

The god of the winds was the first offspring of the sun who was, at his rising in the east, saluted with the "Blazing Torch." When the Shaman after saluting the sun, turned to the four points from which came the winds he formed a cross and the blaze blown by the winds fell away from the torch and formed the right angles which, in time, suggested the Swastika. Let me illustrate my meaning. In the Tenth Letter of Father De Smets, "Life and Travels among the North American Indians," edited by Major Chittenden (Funk, Wagnalls, N.Y.), there is an interesting account of the customs, religious rites and habits of the Assiniboins.

The great missionary was a privileged guest when the salutation to the Sun and the Four Winds and Water occurred among the Assiniboins. He writes: "Sometimes three or four hundred lodges of families assemble in one locality. One sole individual is named the High Priest and directs all the ceremonies of the Festival . . . After these preliminaries the ceremony begins with an address and a prayer to the Great Spirit. He implores Him to accept their gifts, to take pity on them, to save them from accidents and misfortunes of all kinds. Then the Priest holds aloft the smoking Calumet to the Great Spirit, then to the Sun, to each of the Four Cardinal Points and at each time to the Earth."*

Writing of the Cheyennes, Colonel Henry Luman, one time scout and trapper with General Crooke, informs us that this formidable "people had no religion: "if, indeed, we except the respect paid to the pipe. In offering the pipe to the sun, the earth and the winds, the motion made in so doing by them describes the form of a cross; in blowing the first four whiffs, the smoke is invariably sent in the same four directions."†

Here then we have the rectangular cross coming down through the ages from the time when, in the Garden of Eden, the rivers crossed and made Eden a Paradise of fertility, and the Swastika of Vedic India retaining the basic cross but altered by the dip of the torch in the hand of the priest, or by the blowing of the flame by the four winds which the Swastika symbolised.

THE CROSS IN THE DESERT.

When travelling in lower California a few years ago, I began on a beautiful morning the ascent of the mount overlooking the little Indian Village of San Hilario. As I advanced I looked up and saw something raise itself above me like a thing alive. It was a giant Saguaro, a candelabrum cactus, and near it a yucca tree, whose cream-like blossoms, trembling in the glorious sunlight, seemed strangely out of place in such forbidding surroundings. Higher up and to my left as I ascended I came to a rough and weather-worn cross standing in isolation by the lonely path. It marked the spot where five years before, an Indian wood-gatherer was slain and his body mutilated. On my return to the squalid village I learned that it was a custom among the Cochimis—Digger Indians—to raise a cross over a lonely grave or mark the place where a murder had been committed. The Padres—the missionary fathers—are gone and the chapels they built in the

*The Cross and the Swastika in America, particularly in Yucatan and Mexico, are frequently mentioned by the early writers, such as: Garcia, "De Los Indios," Book 3, Chap. VI, p. 109; Sahagun, "Hist. de la Nueva Espana," Book 1, Chap. 11: Ixtlilxochtl, "Hist. des Chichimeques," p. 5; Cogolludo, "Hist. de Yucatan," Book 4, Chap. IX; Sotomayor, "Hist. de el Iza y de el Lacandon," Book 3, Chap. 8. In truth, if all references to the Cross were collected from the books and pamphlets left by the Mexican-Spanish writers of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, and bound together, they would make a large volume.

†The old Sante Fé Trail, p. 244.