

relled about the respective merits of their various ideas of the One God.

October 13. Judges vii: 13-23.

It is interesting to note the similarity of the methods of warfare pursued by the modern Chinese and these ancient tribesmen of Israel. It is said that when the English troops invaded China they were met by hordes of soldiers making the most inconceivable noise in every conceivable manner. The din and racket was quite sufficient to put an army to rout, had alarm been an effective weapon. When the English soldiers failed to run away the Chinese did, and Gideon's host probably would have adopted similar tactics had the noise failed of its object. All these ideas are based upon the occult powers of sound, traditions of which probably linger among the Chinese, and were present among these early races. The fall of Jericho belongs to the same class of events. The war-whoop of Indian tribes is related to these occurrences, and possesses mantram power of the nature of incantations or spells.

NIRVANA.

Great have been the disputes among the learned as to the meaning of the word Nirvana—whether it indicates a state of no-consciousness or a state of vastly enhanced consciousness. Probably both views have their justification; the thing does not admit of definition in the terms of ordinary language. The important thing to see and admit is that under cover of this and other similar terms, there does exist a real and recognizable fact (that is a state of consciousness in some sense), which has been experienced over and over again, and which to those who have experienced it in ever so slight a degree, has appeared worthy of life-long pursuit and devotion. It is easy, of course, to represent the thing as a mere word, a theory, a speculation of the dreamy Hindu; but people do not sacrifice their lives for empty words, nor do mere philosophical abstractions rule the destinies of continents. No, the word represents a reality, something very basic and inevitable in human nature. The question is really not to define the fact—for we cannot do that—

but to get at and experience it * * * The Gnana-yogis adopt two practices, (1) that of intense consecration of the thoughts on a fixed object, (2) that of the effacement of thought altogether. * * To concentrate at all times wholly and unreservedly in what you are doing at the moment is, they say, a distinct step in Gnanam.

The next step, the effacement of Thought, is a much more difficult one. Only when the power of concentration has been gained can this be attempted with any prospect of success. The body must be kept, as before, perfectly motionless, and in a quiet place free from disturbance; not in an attitude of ease or slumber, but sitting or standing erect with muscles tense. All will-power is required, and the greatest vigilance. Every thought must be destroyed on the instant of its appearance. But the enemy is subtle, and failure—over a long period—inevitable. Then when success seems to be coming, and Thought is dwindling, Oblivion, the twin-foe, appears and must also be conquered. For if Thought merely give place to Sleep, what is there gained? After months, but more probably years, of intermittent practice, the power of control grows; curious but distinct physiological changes take place; one day the student finds that Thought has gone; he stands for a moment in Oblivion; then that veil lifts, and there streams through his being a vast and illumined consciousness, glorious, that fills and overflows him, "surrounding him so that he is like a pot in water, which has the liquid within it and without." In this consciousness there is divine knowledge but no thought. It is Samadhi, the universal "I Am."—EDWARD CARPENTER, "*From Adam's Peak to Elephanta.*"

Never a word is said
But it trembles in the air,
And the truant voice has sped
To vibrato everywhere;
And perhaps far off in eternal years
The echo may ring upon our ears.

—Henry Burton.

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