

THE MORNING PRAYER TO A MUD GOD.

BY A MISSIONARY IN INDIA.

We are in India, and taking a walk in the early morning. We come to the bank

of a river. Everybody else seems to be there also. Women are filling their vessels of shining brass or red earth with water and stopping perhaps for a little gossip, raise them to the tops of their heads and walk away to their houses. The washermen are come with their great bundles of clothes; and we hear the splash as they beat them on the smooth flat stones. Here and there a morning bath is going on; and not in all the long hot day to come will there be such a busy time as now.

But here are some men who are worshipping idols; and we may go near enough to hear and look on. These two men are worshippers of the god Siva. We know his by the three marks we see on the

fore head and arms. They, however, mumble so rapidly all that they say, that we could not distinctly understand them, did we not know that all these men say the same thing every time. Let us watch one of them.

"Reverence to thee, Siva! I take this lump of clay."

Shaping it in his hand, he addresses the image:

"Siva, I make thy image. O god! enter into this image; take life within it. Constant reverence to thee, whose

form is radiant as a mountain of silver, lovely as the crescent of the moon, re-



WORSHIPPING A MUD GOD