

the tricks of the monkeys and went to pay a visit to "The Golden Temple." This sacred building is reached through a winding street, narrow and dark. On each side of this lane are small platforms, where are sold little idols and flowers to give as offerings in the temple. We, of course, could not go into the temple, but we went up some old stone steps to a sort of balcony and looked down at the entrance to the golden temple. Hundreds of pilgrims were going in marching to the sound of the huge gong that each pilgrim struck as he passed the altar. Some sacred cows went in also, and were fed on the spot by offerings of green leaves, fruit and flowers that were thrown in a large heap at one side of the altar.

Dirt and smells abounded. Garlands of marigolds were thrown about the necks of the sacred cows and the people huddled close together, crowding in to the temple doors, and we felt that we had seen enough and must get out for a breath of pure air.

On our way to this temple, our guide took us to the home of Mrs. Annie Bessant. She was not at home, but passing her house we noticed over her hall door a gaudily painted representation of "Genish" or the elephant god. He sits on his haunches having men's feet and hands; an elephant head with a long trunk out in front. Under the trunk is tied a sort of bib. The thing is ugly in the extreme. Mrs. Bessant has become a convert to the Hindu religion and professes to remember past experiences in the transmigration of her soul. On we went to pay a call at the Well of Knowledge. We had to walk through filthy, narrow lanes. In this case there certainly was no royal road to learning.

After a tortuous route through throngs of pilgrims we reached the well. Being common and unclean we could only stand and look, a drink of

this sacred water was denied us; I may add that we did not ask for it. The water in the well fairly smelled. Pilgrims threw in offerings of rice and flowers. These decayed, and yet day by day the offerings were thrown in and day by day the priests dished out this water to the crowds and it was drunk with great reverence. What was left was thrown down, so that all about the well was sticky muck and filth. In stalls all round this well are the sacred cows. The proximity of these animals add a variety of smells, that in the hot, close atmosphere is simply overpowering. We were glad to escape, wondering how Annie Bessant can call this the purest and best religion. We now felt that we had seen enough of Benares for one day and so went back to our hotel arranging with our guide to make an early start in the morning.

About seven o'clock in the morning found us on our way to the sacred river Ganges. Half an hour's drive brought us to the river bank, where we rented a boat and went slowly past the ghats. Of these there are forty-seven and are flights of large stone steps leading into the water. The scene here must be seen to be realized. Hundreds of Hindus of all castes are bathing, washing clothes, making offerings of rice, flowers or sandal wood; dyeing yarn or worshipping round these ghats. Groups of widows with shaved heads, fakirs with long hair, holy men covered with ashes, children having a good time, dobbies doing their washing, each add a part to the picture, we saw on the banks of the Ganges. Out in the water float boats, crowded with pilgrims. All these with a back ground of temples and idols make a scene never to be forgotten.

We saw a devout looking old man with closed eyes, pouring water out to the Sun God; beside him bobbed up and down in the sun-lit waters the body of a dead dog.