

Can Women Become Adepts?

Originally published in *The Theosophist*, October 1883, this article was written by Damodar K. Mavlankar, who was Secretary of The Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras, India. He resigned his position after Madame Blavatsky left Adyar for Europe, in March 1885, and travelled to North India, with the intention of reaching the Ashram of the Masters in Tibet. After some weeks of no communication from Damodar, Col. Olcott received a note from one of the Masters to the effect that Damodar had reached Them.

Letters to the Editor.

CAN FEMALES BECOME ADEPTS ?

WILL you kindly let me know whether females can attain to adeptship, and whether female adepts exist at all ?

“ AN INQUIRER.”

Note.—It is difficult to see any good reason why females should not become Adepts. None of us, Chelas, are aware of any physical or other defect which might entirely incapacitate them from undertaking the dreary ordeal. It may be more difficult, more dangerous for them than it is for men, still not impossible. The Hindu sacred books and traditions mention such cases, and since the laws of Nature are immutable, what was possible some thousand years ago must be possible now. If our correspondent had referred to the Editorial Notes, page 148, Vol. III, (Article, *Re-Incarnations in Thibet*), he would have found the existence of a female Adept hinted at—the pious Chinese Princess who, after living for ten years a married life, renounced it with her husband's consent and became a *Gelung-ma*, or Ani, *i. e.*, a nun. She is believed to be still re-incarnating herself “*in a succession of female Lamas.*” The late Tde-shoo Lama's sister is said to be one of such re-incarnations. From this lady-Adept, the Superior of the Nunnery on the Palte-Lake—a Tibetan pedlar of Darjeeling acknowledged to some Bengal Theosophists, who visited that place last year, to have received a talisman. That pedlar is now supposed to be dead ; but those Theosophists who heard repeatedly his statement can testify to the fact. In Nepaul, we all know, there is a high female Adept. And in Southern India, flourished at a recent date, another great female Initiate named Ouvaiyar. Her mysterious work in Tamil on Occultism is still extant. It is styled *Kural*, and is said to be very enigmatically written, and consequently inexplicable. In Benares too lives a certain lady, unsuspected and unknown, but to the very few to whom reference has been made in the *Theosophist* in the article “Swami Dayanand's Views about Yoga” (page 47, Vol. II). Further information about these few already mentioned or any other female Adepts we may know of, we do not feel at liberty to give. If our numerous correspondents would carefully go over the back Numbers of this journal, they would find many of their questions already anticipated and answered ; and thus, they would save us an unnecessary travelling over the same line.

D. K. M.