

A NATIVE INDIAN HYMN.

As one way in which the East Indian mind is expressing Christian truth, we give a hymn written by a native of India. It is said that some of these Indian Christians went to a missionary and asked for hymns which they could feel in their hearts more than they did English hymns. So the missionary sent word that all who could write hymns should do so. One hundred were sent in, and this is one of them :

VIA DOLOROSA.

Whither with that crushing load,
Over Salem's dismal road,
All Thy body suffering so,
O my God! where dost Thou go?

CHORUS.

Whither, Jesus, goest Thou?
Son of God, what doest Thou
On this city's dolorous way
With that cross? O sufferer, say!

Tell me, fainting, dying Lord,
Dost Thou of thine own accord
Bear that cross? or did Thy foes
'Gainst Thy will that load impose?

Patient sufferer, how can I
See Thee faint, and fall, and die,
Pressed, and pulled, and crushed, and ground
By that cross upon Thee bound?

Weary arm and staggering limb,
Visage marred, eyes growing dim,
Tongue all paroled, and faint at heart,
Bruised and sore in every part.

Dost Thou up to Calvary go
On that cross in shame and woe—
Malefactors either side—
To be nailed and crucified?

--Exchange.

A PLEA FOR OUR MISSIONARIES.

BY MRS. HERRICK JOHNSON.

It may seem the merest truism to say that we hardly realize what trials and difficulties constantly beset our missionaries on the foreign field, and that therefore we ought to pray most earnestly for them at all times. Yet may it not be that, like many another truism, its keen edge has been blunted through frequent repetition and a sort of indefinite application, until the whole matter lies but vaguely in our minds, and does not appeal as it should to our sympathy and affection. Especially since in these modern days, we say over and over to ourselves and to others, that it is a very different matter to become a missionary now as compared with the early days of missions; that time and space are practically annihilated; that the missionaries come home much oftener than they used; that all foreign countries are now visited and inhabited to some extent by English-speaking people, whom the missionaries may meet, and with whom they may enjoy intercourse, and the amenities of home life; that more missionaries are grouped together, especially at all the most important stations; and that ideas of education and civilization have penetrated nearly all nations to a greater or less extent. Saying all this, do we not too often virtually dismiss the matter from our minds, and content ourselves with furnishing such funds as are expected; with keeping general track of the work carried

on, and with praying in a general way for all missionaries, and thinking in an unconscious way that they do not need more interest or sympathy than any other workers.

Because this is perhaps more largely the case with us than we are aware, it may not be amiss for us to consider in detail some of the more obvious and peculiar trials which are found in life upon the foreign field. Of course, the first thing to be mentioned is the going itself,—the breaking of the home ties, the lonely passing out from all that makes home life dear and desirable. We need not linger upon this consideration, as it is the one most often and largely dwelt upon, though it comes more directly to our hearts when we hear—as we did recently in our own circle of friends—of a young man going out to India, whose mother was so ill when the time for his departure came that it was feared his going would result in her death. But his party was ready, his appointments and arrangements were made; his mother was brave and contented, leaning on the Everlasting arms, and he could leave her there, knowing that all would be well. He missed cablegram and letters *en route*, and heard no word of life or death for nearly two months, when he reached the station to which he was appointed, learning there in great thankfulness that the precious life was spared and gaining in strength and vigor.

Added to this trial of the actual going, is that sense of facing the unknown, which, whether we are conscious of it or not, is a large element in our natural dread of death. Even when going abroad for a brief pleasure trip, we often experience this haunting sense of mystery and unreality that somehow mars the pleasure for a time. Having arrived upon his field, next comes upon our missionary the babel and bewilderment of the foreign language. The interest awakened by novelty of surroundings may for awhile keep this trouble in abeyance; but the time comes, sooner or later, when the foreign tongue is a source of positive trial. Every one who has been abroad, even in European countries, will remember the homesickness that now and then seized upon the heart because only one's own little party spoke the home language. But on mission ground this becomes, for a time, a settled element of discomfort and trial, at least until the struggle with the language for one's self gives partial familiarity with it, and dulls somewhat the longing for the music of the home speech, the home ways, the home life.

Another trial, and somewhat peculiar one, grows out of the necessarily very close association of the missionaries with each other. The old proverb that "no house was ever yet large enough for two families," while somewhat exaggerated, as proverbs are apt to be, contains at bottom a profound truth. Some one has said, "Grace can dwell where you and I cannot," and it certainly requires a great deal of grace to enable people of differing or completely opposite tastes, tempers and personal habits, and methods of work to live without more or less friction in such close association as is often necessary at our mission stations. Missionaries are but human, and all have their faults and weak points, which grace may modify, but not absolutely transform. People in such circumstances have an unusual amount of watching, as well as praying, to do to keep the home atmosphere bright and sunny, and to repress manifestation of dissatisfaction and discomfort, and sense of disharmony. It needs but slight reflection to see that this may be, in some cases, one of the sorest trials of missionary life.