

International S. S. Lessons.

August 19. John I, 35-49.

The designation of the Lamb of God, v. 36, applied in this passage connects the Christian with all earlier religions. The lamb or ram was sacred among the Jews as the sacrificial victim or burnt offering. The Agnus Dei of the Romans suggests the Agni of the Brahmans, the God of Fire, who is represented seated on a ram. The Golden Fleece of the Greeks is also connected with the sun or fire symbols of antiquity, and all are related to the sign Aries, the Ram of the Zodiac. The translation of the word Messiah (v. 41) indicates the current use of the Hebrew. The Jews had a tradition that Adam or Abraham reincarnated as David and would come again as the Messiah. V. 45. Compare Luke iii 23 38.

August 26. John II, 1-11.

The third day, the mystic period, is celebrated the mystical marriage of the Lamb, the disciple is joined to his Higher Self, and water, the astral, is turned into wine, or Matter into Spirit. Cana or Khana is from a root meaning a "place consecrated." It appears in the term Devachan. The Mother of Jesus is the body or lower principles in which the candidate must accomplish his Initiation. "What have I to do with thee?"—the atonement not yet achieved, the hour of Initiation not yet arrived.

September 2. John II, 13-25.

The temple to be cleansed represents exoteric religion generally, oxen, material things; sheep, the subdued passions and desires; doves, spiritual aspirations. The money changers are those who traffic in spiritual things. The scourge, common on the Egyptian monuments, like the noose of the Hindu Shiva, represents the means by which the baser nature is tamed. "My Father's House," the human body, naturally the temple of the Holy Ghost. The mystical three days of ch. ii., v. 1, again occur in which the body shall be raised. V. 20. Wilt thou with three Fires do more than with forty-six? There are forty nine Fires—

September 9. John III, 1-16.

The surprise of the Master that Nicodemus did not understand the teaching of rebirth in v. 10 is notable. The Jews of the time were familiar with

the doctrine, but, as at present, materialized it, and hence the allusion in v. 4. A man must be born of water, symbol of the astral, and the Spirit. "The Spirit breathes where it wills," as it should be rendered in v. 8, "and ye hear the voice (phone) thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh." The true man is a spirit who may go whither he wills, and it is that spirit, not his body or bodily vitality, which is reincarnated, or stands again in a new body. The popular confusion of reincarnation and regeneration should be avoided. V. 11-13 are notable,—no man hath ascended to heaven but he that came down from heaven—in connection with chap. x., v. 34, 35. V. 14 connects the serpent and dragon symbols of all religions with the Christian. It is one of the most sacred emblems.

September 16. John IV, 9-26.

The Master knew no distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color. To the Samaritan woman He conveys the sacred teaching of the spiritual life as freely as to his own disciples. The tendency to materialise on her part, v. 11-12 and 15 and to spiritualise on the Master's, v. 13-14, is characteristic. Our own age speaks in v. 15. The Master in v. 23-24 expresses the great esoteric fact which places all formal and ritual worship on the same level. "God is Spirit" is the basis of occultism and they who would worship must rise above the physical plane and worship in spirit and truth. The claim to be Christ, Anointed, Illumined, v. 25-26, is unequivocal.

The Gospel of John, the last book of the Bible to be written, may be usefully compared with Genesis.

The Local Branch.

The various activities of the Toronto Society, have been well sustained during the warm weather, and the attendance has exceeded expectation. The Wednesday evening studies are being devoted to "Modern Theosophy," the "Ocean of Theosophy" having been completed. Papers during this series by Mrs. Titus, Miss Harrison and Miss Simpson were very favorably criticized. A new feature of the Friday evening meetings will be monthly lectures on special subjects.

The last Friday of each month will be devoted to these, and "The Story of Osiris" will be treated on 31st August. Interest in the "Secret Doctrine" class continues.