

ENGRAVED BY FELIX LE BLANC.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

COPY IN WOOD OF THE BHUDDER MOSQUE WINDOW AT AHMEDABAD, MADE BY THE WORKMEN OF LOCKWOOD DE FOREST IN INDIA. NOW IN SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM, LONDON, SIZE $7\frac{1}{2}$ X 12 FEET. (ILLUSTRATION OF THE WONDERFUL TRACERY OF THE EARLIEST MOHAMMEDAN PERIOD AS WORKED OUT BY THE HINDU WORKMEN.)

GODS OF INDIA.

NOT many countries have been kept alive in the imagination of mankind so long as India by a few stereotyped phrases, mainly the inventions of extravagantly enthusiastic poets attempting to describe scenes they never saw. The way educated people talk of the gorgeous East, of lotus-flowers and pearl-divers, of yogis and Buddha and the car of Juggernaut, shows that the world at large still believes India to be a wonderland—to be peopled with jugglers, fairies, or white-robed priests, according to the fancy of the individual.

The fact is that India has no history worth mentioning until the time of the Mohammedan conquest. There is nothing to take hold of, nothing that the most ingenious schoolmaster can find to teach; and it is therefore not unnatural that most people know so little about the country. All that is to be known is obtained from the study of Sanskrit texts, embracing works of philosophy, poetry, mathematics, and religion,—comparatively few of which have been translated into European languages,—and from observation of such monuments as an art-loving race of men have reared to testify to their faith in God, or to their reverence for the dead.

India has served many gods, and the monuments raised in their honor are countless. It appears to be generally believed at the present

day that the religion of India is Buddhism. How this common impression gained ground it is hard to say. When Sir Edwin Arnold published "The Light of Asia," he did not think it necessary to state that Gautama the Master had no longer any following in the country which witnessed his birth and holy life; but Sir Edwin's book produced a religious revival, or something very like it, among a certain class of semi-intelligent readers who are continually foraging for some new titbit of religion with which to tickle the dull sense of their immortality into a relish for heaven.

There are no Buddhists in India. There are many in Ceylon, and there is a sect of them in Nepal, an independent territory to the north, on the borders of Buddhistic Tibet. The religion vanished from India in the early centuries of the Christian era. The neo-Brahmans set up anti-Buddhas, so to speak, in the figures of Krishna, Mahadeva, and Rama—demigods and idols of the great neo-Brahmanic religions, Vishnu-worship and Siva-worship; and these swept everything else before them until the Mohammedan conquest; and at the present day, in one shape or another, these forms of belief are adhered to by five sixths of the population, the remainder being Mussulmans. The Buddhists are gone, though not without leaving behind them a rich legacy of philo-

sophic thought, and many monuments of their artistic genius.

So far as we have any means of judging, the Buddhists were the first builders and hewers of stone in India. Out of something like one thousand temples and monasteries hewn out underground in the solid rock, at least eight hundred, and these the most ancient, are indubitably Buddhistic, and all the most ancient and imposing ruins bear the same sign manual. It is a hopeless task in our present state of information, to seek to ascertain whence they derived the first principles of their architecture, from Egyptian, Assyrian, or Chaldee. Every observer is free to make his own conjectures, and, for myself, I confess that the massive square architecture, the broad frieze, and the ranks of stout, well-made pillars, which characterize the pure Hindu temple, always suggest most strongly a connection with Egyptian art. As for the exceedingly rich carving and high relief work which contrast with the flat stone engraving of Egypt, they are easily accounted for by the difference of material. It is easy enough to cut

ligions to begin by utilizing the machinery left by their predecessors, and the Hindu sects were no exception to the rule. It would be beyond the province of such a paper as the present to trace, or give a synopsis of, the religions of India. We have to do with gods, little gods and great gods, and their habitations. Some of the little gods are very amusing, and some of the great ones are very horrible; if we laugh at Rama and the monkeys, we must shudder at great clumsy Jagannāth, or Juggernaut, as he is generally called, whose name means the "lord of the world," and beneath whose roof all sects of neo-Brahmans join hands, and are ready to die in protest of his supremacy. The Buddhism of the people who first hewed temples and monasteries out of the solid rock would have been outraged at the idea of worshiping an idol, but not many centuries elapsed before the image of the prophet was set up in the sanctuary, cross-legged and adorned with jewels, for adoration. Even before the image was worshiped there were symbols in use — the wheel of the law, the bodhi-tree (that is, the tree under which



DRAWN BY FRANCIS LATHROP.

ENGRAVED BY JAMES TYNAN.

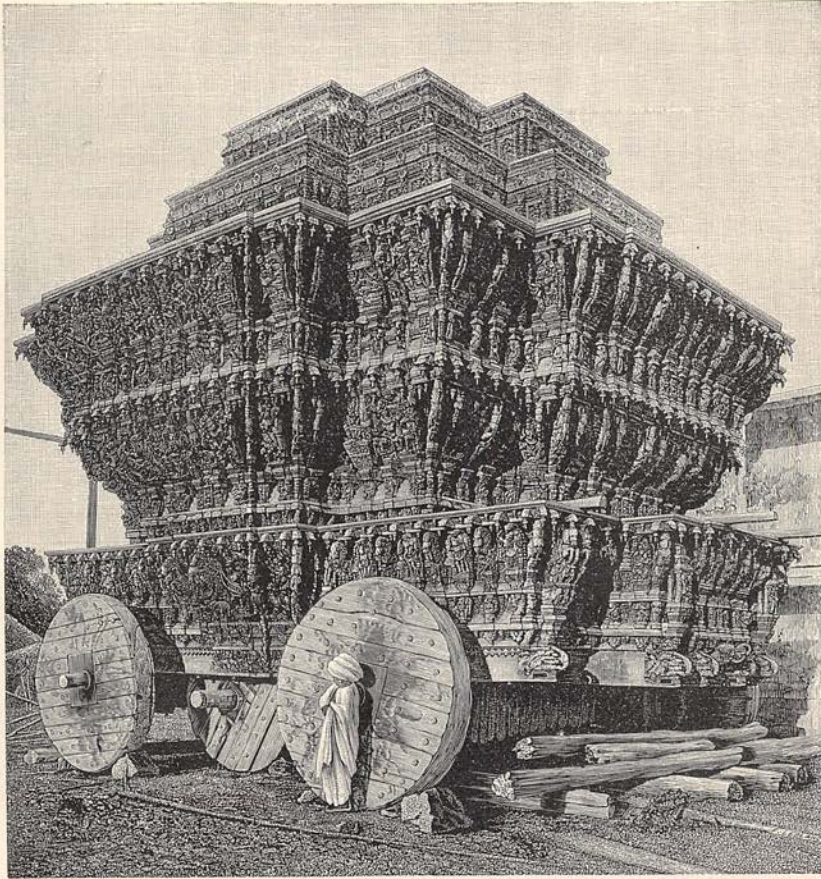
INDIAN LOTAS IN THE COLLECTION OF LOCKWOOD DE FOREST.

the most elaborate ornaments out of brown sandstone and soft white marble — quite another thing from working in that marvelous granite which defies ages, and can almost defy the sand-blast of the desert.

That these temples, first raised and wrought to the honor and glory of a very pure religion, should have become necessarily the habitation of all sorts and conditions of gods, is not altogether surprising. The same thing has occurred elsewhere, and many a Roman church is built on the foundations of a heathen temple; not a few are altogether temples, such as the temple of Hercules in Rome. It is the tendency of re-

a man by contemplation may become a perfect Buddha), and the dagoba, or dome, originally intended for relics.

So, when the neo-Brahmans, descendants of those Brahmans whom Gautama Buddha had vanquished, once more came forward with a religion to offer, more sensual, more miracle-working, and far more adorned with legend and myth, song and tale, than the exclusive monastic belief to which Buddhism had grown, they found the people ready enough to turn the image of Buddha into an image of Siva, and to build holy places for Rama the monkey-lover on the foundations where the sanctuaries of



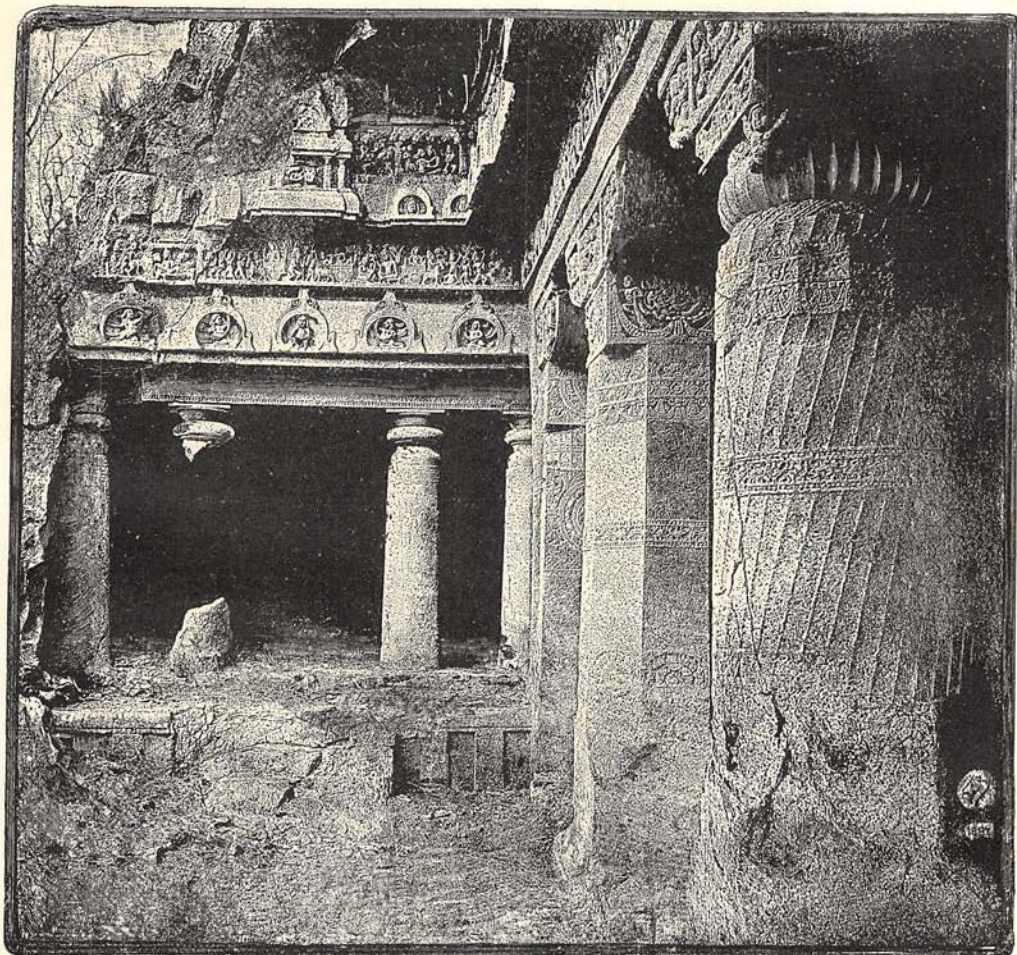
ENGRAVED BY FELIX LE BLANC.

TEMPLE CAR, SOUTHERN INDIA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

monastic faith and learning had before stood. For the chief of Buddhist institutions was the monastery, and in no Catholic country have the mendicant and priestly orders ever flourished in such numbers, in such wealth, or in such power, as they did in India during the eight or nine hundred years which elapsed from the rise to the extinction of Buddhism. The monks took the vows of poverty and mendicancy as individuals, but the order, as a body, owned vast estates, magnificent buildings, and untold riches. Their error lay in severing themselves too much from the people, in making their religion too abstract for popular comprehension, in leading lives which were too secluded to admit of any breadth of view, and too well provided with good things for any great intellectual activity. They have left but little behind them worthy to be ranked as literature. On the other hand, the doctrines and the whole mode of thought of their founder took such hold upon the people that, centuries after the total extinction of his religion, his ideas — his *modus percipiendi* — are found underlying the literature, the social contracts, and the daily lives of Vishnavite and

Sivaite, Jain and yogi; in a word, his tenets have more or less influenced the fundamental dogmas of the many forms of religion and philosophy which have followed upon his, and upon one another. It requires, however, patient study and long reading, with not a little knowledge of reason-history in general, to trace the teachings of the gentle Gautama in the vast sea of speculation commonly termed Hindu philosophy. On the other hand, it needs little insight to see, even in such buildings as the devotion of modern believers has reared within our lifetime to the honor of its gods, that it was the early Buddhist mason whose master hand laid the cornerstone of Hindu architecture once and forever. The symbols have changed, and the elaborate frieze of carved stone no longer bears the wheel and the pagoda, or the figures of Buddha himself, riding on many kinds of beasts, bestowing the benediction with his raised hand. Instead, there are images of gods and goddesses, Kali or Durga, Ganesh with the elephant trunk, Mahadeva, Rama, Lakshmi, and all the three hundred and sixty other deities of the Hindu calendar: there are animals and living things



DRAWN BY A. BRENNAN.

ROCK-CUT TEMPLE, ELLORA.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

of all kinds except fish, for the fish are acursed. There are all manner of designs grotesque and strange, but interwoven with a richness and skill of which even the finest illustration can give no adequate idea, the little figures and images being executed in as high relief as ever adorned the Lombard Gothic churches with choirs of stone angels and cherubim.

But, in spite of all this ornamentation, the fundamental lines are Buddhist and Buddhist only. The sturdy columns, constantly alternating between the smooth, the fluted, the beveled, and the spiral; the broad capitals, of which the carved curtain falls sometimes a third of the way down the pillar; the imposing steps; the system of chambers and antechambers; and lastly the shrine itself—all these things are found closely defined in the early rock temples, hewn and dug out of the solid stone, the columns carved out of the mass, and never severed from the architrave they support. One hand is visible

in all this, and one inspiring genius, creating a school of architecture which even in the Mosquesque style of the later buildings of the Mohammedan conquest is not wholly lost. The Moslems brought with them their pointed arches and graceful traceries, their minarets and their domes, introducing a style wholly foreign to the spirit of Indian art; but even the intense vitality of the conquering school has not withstood the temptation to make use of Hindu details of ornamentation, while maintaining the plan and principal features of a foreign architecture.

The Hindus were not acquainted with the arch before the Moslem conquest, and the pure Indian style is as remarkable for its flat roofing and square doors as the Egyptian or the Greek, whereas the Mohammedan carries with him his love for the tall springing vault and pointed gateway. Even in the Rani Lepre mosque at Ahmedabad, with its flat roof and square pillars, there is a pointed door on one

side, and the panels of stone tracery are of the pointed model.

The other distinguishing feature of Hindu architecture, and one which is never to be mistaken, is the representation in sculpture of men and animals, and, generally, of sentient beings. The Moslems, like the Jews, were commanded not to make images of anything in heaven or in earth, and Mohammed added, "Therefore, if ye must make images, make images of things which have no souls, such as trees or plants." His Sunnite followers have never transgressed this rule, and their friezes and capitals and paneling are either in geometrical patterns, or are ornamented with symmetrically twined boughs and leaves.

The Hindu, on the other hand, never loses an opportunity of introducing gods, elephants, tigers, horses, and birds—anything living that he can think of except fish; for fish have no souls, and the believer in the transmigration of the spirit eats fish with impunity, though he would die rather than eat beef, and has religious scruples about game.

The Buddhists themselves set the fashion of carving human and other figures in their friezes and capitals. These carvings are found even in the rock temples, and were probably introduced before the worship degenerated into an idolatrous adoration of the image of Buddha, set up in the inner shrine. The symbols of Buddhism are found represented in every way in these friezes. The wheel of the law is formed sometimes by a string of figures, alternately male and female, joining hands, and dancing in a circle. The dagoba, or dome, of the relics is commonly pictured in the conical umbrella which a servant carries after the mounted figure of Buddha, and the leaves and branches of the sacred fig-tree (*Ficus religiosa*) are trained and intertwined in the tracery. Buddha is represented as riding upon a hare, an elephant, an ass, and even upon a man's shoulders, and the multitudes of his disciples and attendants complete the train of sculptured reliefs.

The gods of India are everywhere, and yet they seem to be nowhere. The religion has been one long winter of discontent; one prolonged struggle on the part of the people to worship many gods under many shapes, while always on the point of believing in one single divine essence as the cause and creator of all things; a hand to hand fight between polytheism and monotheism, in which the priests have continually endeavored to play the part of conciliators. Vishnu and Siva are now the chief contending parties, and the priests have tried to make them agree by adding a third supreme deity in the shape of Brahma. Of this fact ingenious searchers after collateral evidence for Christianity have made capital, saying that

Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva are inseparable, and that the Hindus are evidently in possession of the dogma of the Trinity. As a matter of fact, this is pure nonsense, and contains as much truth as the parallels that have been drawn between Christ and Buddha, Christ and Krishna, Napoleon the Great and Apollo. Archbishop Whately, in his great squib, showed once and for all the absurdity of such demonstrations.

It is now well established that the priests conceived the idea of adding a third deity to the two conflicting ones, with a view to reconciling the existing religions; and, finding one insufficient, they did not scruple to add a fourth in the person of Krishna, thereby destroying the idea of a trinity at a blow.

There are, then, two great Hindu religions, the Vishnavite, and the Sivaite. Vishnu is a pure solar deity, and appears as such in the Vedic hymns. He descends to earth in a variety of incarnations, or *avatars*, as they are called. His last incarnation—generally reckoned as the seventh—was in the form of Krishna, though in the south many Hindus consider Gautama Buddha to have been the sun-god appearing once more in the flesh. As regards the modern religion of Vishnu, however, his embodiment as Krishna is by far the most important; for it was Krishna whom the Brahmans held up to the people to attract by the grossly sensual rites and ceremonies of his worship, when the contemplative monastic system of the Buddhists had grown too exclusive in its observances, and too transcendental in its beliefs, to suit the popular taste any longer. In the great epic poem called the "Mahabharata," a work consisting of about three hundred thousand verses, and which describes the struggle between the sons of Pandu and the sons of Dhritarashtra, Krishna plays a very important part, although the principal religion described in that poem is rather Sivaite than Vishnavite. When he had subsequently become a deity, the five sons of Pandu were also worshiped, not to mention a considerable number of Krishna's wives, themselves considered to have been but the incarnations of female deities. All these are taken and introduced into the Vishnavite religion as divine beings.

Furthermore, there is the incarnation of Vishnu as Rama, again with a divine wife, who is carried off by the king of the demons to Ceylon, whence Rama rescues her by the aid of the monkeys, and their king and chief minister, Sugreva and Hanuman. Rama, his wife Sita, the monkeys, and whosoever, in the great legend of the Ramayana, fought on Rama's side, are all adopted into the Vishnavite religion, and worshiped to this day—so that in Benares, a holy city especially sacred to Rama, the monkeys run wild in vast numbers, and no man dares

interfere with them, though they come to his table, and help themselves to his food unbidden. I remember seeing, many years ago, in a newspaper published near Benares, a long letter from some native less orthodox than the rest, complaining bitterly of the torment he suffered from the monkeys walking in and out of his house at all hours of the day; and imploring the editor to use his influence in getting the police to "arrest" these trespassers.

Such is the Vishnavite religion — a huge pantheon in which are collected all gods, demigods, heroes, and animals that can by any stretch of reasoning or tradition be said to have any connection whatsoever with Vishnu; besides, as the two great religions are in practice very tolerant of each other, though theoretically at variance, it is not uncommon to find the gods of Siva's cycle attracted over to Vishnu, and the converse.

As for Siva, he differs fundamentally from Vishnu in that he has not passed through a variety of incarnations, but makes up the deficiency by keeping a number of gods constantly at his beck and call. He has, indeed, many forms, for, as he is alone in his supremacy, he is alternately god of peace and god of war, god of growths and god of destructions. Moreover, he is constantly associated with Vishnu, and the two with Brahma, and again with Krishna. Generally speaking, all sects of *lingam* worshipers are Sivaites, and those who sacrifice any living thing to idols — a practice, however, which is very rare at the present day. Siva is of an older conception than Vishnu, and more nearly resembles Indra, the Vedic supreme god, with his hosts of spirits and subordinated gods. Siva commands Skanda, the god of war; Visabhadra, the divinity of warlike rage and frenzy; Kuvera, the god of treasure; Ganesha, the intelligent, with the head of an elephant, and to whom an invocation is set at the head of many Hindu books, "Honor to the blessed Ganesha"; and Siva is attended by hosts of *yakshas* and spirits of all sorts. Siva and his minor gods, then, compose a second pantheon as extensive and as well-filled as that of Vishnu.

Add to these two the priestly conception of Brahma as associated with both, by which aggregation all the multifarious shapes of divinity and varieties of worship are by one *exequatur* made legitimate, orthodox, and conducive to salvation; add, moreover, the doctrine of the Vedanta, which is as much of a catechism as can be said to exist in India, and which shows that there is only one supreme being vaguely represented by the demonstrative pronoun "that," all else being but vanity, and the result of illusion; then superimpose the universal doctrine of the transmigration of the soul — and the confusion is complete.

Under these circumstances, objects the intelligent foreigner, in the face of a celestial army outnumbering the population of the globe, and of an extremely irascible temper, what position does the ordinary Hindu assume? He shifts his responsibility. He goes to a *guru*, a master in religious matters, and having selected some especial divinity from the heavenly host, he is taught a *mantra*, a mystic text for meditation, which he keeps secret, and repeats to himself during his ablutions, morning and evening. By this text he invokes his special divinity whenever he is in need of help during life, and when he is dying; but this devotion does not prevent him from accepting the supremacy of the divine essence taught in the catechism of the Vedantasara, nor from acknowledging the importance of all the other divinities in his own pantheon, and admitting that those of the Vishnavites if he is a Sivaites, or of the Sivaites if he follows Vishnu, are entitled to consideration. But he hopes that his own divinity will take care of him *in horâ mortis et in die judicii*, and he believes that it is possible by a pure life, and devout contemplation, to become so identified with the divine essence aforesaid, as to escape the metempsychosis, or change of body, and to enjoy an immense period of blissful unconsciousness, or of happy rest, in complete independence of the three hundred — or three hundred thousand — gods and goddesses who rule over the earth.

As for the educated people, principally the Brahmans, if questioned in a friendly way, and led on to speak their mind, they will generally admit that they believe in one supreme being, and in various states of life, but that the pantheons of Vishnu and Siva are the creations of an ingenious fancy. They conform, indeed, to the outward requirements of some religion, but they are inclined to put their faith in the monotheism of the Vedic hymns, and to regard the rest as a superstructure.

It has been much the fashion to speak of the grand simplicity and primeval single-heartedness of the Vedic religion, and to regard it as the unadulterated faith of a pastoral people. Grand those hymns are beyond a doubt, and they breathe a high belief in a single supreme God, though abounding with allegory and simile taken from the manifestations of nature's forces. But simple they cannot be called, nor does it seem possible that they can have been composed by a people in any true sense primitive. The language is complex, and the imagery often highly artificial, while meters of great variety are kept perfectly distinct, and never confused. It was in every sense an intricate religion, and it is more than probable that it was never the religion of the people, who most likely followed a form of Vishnavism or Sivaism. Both Vishnu

and Siva appear in the hymns, and the former, as the sun-god, is sometimes spoken of as supreme, while Siva generally occupies a subordinate position.

In countries where people live much in the open air, dress simply when they dress at all, and eat what they can get, it requires little effort of imagination or skill of pen to make them seem as primitive as one pleases. As a matter of fact, where it is very easy to live, or, at least, where little thought or labor is requisite to obtain the means of living, a nation endowed with any natural activity is very likely to devote its energies to intellectual pursuits; and the result is sure to be a state of national thought which, in despite of scanty clothing, and rice for breakfast, dinner, and supper, will turn out the very reverse of primitive. India is such a country, and, so far as the Aryans are concerned, always has been. What it was before the Aryan conquest we have no means of knowing, but it is not at all likely that the modern religions and customs belonged to the aborigines prior to that date. It seems much more natural to suppose that the Vedic hymns, and the Vedic faith—if we may so call it, were at all times the exclusive property of the higher classes of Aryans, and that popular religions existed among the masses, as they do now, simultaneously with the highly civilized belief of the Vedic Brahmans. The word *brahmana*, as designating a member of

the priestly caste (distinguished from the *brahman*, the officiating priest and singer of the sacred verses), is found only in the very latest of the hymns, showing that no such distinction was necessary before the fusion of the classes which probably accompanied the southward migration.

Whatever India may have been then, any one may go there and see for himself what it is like nowadays. Saddened, oppressed, and weighed down by conquest, mutilated by the sword of the conqueror, and ground to the very dust and ashes of poverty by his relentless imposts and all-devouring avarice, poor and despised,—worse than all, despising herself,—but India still—the land of sunshine and roses, of holy places and sacred rivers, of glorious traditions and glorious nature, whereby the living death of her people glows yet with the colors of a life that is over and past for them. To the careless traveler it seems almost as if she might still be called young. But there is something underlying this outward bloom, this mere exuberance of productiveness; and that something, at first faint and undefined, gains substance and reality and clearness as a man searches under the surface, and brings at last a sorrowful conviction that beneath this splendid sun, and among these gardens of roses and forests of rhododendrons, have been wrought tragedies as dire as any that blacken the history of the world.

F. Marion Crawford.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.



It is told of one of our poets that, when in England, he was asked who took Matthew Arnold's place in America, and he answered, "Matthew Arnold." The reply would still be just, and, excepting as he fills it, the place of Matthew Arnold must long continue vacant. Men of genius are not replaced, and if, dying, they leave their work half done, the loss is irreparable. But Arnold's message was delivered, whether in verse or prose, with an amplitude and distinctness to which few messages may lay claim, and is "full of foretastes of the morrow."

Wordsworth expressed regret that the critics found so much fault with his poetry, because, as he remarked with Olympian simplicity, "They deprive the youth of my country of what would be a blessing to them." A similar feeling as to the ignorance and misapprehension which prevail regarding Matthew Arnold and his work induces me to write briefly as to the impression left by each upon my mind.

Readers of Mr. Arnold will recall the definiteness and meaning given by him to the use of the verb *to know*. To know the Greeks, in his sense, is not merely to have a knowledge of some set of facts concerning them; to be more or less accurately informed as to their appearance, dress, occupations, manners, tastes, language, etc.: it is to enter into the racial phenomena, the peculiar spirit, the elemental and developed genius, of that unique people.

Many say they knew Mr. Arnold whose conversation proves their knowledge to have consisted in having read, with ill choosing, some one or two of his poems, whence to conclude him not a poet; some one or two of his essays, whereby to discover him unsound; or in having met him once, twice perhaps, with the result of having misknown him utterly. It has been remarked that the comparative paucity of the reading public which really knows and appreciates his distinction is a phenomenon of contemporary literary taste.

There are melodies the full sweetness of which the ear immediately seizes. But who that is a