

likely to yield a rich harvest. On some my thoughts had been fixed long before I was able to visit India; but the years which have since passed by, though as full of scholarly labours as other duties would permit, have seemingly not brought me nearer to the longed-for chance of exploring them.

Life seems short where the range for research is so vast as in the case of ancient India and the regions through which it communicated with the classical West. But life must appear shorter still when the chosen tasks cannot be done in the study, when they call for the exertions of the scholar and explorer combined, such as are readily faced only while the optimism of comparative youth and physical vigour endures. To Fate—and to those who dispense it, I offer due thanks for having allowed me to work on Indian ground and at last, after years of toil, to attain for a time freedom and the means to serve science. Yet when I look back upon all the efforts that had to precede this opportunity, I am tempted to regret that I cannot share the Indian belief in those 'future births' which hold out promise of appropriate reward for 'merits,' spiritual and other. For on the strength of such a belief I might feel more hopeful of meeting yet with that reward for my work at Khotan which I should prize highest,—the chance of repeating it elsewhere.

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