

THE HOLI.

(For the Children's Record.)

This word, though pronounced in the same way as the English holy, has a very different meaning. It is the name of a great religious festival held by the Hindus during that part of the spring when the days and nights are equal. Accounts differ as to its origin and first purpose, but into these we need not enter.

with flour. Some ridiculous head gear of cloth, paper, tinsel, or tin, is added and false moustache, hair and whiskers, are made of flax. Other things such as necklaces of spoons, old military belts with cartridge pouch, antique armour, sticks, fans, flags, etc., add to the grotesqueness of their appearance.

Sometimes they dress as tigers with alternate stripes of black and yellow and red painted faces, which are, if anything, more hideous than the original. Monkeys, too, are



Some Dresses at the Holi Festival.

During this festival day and night are made hideous by the shouts and yells, the coarse jests and ribald songs, and by the endless tom-tom-ing and clanging of many discordant instruments in the hands of a great rabble of men, women and children, who for the time throw off all restraint, even of modesty and decency. The accompanying picture will give you some idea of how the better class of them disguise themselves. To their ordinary clothing they add some gaily colored cloth of red, green or yellow. Their faces are whitened

copied to perfection, and even the devil comes in for some imitations.

In fact, the whole scene, though it has much that is merely boyish prank and love of display, is presided over by an evil genius. The songs and jests are so filthy, and such license is given to evil, during this festival, that no respectable woman would be seen on the streets. Even missionary ladies are obliged to keep to their houses and their schools are closed, because the girls also dare not go out.