

THE EASTER CROSS.

BY CARL SPENCER.



CHRIST, whose cross began to bloom
With peaceful lilies long ago,
Each year above Thy empty tomb
More thick the Easter garlands glow.
O'er all the wounds of that sad strife,
Bright wreaths the new immortal life.

The hands that once the cross upraised
All power in heaven and earth doth fill;
Of men desired, of angels praised.
Why sits he silent, waiting still?
Alas! In many a heart of pain
The Christ is crucified again.

Low lies the world He died to save,
And feels not yet her Easter morn;
Still holds the victory of the grave
O'er all his brethren younger-born,
His soul yet travails at their side,
It's long desire unsatisfied.

Sad symbol of the deathly strain
In resurrection-light revealed
The sign of hope that conquers pain,
Of joys that sharpest sorrows yield—
Hail, thou the first that bearest flowers!
The burden, not the grace, is ours.

And yet the cross is dropping balm;
May we not come so near, at last,
That all the grief shall shine with calm,
And beauty hide the ashen past?
Oh, that our stone were rolled away!
Oh, that our cross could bloom to-day!

THE REV. H. F. LORD, S. P. G. missionary at Kohlapur, contributes to the Bombay Diocesan Board, an account of a preaching tour undertaken in September, during what seemed to be a break in the weather. "Leaving Kohlapur on September 4th with my four catechists, we went to Nipani, twenty-five miles off on the Belgaum road, as there is a bungalow there. We also halted at Kagal, where there is a bungalow, and spent three days in a dharamshala at Sumdalgaon. While we were in the latter place 'taboot day' was observed, and we had an opportunity of seeing how entirely the Mussulman festival is engrafted upon Hinduism in the small villages, the whole heathen population turning out and worshipping them as they were carried to the place of immersion. How far the Hindus have adopted the festival may be judged from the fact of our being told in one small village, on our asking how many Mussulmen there were in it, that there was not one. Yet these Hindus had a taboot to themselves. The dharamshala here being in the centre of the village and near the chowdi we had the opportunity of preaching to a large audience, and afterwards discussing our subject with them. As in most villages the discussion turned on idolatry. The disputants argued that it was necessary, but did not care for any higher than human sanction for its existence, saying, It is easier to worship what we see, therefore we have instituted idolatry. Were it not for the sadness of the subject, one feels it would be

amusing to observe the numerous and different arguments which different villages bring in support of idolatry. During the twelve days of our tour we preached in nearly all the villages we could reach from our three halting places. Nineteen different villages were visited, none of them twice; and as we camped at Nipani five days, we preached in it every night at different places, generally dividing our forces, preaching in two places at the same time. Nipani is a town of some 10,000 inhabitants. I got permission from the Secretary of the Municipality to give a lecture in the Municipal Hall. He, however, failed me, as he did not give notice beforehand, and when we arrived at the appointed hour there was no audience. After we had waited half an hour, some seventy-five of the chief Brahmins and Sowcars of the place assembled, and listened patiently and seemed to be interested while I gave a brief outline of the true religion. The lecture lasted over fifty minutes. We had to shorten our tour by a few days owing to the heavy rains which prevented us from reaching some of the neighboring villages.

PRINCIPLE OF GIVING.

I am sure you will allow me to urge a matter which I think is greatly lost sight of, I mean the giving on a fixed principle. I am quite sure that the true way of giving is to dedicate to God a fixed proportion of one's income. Many people thus give to God in charity and in support of good works a tenth of this income, and this seems to me very reasonable. I am not prepared to say we are commanded to do this under our Christian dispensation, but we are told to give "as God hath prospered us" which is the principle of proportionate giving; and I think, if we Christians are living under the free, generous law of love, we should hardly be content to give less than was exacted from the Israelites of old by Divine command. I earnestly commend the principle of proportionate giving to all my hearers. I think it is very important to the discharge of a duty which is universally acknowledged, but often very unworthily filled. I am sure that if Church people gave thus on principle,—there would be little need of appeals for the many excellent societies, and for the various good works which are crying out on all sides for help. I would only say that if, to a really poor man, barely able to make ends meet, a tenth is a larger share than he can rightly give, there are many of larger means who could easily give more. There are two societies in existence, one called "The Treasury of God," which is limited to Church people, and another "The Proportionate Giving Union," which is not so limited, the object of both being simply to band together those engaging to act upon the principle I am advocating and to encourage its adoption.—*Bishop of Wakefield.*