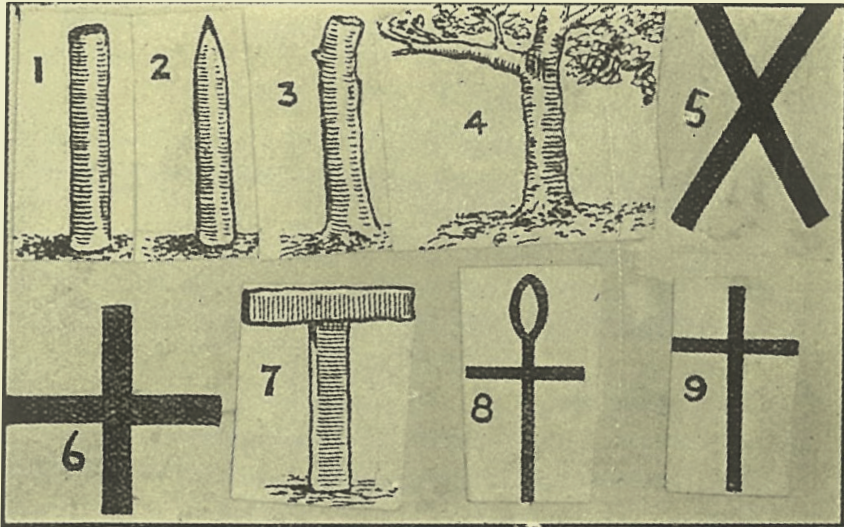


# WHICH CROSS?



## ON WHICH WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED?

1. STAUROS (Greek), or blunt pole for affixion. -Acts 2 36; I Corinthians 1, 23; also Josephus
2. SKOLOPS (Greek), or sharpened stake for impalement.
3. XULON (Greek), or dead trunk, used as stauros. Acts 5, 30.
4. DENDRON (Greek), or living tree
5. CRUX DECUSSATA (Latin), initial letter of Christos (Christ). -See monogram +)
6. CRUX COMPACTA (Latin), manufactured gibbet, or Greek cross.
7. CRUX COMMISSA (Latin), or heathen "Tau Cross."
8. CRUX ANSATA (Latin), or Egyptian Sign of Life.
9. CRUX IMMISSA (Latin), or Latin cross, from 8.

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WHICH CROSS?  
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by  
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*The History of the Presbyterian Church of NZ*  
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*Shall Ritualism and Romanism Capture NZ?*

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## **THE VENERATION OF THE CROSS IN ALL AGES.**

Nowhere should we be more careful to lay a good foundation than in our worship. He who in these days of scientific knowledge should worship "the man in the moon" would render himself supremely ridiculous and deserve to be laughed at on all sides. In a similar position does the individual place himself who venerates the modern material cross. There is no evidence that would satisfy an antiquarian of any repute that there was ever such a thing used in connection with the death of Christ as his Christian cross. Any one of half a dozen of crosses known in those days might have been employed for this purpose.

### **Its Heathen Origin.**

There can be no doubt about the origin of the cross both as an instrument of punishment and a symbol of worship. Long before Christianity was known crucifixion was practiced among Egyptians, Persians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans. It was intimately associated with heathen worship. There were frequent crucifixions to Baal. There were numerous crosses in those early heathen days, including the Papal cross of modern times. One form was got from the letter T, the first letter of the goddess Tammus, the Roman Astarte, the Phoenician Ashtoreth of the Bible, and the female complement of the male god Baal. It was an idolatrous emblem to denote the god of Hell, as well as Venus, Bacchus, Tammus, etc. It was figured on the dresses of the Babylonish priests, and

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suspended from the necks of the vestal virgins. It still forms part of the Hindoo sexworship. As far as the sensualistic, idolatrous nature of the worship is concerned there is no difference between the use made of the cross in the heathen world of the past and in some parts of the Christian world to-day. After a thorough investigation of the whole subject Alfred Porcelli, a great authority on this question and others, have come to the conclusion that when, for instance, Cardinal Gibbons, writing in "The Faith of Our Fathers," speaks of "the sacred chrism which is marked on our foreheads," by which we are "sealed by the sign of the cross impressed on us," he is just verifying the words of John in the book of Revelation in regards to the false prophet or priest impressing on the foreheads of all "the mark of the beast." (Revelation 13, 16.) What adds to the folly of this symbolism and worship on the part of Christians is that there is not a particle of evidence to show that Christ was crucified on *Roman cross* among the Romans was the *crown simplex*, on which many crucifixions among them took place. It was simply and upright stake set in the ground, without any transverse piece whatever. It could be easily erected in a time of urgency, and there was less likelihood of bungling in its use. Elaborate crosses were out of the question, "because they were often used in such marvelous numbers. Varus crucified 2000 Jews, Hadrian 500 per day, Titus so many that there was no room for the crosses nor crosses for the bodies." (Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.) On this *stauros* the victim was nailed through the hands and feet, his hands being extended above his head for this purpose. This is just what was done at Calvary. Josephus, the Jewish historian, Luke,

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Peter, and Paul all use the Greek words *stauros* (translated cross by us) and *rulon* (translated tree) to denote the gibbet on which our Lord was put to death. According to Liddel and Scott's Greek Dictionary the original meaning of *staurous* is a stake and *rulon* simply an equivalent for *stauros* is a stake and *rulon* simply an equivalent for *stauros*. Hence the New Testament writers speak of Christ as "hanged on a tree," "suffering for our sins in His own body on the tree." and "taken down from the tree"; just as Moses said of the Crucified, "His body shall not remain all night on the tree." Dean Farrar, in his article on the Cross in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, admits all this, but hesitates over the inscription was not on woode, but on gypsum, was nailed "over His head," and was fastened on the upright stake, and not on the transverse piece at all.

### **As a Symbol in Worship Unkown in the Early Church.**

It is significant that the early Christians, knowing the idolatrous use to which this symbol of the modern Romish Church had been devoted in the heathen world, abjured it altogether. It is impossible to plead for it "the use and wont" of the Early Church established by Christ and His Apostles. This in modern worship is fatal. What has no sanction in the teaching or practice of the Church under their guidance is to be banned in all Protestant circles as articles of doctrine or worship. The unlearned Christians of Rome who used the catacombs as burying places for years were fond of symbolism, and have left us in them symbols of the Trinity, light, life, victory, and suchlike, in endless variety; but the modern

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cross is not among the inscriptions of the early centuries. The nearest approach to it is X, the initial letter of Christ's name in Greek. In the Inscriptions of a later corrupt age we can see this X merging into †. The famous words of Minutius Felix, in his Apology of 220 A.D., "We neither worship crosses nor desire them," show how crosses were viewed by the Christians of those days. In the beginning of the fifth century, however, we find St. Cyril of Alexandria admitting that the superstition of the cross existed in his day.

### **The Cross Fosters an Unspiritual Worship.**

It fraternises with the enemy of a pure and enlightened worship. It fosters superstition. It has developed into a fetish and become a charm against witchcraft and evil spirits. It runs in the teeth of the principle which Christ laid down for the superstitious, idolatrous woman of Samaria; "God is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "They that are Christ's" are not the cross-weavers, cross-bearers, and cross-venerators, but those who "have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof." Paul, knowing the weakness of the human heart, prayed, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, *by Whom* [not by which] *the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.*"

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The most serious charge lies in this: The veneration of the cross, however explained or disguised, is idolatry pure and simple. The plea that men worship the Saviour

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through this material sign will not stand examination for a minute. It is just the plea that the most enlightened of the heathen use in defence of their gross worship of idols. Probably no other was thought of by the Israelites when they worshipped the golden calf which Moses in his indignation ground to powder, or when they burnt incense to the brazen serpent, which Hezekiah destroyed and called *nehustan* (a little brass). God will not have such material aids to worship. All such aids He condemns and punishes as idolatry. The second commandment is specially directed against these. This is one reason why Romanists and Ritualists, making the Church the authorised interpreter of the Bible, have obscured it with their fancies and given to it a subordinate place. They have done that with the second commandment in particular; in some of their catechisms leaving it out. Here is the way the Jesuits run a coach and four through that commandment. Gabriel Vasquez, called in Romish circles, “the Phoenix of minds,” writes-

Not only an image of God, but any creature in the world, reasonable or unreasonable, may without danger be worshipped together with His image; relics of saints, though under the form of worms ; . . . a ray of light on which the devil is inverted, *if a man supposed it to be Christ* ; . . . all inanimate and irrational things may be legitimately worshipped, for God is in them according to His essence. - De Adorat, Lib. III., Cap. II.

This would blot idolatry out of existence. There never could have been such a thing. It falsifies history, makes void the law of God, and outrages common sense. The greatest sinners in this idolatrous worship are in

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Protestant quarters where the most light shines. John Kensit and some of his Wycliffe preachers disturbed the "celebration of the veneration of the cross" in Holy Trinity Church, Hoxton, by exclaiming "this idolatry in the Church of England must cease." No wonder. There are a good many protestant churches where this idol worship takes place. At St. Cuthbert's, Philbeach Gardens, London, "the adoration of the cross," as it is called, may be seen at 9.30 a.m. on Good Friday. A high cross is laid upon the floor, and men, women and children prostrate themselves upon the ground and reverently kiss the foot of the cross, while the choir sing hymns of adoration to it. Afterwards the officiating priest uncovers a cross on the altar, and says, "Come and let us worship." In response all bow and worship. Then the clerks venerate the cross with feet unshod. Finally a procession is formed, in which candle-bearers lead the way, and two priests follow with the great cross, depositing it at the close of the parade on the altar, to be "venerated by the people." All this in a Protestant church! Indeed, it is nothing unusual. There is a secret society in the Old Country known as the S.S.C. (*Societas Sanctae Crucis*), or "Society of the Holy Cross." It has many hundreds of Anglican priests in its membership, and meets in synod regularly, but its proceedings are kept as dark as night. Not without reason. In such things as the mass, the confessional, and veneration of the cross its actions are the deeds of dishonesty and darkness. There is scarcely any of the many secret societies honeycombing the Church of England which does not include "the veneration of the cross" in its exotic and medieval programme. A curious prophecy is referred to by Mourant Brocks in a book



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called "Rome, Pagan and Papal," written many years ago. The author mentions that a priest once met an English lady at Teneriffe, and said to her, "Your nation will soon lose its Protestantism and return to the bosom of the true Church. In about twenty years the change will be in rapid progress. I will tell you how you many know that it is going on. You will see crosses on your churches, in your churches, on your altars, in your graveyards, in your houses, and on your persons." It would seem as if that prediction were coming to pass in the Homeland and here. You will remember how at the time of the recent Mission of Help large crosses figured on the handbills and booklets sent round. In some places there were processions with huge crosses such as we have described. At the consecration of an Auckland bishop there was one of these childish, degrading exhibitions. We are happy to say that they are quite illegal. They have no sanction in the Prayer Book. The cross which the Reformers cast out of the worship of the Church at the Reformation is designated in one of the Homilies "an image leading to idolatry" and "a lie." It just shows that Ritualists and law-breakers are in our midst undermining the fundamental principles of Christianity and Romanising the Protestantism of this new country. Some are charitable enough to suppose that the cross is only an ornament in modern Anglican architecture, has nt indispensable place in Anglican worship, and that strangers to a district in New Zealand who on this score confound the Anglican Church with its Roman neighbour, as is often done, make a huge mistake. Would that it were so. An Anglican gentleman of our acquaintance living in Canterbury recently put this

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matter to the test. In his loyalty to his Church and to his Saviour he offered a subscription to a congregation of his communion, who were about to erect a church, on condition that no cross appeared on the inside or outside. The office bearers considered that would be a novelty, and by the minister's advice the offer was contemptuously rejected. Is it loyalty to Jesus Christ? When a brave fireman mounts a ladder and at the risk of his life rescues a man from the smoke and flame of an upper storey of a burning house, what a fool the man when brought safely down would be to turn his back on his deliverer and fall down at the foot of the ladder, exclaiming, "Sweet ladder, you have saved my life. Henceforth I shall wear a miniature of you on my watch chain." When a humane person throws a rope to a drowning man and drags him half dead to the bank what would you say if after he recovered his senses he addressed the rope instead of the rope-holder, and exclaimed, "Kind rope, I owe you my life. In honour of this I shall wear a little rope round my neck till my dying day"? When a doctor at imminent risk makes with his lance an incision in the neck of a diphtheretic patient and inserts a breathing tube, would it be a compliment to the doctor for the man whose life was saved to say to the surgeon, "Will you let me have that lance or that tube that I may make me like it, and wear it as a memento of this occasion"? When that heroic man working on the side of a railway line the other day near Auckland, saw an express train coming in one direction and empty fugitive trucks in another, ran forward, and standing in the middle of the road waved a red flag till the passenger train stopped, what would the world have said if the people saved from a dreadful collision had

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said nothing to the man by way of thanks, but simply expressed their determination to get little red flags made for their button-holes, and to hug and kiss the flag as the instrument of their salvation? Shall we ridicule such things and yet call it manly or Christian to treat the Saviour of the world in exactly the same fashion? In view of it all, who will not say, "Away with crosses from our churches; away with them from our altars; away with them from our houses, books, and persons; away with them from our graveyards; no Romanist or Ritualist will ever induce me, under the pretence of honouring the Son of God, to betray the Saviour of the world, or bring me under the censure of Paul: 'For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ'""?

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