him, appeared to be meditating on a crucified Redeemer.

Another feature in the Christian character of Krishna Prisada was *his diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures, so far as they were printed.* Some time before his death he told Mr. Ward that he had read the New Testament over twice from beginning to end. The last time he went with this brother into Jossore, he was reading the Psalms and Proverbs, and expressed, at the time he was reading the Proverbs, how much he was pleased with the moral lessons of Solomon. He had also read a good part of the Pentateuch through. He was not a careless reader of the word of God. He made observations as he read, and kept by him a small book for the purpose of inserting such passages as struck his mind, particularly such as expressly related to the expiatory work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and such as might become useful in holding conversations with his fellow-countrymen. Mr. Ward showed him a collection which he had made of passages on the great doctrines

and duties of Christianity. Prisada urged its being printed, and said it would be very useful. He would say, showing the Bengalee Testament to one of his countrymen, "Brother, here is nothing in this book but what is profitable. It is not like the Hindoo shastrus, full of lewd stories. It gives wisdom, and mends the heart."

Other features in the Christian character of this deceased brother were—*his concern for the purity of the church of which he was a member, and his earnest desire for the universal spread of the gospel.* A person not having had the pastoral direction of a church in Europe is but an incompetent judge of the difficulties which the pastors of such churches have to encounter. If all the members of our English churches had been like Krishna Prisada, many poor minister's hearts had not been broken. He was always an advocate for maintaining a proper discipline, even when some of the native members were ready to revolt, on account of what they supposed to be severity. Unaccustomed to any effectual control, many converts from heathenism can scarcely bear it from foreigners, whom



they are soon ready to suspect, and of whose motives they are frequently, very incompetent judges. Some of the Periodical Accounts of the Moravian missionaries contain one or two instances in which their converts revolted from them, on account of the scripture discipline which they maintained. Krishna Prisada was enabled to perceive that upon the purity of a Christian church depended the Divine Presence, its energy, and its prosperity. He was very anxious that the members of the Baptist church at Serampore should be very different people from the native Catholics in different parts of India.

He was also *very anxious for the spread of the gospel* among his benighted countrymen. In one of his journies with Mr. Ward, he said, he should rejoice when he had cleared off the debt he had incurred in building his house, for after that he would devote himself wholly to the work of God. He laboured day and night in getting acquainted with the scriptures, with the proper method of composing discourses, &c. He got an old box, put a shelf in it, and began to collect a library. He got those parts of the



Scriptures which were printed, and had them bound in a better style to put in his book-case. When he accompanied Mr. Ward to Dinagopore, he bore a constant testimony to the truth of the gospel. His discourses often moved that brother, though every idea he gave was familiar, and frequently the attention of the crowd of native hearers under the banyan's shade was fixed and solemn. He made no scruple in avowing that he was a Christian, that he had renounced his poita, his cast, his gytree, and his spiritual guide, for Christ, and that he counted all things but loss, to win Christ, and be found in him. He offered also the most solid and satisfactory reasons for this change of sentiment and conduct. At the close of one of these meetings under the tree, Mr. Ward recollected what they had sung on board the Criterion, and could not but rejoice that God had so literally accomplished the desire expressed in this hymn :

Bid Brahmuns preach the heavenly word  
Beneath the banyan's shade, &c.

When this hymn was singing on board the Criterion, that the meanest shoodra would be

induced to lose cast for the gospel, was denied by almost all the English in the East, and by hundreds of very orthodox ministers and private Christians in England. Yet in five years from that time, an Englishman, a converted youth, the son of Mr. Fernandez, a converted brahmun, and a converted kaist'ha, were seen preaching in Bengalee, under the shade of this sacred tree, and in the villages by the sides of the Ganges from Serampore to Dinagepore, a distance of more than 300 miles.

Another feature in the Christian character of Krishna Prisada was *his desire for the salvation of his relations*. He had a relation, a man of property, at Calcutta, at whose house he lived before his conversion. This man was not very inimical to the gospel, but his fears about cast were great. Krishna Prisada wrote to him again and again, in the most respectful and tender manner, assuring him that he was happy in his choice of Christ, and recommended the gospel to his reception. He wrote also to his relations at home on the same subject. He was anxious to get one of his brothers into the Brethren's printing-office, that he might be un-

der the word ; but this young man had too much fear about his cast, to come so near the absorbent powers of the gospel.

This deceased convert not only thus adorned the gospel by a holy life, but by *his patience and fortitude under a very long and trying affliction*. In the year 1803 he accompanied Mr. John Fernandez and Mr. Ward to Dinagore. He there caught a fever which laid him aside for some time, and which afterwards settled into the spleen, a very common disease in Bengal. In this state he long lingered, and took many medicines, but nothing could remove his disease. For some time he lived at the Mission-house, in order that he might have attendance while taking his medicines. When there, his wife became familiar with a rich Bengalee, and for two or three days lived in a criminal intercourse at this man's house. This, added to Krishna Prisada's long continued bodily afflictions, was a severe trial. He, however, never murmured against God.

He was sometimes too peevish with those about him, but he appeared to be happily kept from murmuring against God. Very often the



Hindoo idolaters, in times of affliction, break out into angry expressions against their gods, telling them that they have made so many offerings to them, and yet they have suffered such afflictions to enter into their families. Some have carried their murmurs so far as to curse their gods, and others have taken their images down, abused them, kicked them out of doors, and destroyed them. Yet Krishna Prisada was never known to utter the least murmur against God, though his afflictions were so severe and long continued. From several conversations which Mr. Ward had with him during the latter stages of his affliction, a happy submission to the will of God, founded upon a sense of his own deserts, and upon a knowledge of the glorious character of God, seemed to prevail in his mind.

It is common with the Hindoos, and perhaps with all other heathens, to estimate the value of every thing new by the outward happiness which immediately succeeds the embracing it. Hence if a person were to fall sick on the day of his baptism, they would consider it as an irrefragable proof that baptism was a bad thing.



It is very probable that some of the idolaters would conclude that Prisada's lying so long afflicted was a proof that it was a punishment for his having renounced the gods, his gooroo, &c. But Krishna Prisada himself was never overcome in this way, though he was the sufferer. He never thought better of the gods nor worse of Christianity on account of his suffering so much after he had embraced the gospel.

Krishna Prisada, in the few last weeks of his life, manifested a strong and continued reliance on Christ for salvation. Mr. Ward visited him one Lord's day evening, and asked him, as usual, respecting his hope in Christ. He said he had no doubt that Christ could save; his only fear was, lest he should not be found in him; and while he uttered these last words the tears rolled down his cheeks very plentifully. Mr. Ward comforted him as well as he was able, by holding up to him the certain salvation of all those who commit their souls into the hands of Jesus.

Towards the last stages of his affliction, Krishna Prisada accompanied Mr. Moore and Dr. Taylor on a missionary journey, under the

idea that the river air would do him good ; but by the time he reached Berhampore his race was run, and he received the crown of victory.

Respecting this brother's state of mind after he left Serampore, the Missionaries have obtained nothing particular. Dr. Taylor and Mr. Moore knew the language so imperfectly that they could not converse much with him. A letter from Dr. Taylor to Mr. Marshman, which relates the circumstances of Prisada's death, contains all that is known on this subject.

Berhampore, July 24, 1806.

Dear Brother Marshman,

“ It is with the most sincere grief that I have to inform you of the death of our brother Krishna Prisada. About two days after leaving Serampore we discovered that he was affected with dropsical swellings.

“ This morning his difficulty of breathing continued ; and a diarrhæa supervened, an almost certain omen of death. I intended to have given him some medicine for the diarrhæa, but the cook's boat (in which Prisada lay) was detained behind. On coming up to us at Berham-

pore, at four o'clock in the afternoon, we learned, that he had died an hour before, without manifesting any particular symptoms or apprehensions of his speedy dissolution. Having ate a little food he sat up, but soon feeling a pain in his neck he lay down, shut his eyes, and fell asleep—we hope in the Lord Jesus.”

Krishna Prisada was buried in the European burying ground at Berhampore.

Thus tranquilly died in the faith of Christ, Krishna Prisada, the first brahmun baptized in Bengal.

When we consider the age of this convert, (about 21 years) the prejudice and errors to which he was brought up, and the disadvantages under which first converts from heathenism labour, we cannot help glorifying God in him. He and Pitamvura Singha were distinguished monuments of Christ's power to save—to save to the uttermost.

What cause of joy and wonder in the conversion of these brethren, from the God dishonouring, man-debasing, and soul-polluting sin of idolatry, and from all the abominations and



errors of the Hindoo system. These were saved from the thralldom of the cast, from abject slavery to the higher casts, from being partners in the abominable idolatries of their countrymen. Prisada was saved from being accessory to the murder of the widows of his family, among whom the burning of widows was practised. One of the native brethren had formerly his hand in the murder, viz. the burning of several of his family. In one instance he set fire to the pile. Oh ! how is Christ to be admired and glorified in the salvation of such. "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?"

No doubt Pearce and Booth and Stennett and Francis, yea, and all the members of the universal glorified church (for there, blessed be God, distinctions are no more—all are *one* in Christ Jesus) have hailed their arrival in heaven, and with the angels are admiring the Redeemer in them.

May we not imagine that when a fresh arrival is announced to the innumerable multitude around the throne, that there is a universal asking, Who is that? From whence is he come? Then as in this instance one answers—This is



Krishna Prisada, from Serampore, once a brahmun, once an idolater, once employed in the murder of poor widows, once revelling at midnight amid the abominable orgies of Krishna; now he is washed, he is sanctified, and hath made his robes white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore he is before the throne.

It will be an amazing sight when believers of all nations shall meet in the Universal Association in heaven.

How will Christ be admired then—in this glorious multitude. At the sight of them how will the power and grace of Christ at once strike the mind—

*Europeans* of different nations.

*Africans* of different tribes—the fruit of the labours of Vanderkemp, the Moravians, &c. and others gone to heaven from under the scourge of the slave dealer.

*Americans*—some Europeans, and others, the fruits of the ministry of Brainerd, &c. from among the drunken, scalping American Indians.

*South Americans*—the hard-earned fruits of the labours of our dear Moravian Brethren.

Last of all, *Asiatics*, and, among the rest, Pitamvuru Singha and Krishna Prisada.

“After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”—Rom. vii. 9.