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## THEOSOPHY, A PHILOSOPHY OF WHOLENESS

"If the student bears in mind that there is but One Universal Element, which is infinite, unborn and undying, and that all the rest—as in the world of phenomena—are but so many various differentiated aspects and transformations . . . of that One, from macrocosmical down to microcosmical effects, from super-human down to human and sub-human beings, the totality, in short, of objective existence, then the first and chief difficulty will disappear and Occult Cosmology may be mastered." S.D. I, 104.

Theosophy is in essence a philosophy of Wholeness, of Unity. The fundamental principles of Theosophy, whether they are promulgated through the modern Theosophical Movement or by scholars not affiliated with any Theosophical Society—and whether they are taught in this generation or were enunciated thousands of years ago—these are the only principles which present to modern man certain basic premises which if studied, thought about and taken into one's life, will enable man to discover his real nature, and restore or create anew for him, a sense of belonging to and being part of the Universe in which he finds himself. They afford valid, unimpeachable bases for establishing an attitude toward life which satisfies man's reason and his spiritual intuition.

One of those fundamental principles is the Unity of all existence and of this H.P.B. taught that "This unity is a thing altogether different from the common notion of unity—as when we say that a nation or an army is united; or that this planet is united to that by lines of magnetic force or the like. The teaching is not that. It is the Existence of One Thing, not a collection of things linked together. Fundamentally there is One Being. The Being has two aspects, positive and negative. The positive is Spirit, or Consciousness. The negative is Substance, the subject of Consciousness. This Being is the Absolute in its primary manifestation. Being absolute there is nothing outside it. It is All-Being. It is indivisible, else it would not be absolute. If a portion could be separated, that remaining would not be absolute, because there would at once arise the question of Comparison between it and the separated part. Comparison is incompatible with any idea of absoluteness. Therefore it is clear that this fundamental One Existence, or Absolute Being must be the Reality in every form there is." *Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy.*

The average modern man does not have an awareness of this Unity of all life. His religions do not teach it and his religious leaders cannot answer the questions which

arise within the man who senses the inadequacy of creeds and rituals nor help him to penetrate beyond the orthodox presentation of beliefs to the inner and vital significance which lies behind them. Admittedly Church membership is increasing rapidly today—the Churches are becoming more and more the social centres of their communities—but along with this increased membership, there is also an increase in the number of persons who have failed to find their answers in any orthodox religion, and who have either become indifferent to all religions, or who, being stirred beyond negative indifference, have, to a lesser or greater degree, become seekers after Truth.

They ask for the 'life more abundant' spoken of by Jesus—not a life more abundant in material things for we have more than enough of these, but a life more abundant to supply the inner needs of man, vaster fields for his imagination, sterner problems for his will and courage to face and conquer, more spacious realms in which his spiritual aspirations may soar and find fulfillment. These are not the concern of individuals in the modern world only—every age has had its nucleus of truth seekers, philosophers, mystics, sages and seers, who sought 'life more abundant', who refused to conform to the marshalled pressures of the ordinary in their age and set out to find their own answers to their questions about life, the real nature of the universe and of man's relationship to the cosmos. They too were concerned in a doctrine of Wholeness and some found the goal they were seeking by following inner paths which lead them to direct realization of their own essential divinity, 'the Reality in every form there is'.

Alfred North Whitehead, a philosopher of modern times, wrote, "Philosophy is the endeavour to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted." 'Every element of our experience', not only those things which we

can touch and see or which are explicable in terms of the reasoning mind, but all things which enter into the consciousness of man—love for individuals and the more inclusive love of mankind as a whole, the aesthetic response to the beautiful, fragmentary glimpses of an as yet unrealized richness of the inner life, sudden perceptions of relationships between dissimilar things, the compelling reality of much that the world of the ordinary calls 'irrational', moments of vision such as that experienced by Yeates when a touch of the higher consciousness came to him and he wrote,

"While on the shop and street I gazed  
My body of a sudden blazed;

And twenty minutes, more or less

It seemed, so great my happiness,

That I was blessed, and could bless."

There is a tendency among some scientific thinkers to reject everything which might be characterized as 'mystical'. If an idea or an event does not fall within the established methods of scientific investigation, it is likely to be rejected forthwith, for, to quote Whitehead again, there is today an "absurd trust in the adequacy of our knowledge. The self-confidence of the learned people is the comic tragedy of civilization." This attitude has acted to deprive man of spiritual independence and drive, but nevertheless, for many of our generation, the scientific method has become almost a religion, a religion with its own orthodoxies which in its own way, hampers explorations into the deeper fields of man's nature just as rigidly as does the orthodoxy of churches. Whitehead was, of course, one of the "learned people" of the modern age, thoroughly familiar with the philosophical systems and with modern science, but there was enough of the mystic in him to realize that attaining the unexplored heights of man's being was still the great challenge and that reason alone could not be the guide on the upward journey. The mind, despite its many marvellous powers, has definite limitations: it "is not self luminous", as Patanjali pointed out ages ago; it shines by

the reflected light from higher and superior aspects of man's consciousness which alone can lead the aspirant to the realms beyond reason and logic. Should the consciousness become caught in the mesh of mind, refusing to acknowledge its restricting limits, the mind can become the barrier to reality, "the great slayer of the Real."

Neither orthodox religion or science offers guidance to the man who is seeking his inner self. Science says that this is outside its field of investigation, although some individual scientists have mystical inclinations; orthodox religion does not have the knowledge and cannot conceive of that which has been wholly missed from its system of thought and beliefs.

Only within some theosophical school of thought, ancient or modern, can there be found that "coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas" through which a man may build a philosophy of life satisfying to both his reason and his spiritual perceptions. Theosophy, as presented by the modern Movement, has three fundamental postulates. These are not "revelations" nor the dogmatic assertions of a religious leader. They are presented as the simple, initial premises, or hypotheses upon which the imposing structure of theosophical ideas is based—simple, but within their simplicity, containing the seeds of a host of implications.

The first of these concerns the One Principle which underlies all things; (1) "An omnipresent, eternal, boundless and immutable Principle, on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and can only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude; it is beyond the range and reach of thought, unthinkable and unspeakable."

There at the beginning, Oneness is postulated and this is necessary in any system of thought which aims at coherence. In the more poetic language of the Stanzas of Dzyan it is described thus: "Alone, the One Form of Existence stretched bound-

less, infinite, causeless, in dreamless sleep; and Life pulsed unconscious in Universal Space." In the Vedanta philosophy of ancient India, the same concept is presented in these words, "That which exists is One; sages call it by various names."

Out of, or through, or by means of that Oneness, the whole of the manifested universe with all its multitudinous forms and its teeming hosts of life centres, came into being. How and by what processes that One became the Many, we can only venture speculations. The Vedanta says that the manifested universe is "The One, changed", but its underlying Oneness has not been lost in the process, and this "fundamental One Existence must be the Reality in every form there is."

The second postulate is this "The Eternity of the Universe as a boundless plane; periodically the playground of numberless Universe incessantly manifesting and disappearing." This concept introduces the idea of the ever-going-oneness of Life. This planet may pass through the stages of birth, growth, decrepitude and death—it may become a corpse floating lifeless in space; the solar universe may pass away, but the One Life, the immutable, eternal Life ever brings into being new forms for its manifestation.

The third postulate directly concerns man and his pathway through this living universe; "The fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Oversoul . . . and the obligatory pilgrimage for every soul, through the cycle of Incarnation, or Necessity, in accordance with cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term." And then there is added, "The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric Philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations."

Such are the three fundamental Postulates, all of equal importance, each necessary to the complete scheme. Perhaps the first one concerning Unity or Wholeness is

the more difficult to comprehend. As an intellectual concept it can be grasped readily enough, but to take it inside and allow its potency to work through the fibres of our being, to accept it totally, demands a profound psychological change. The idea of "the Existence of One Thing, not a collection of things linked together" means the laying aside of our sacred individualism, our separateness—and for ages the world has fostered the ideal of a strong personality, ever ready to defend its separateness from others and to resent any intrusion upon its domain.

Perhaps for most of us Wholeness will remain largely an intellectual concept, but with tenuous roots slowly working downward into the depths of our being. We may be able to say of all others without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour, "They, too, are sparks of the Divine, they are part of the Reality that is", although we may not be able to feel, completely and utterly, "They are myself; I am conscious of no separation between them and me.": this may come naturally and easily at a far distant stage of our evolution.

But even an intellectual acceptance of the doctrine of Wholeness alters our whole attitude toward life. We have a kinship with all living things. The ants and worms which we disturb when digging in our gardens,

the night-flying moths that crowd to our lighted windows, the quiet animals grazing in fields, the many lovely forms of vegetation, all these are centres of Life. As we gaze at the crowded heavens at night, an awareness that all those points of light, worlds, planets, stars are also life-centres in the one Wholeness of Being, fills us with wonder and awe at the glorious comradeship of Life which we share in common. Thoreau's "Lonely? Why should I be lonely? Does not my planet swim in the Milky Way?" is carried onward in Whitman's "When we become the enfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be fill'd and satisfied then?"

And my Spirit said "No, we but level that lift, to pass and continue beyond."

This doctrine of Wholeness, difficult to grasp in its completeness, but so compelling attractive to our intuition of the unity of all life, is one of the pivotal doctrines of all theosophical systems of thought. It restores to man an awareness of his being an essential, irrefragable part of the universe of Being. He is ever at one with all that is, the powers and glories of the cosmos are reflected within him and he, by virtue of his unbreakable link with life, can if he but will, realize that Wholeness within his own Self. —D.W.B.

## ACTION AND REACTION

BY F. S. TEW

You, as an observer, are on the top-most peak of a high mountain range in possession of a pair of powerful binoculars. Your point of vantage allows you to survey both sides of the range, to the East and to the West.

Looking to the East you behold a vast sunny plateau—luxuriant, bright, rich, grand and peaceful. The cool mountain

streams spread out over the rich land, and as far as the eye can see, your binoculars tell you the land is a veritable paradise. The beauty of the panorama is beyond description—you are enraptured—transported!

Looking to the West your vision is restricted by a dense cloud bank. A heavy mist shrouds the entire expanse. The gray-

ness at your feet deepens into a darkening murkiness as it descends. Now and then through a rift in the fog you discern this bottomless gloom. The mist thickens in layers or bands. These layers are not sharply divided but merge or coalesce at their lines of contact, each acquiring some of the density of its neighbor.

Should a traveller enter the valley below, you would expect him to vanish into total darkness.

On the winding path down, such a traveller would meet many men differing among themselves in consciousness; the completely conscious near the top, diminishing to apparent unconsciousness in the obscure valley. The life he might encounter adapts itself to the different environments. The manifestations of consciousness at the lines of contact also coalesce. But the expressions of consciousness in the valley are not aware of the expressions of consciousness near the top of the range. The mist is too dense. Each band is only aware of its immediate neighbor. Yet the cosmic urge toward complete consciousness causes the life in each environment to struggle upward and intermingle with the layer next above. This blending results in an absorption to a point where the 'lesser' consciousness slowly develops into the 'greater' consciousness—finally emerging out of the mist into a complete self-consciousness. Time and struggle are needed to evolve this awareness.

The men at the bottom of the mountain represent 'selves' or 'egos' living and functioning among those of their kind, using their bodies as vehicles of expression. They could be considered young in Soul-age; at the point of lesser consciousness in development. They may be likened to the bushman of Australia or the aborigine of Africa. Considering them thus, their actions originate as the result of some force 'behind' consciousness. This force causes them to act. The gain or loss of the results of their actions are primarily in relation to physical and material associations. They act by instinct. Mental selection is not used

for their acts are solely to the ends of material or physical satisfaction. In the darkness there is a groping; a floundering by the ego, whose most responsive avenue of growth is the physical body. No reflection is used or choice taken to fulfill a mental repletion.

During this chaos, teeming men below contact the lines above, at the next higher bands or streams of consciousness. In this merging, where the darkness has leavened into a grayness, they meet men vaguely pondering possible mental and spiritual benefits due to certain actions. Here, an understanding or realization intimates that the effects of action are related to the cause. Here, a nascent sense of values has developed.

The struggling brothers from the valley are welcomed by those at higher levels. Due to past experience and advancement (out of the valley), those at higher levels assume an inborn competency for advising certain courses of action, and often obstinately regard their judgment infallible. Advice is offered to those they consider less advanced. Are they affected by the results of this advice? If the men from the valley return with sorrowful tales at having followed such advice, then those at the higher levels recall results brought to themselves, in the past, by having followed the advice of those in the next band above them. Little do they understand at this primal stage of consciousness, the meaning of the lessons and admonitions which have seeped down from the top of the range. Little do they know that this very seepage is leavening all the different streams of consciousness.

Suddenly, during this uncertainty, a rift in the mist lets the sun through, showing a Path up the mountain. Struggling up this path, with the aid of those at higher altitudes, men become conscious of the Law of Action and Reaction. They learn this law is no law in the sense that it is ordained by supposed deity. They realize this law is created in their own psychological pro-

cesses, in describing to themselves how Nature acts. And as they postulate levitation from a knowledge of gravitation, the opposites combine to form the one, and all Natural Law is conceived from this criterion.

As they peer down the mountain through the mist, (even though they have not reached the top) they see the struggle below—and remember. They recall their habitual thought tendencies—expressed in deeds—affecting their own lives, and how by adjustment they realized Karma as a necessity for growth, not as a retribution for evil living, but because effects of certain actions which they originated reflected back on themselves. Thus so-called 'good' actions are reflected as readily as so-called 'bad' actions. From this contemplation was born a sense of values in life, and the measuring stick they used lengthened to include the entire mountain side.

The limitations of those in the valley—forging upward—are seen in a different perspective, eliminating all dogmatism. A tolerance develops. Seeing all the seeming imperfections around them—the idiot, the crippled, the hungry, the underprivileged; and per contra, the genius, they realized that these are not the caprices of some supreme being (anthropomorphised by man's imagination) but the natural reactions of evolving Life. If doubt arose as to "why" this was so, they immediately squared the effects in their own existence with the evolutionary climb they saw below and around them, and thus clarified the mystery. Nor, at this stage of growth did they condemn mankind to a fatalistic doctrine, for they had reached a point in the climb where freedom of choice and selection had been instituted into their own efforts. They had learned that certain actions brought certain results, and that they were *personally* responsible for their thoughts and actions. And, as these actions combined with the actions of others, they realized they were linked, not only with humanity, but with all life; striving in its evolutionary develop-

ment. Their conception of Universal Order crystallized itself into ONE unified expression of Life. And with this as an hypothesis they looked eagerly toward the top of the range where they expected their struggle to end.

As they neared the summit where the light could be seen through the haze, they reflected on their evolutionary climb, both morally and intellectually. They remembered when they were 'amoral', 'immoral', 'moral'—they recalled when they were 'natural', 'ignorant', 'intelligent', and 'philosophical'. Knowledge was acquired by the experience of incarnation. Such experience matured to certainty as follows: Primarily, awareness; Secondly, power of choice (as a result of the sensing activity); Thirdly, understanding (as a combination of the first two); and Fourthly, wisdom. They discerned a justice expressing itself in Life. They recognized that at every point in the climb they were tied to their past actions, but likewise makers of the future. Their fate (so-called) symbolized a scale which was constantly being kept in balance.

Knowledge of the Karmic Law constitutes a thorough understanding of Good and Bad, Moral Accountability, Ethics, and Deportment. It stands, like Truth, behind these conditions and explains them; encompassing the entire Universe in its scope. So men individually and forming nations, could they but comprehend this, would not contrive to disrupt the balance, for they would know that hatred, greed, envy, and lack of understanding must rebound to themselves. This obligation to Life constantly binds and holds others as well as themselves to a much greater degree than any man-made rules could dictate.

Thus as they reach the top of the range and glimpse the paradise presented by the plateau, they see a reason for life behind them as they climbed, and before them as they gaze.

\* \* \* \*

You put your binoculars away and with them the superstitions and traditional rub-

bish of irrational orthodoxy. For out of the mist has emerged a rational ethics and morality, freed from pious sentimentality, showing how to wisely adjust to Life.

“Whatsoever ye sow, that shall ye also

reap”, comes to mind—not twisted by mental slavery or childish theological dogma, but straightened by the intellect of progressing men.

## THE EXTRAORDINARY LAMA INCARNATIONS IN TIBET

BY WILLEM B. ROSS

Tibet, more than any other country in the world, has always been associated in the West with *Mystery*. Many are the reports by various reputable travelers of unusual events witnessed by them in that strange land, where almost everything is unique, matters physical as well as spiritual, social as well as artistical. Its language, its literature, its religious organizations, and its government, are all greatly influenced, if not molded, by that, which makes of Tibet a Land of Mystery. I am not referring to the wonderworkers (sngags-pa) or to the yogis (rnal-hbyor-pa) of Tibet, because one finds such men in India and in other places on the globe as well. Nor am I referring to the particular type of Mahayana Buddhism, called by outsiders “Lamaism,” which is, in reality, not a single form of Buddhism, but rather a collection of different Mahayana schools more or less alloyed with Hinduism and aboriginal Shamanism (Bon). This Lamaism, *per se*, cannot be responsible for the the *Mystery* that hovers over Tibet, because it is rather its effect, and is, in a way, sustained by that *Mystery*.

A Bodhisattva can be defined as a person who strives consciously to become a Buddha. The beginning of such a striving is a decision and that decision, when put into words, is the Bodhisattva Vow. This vow has many forms and the following is taken from a Volume of Specimen Articles from the Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, p. 45:

1. There are innumerable sentient beings: I vow to save them;
2. There are inexhaustible passionate delusions: I vow to destroy them;
3. There are immeasurable holy doctrines: I vow to study them;
4. There is the unsurpassed Truth of the Buddha: I vow to attain it.

The task is enormous and the number of lives needed to accomplish it is very great, indeed. Ten are the stages of the Bodhisattva Path and with each stage there corresponds an advancement in learning, wisdom, and spiritual powers.

It is the continued presence of a number of advanced Bodhisattvas in Tibet that is at the root of the *Mystery*, while the *Mystery* itself is the *uninterrupted succession of their rebirths*.

Ordinary people are always reminded that once dead their possessions are of no avail to them, since they are powerless to take their riches with them to the next world. The object of this reminding is, of course, to point out the evanescent value of physical possessions in contrast with that of spiritual assets, which do accompany the Egos to the heavenly world. As a consequence of this inability to enjoy one's material possession in the next world, a testament is made and one or more heirs are appointed to take over the ownership of one's goods. Imagine, however, a rich man dying and declaring in his testament that he is not going to waste his time in heaven, but that he has decided to reincarnate in

a baby to be born at a given place and family, within a year or so, and that he appoints that baby as his heir! This would indeed be an extraordinary event in our Western World, and yet something similar has again and again occurred in Tibet and in a few other countries in Asia, where Lamaism is firmly established.

Recent events in Tibet have focussed the World's attention on two Tibetan personages, best known as the Dalai Lama and the Tashi Lama respectively, although the latter is almost equally well known as the Panchen Lama, which is the preferred designation, since the title "Tashi Lama" (bKra-sis bLama) signifies a lama who officiates at marriage ceremonies in Sikkim (SCD-70). These two Grand Lamas occupy a position more unique than that of the Pope or of any other spiritual or worldly ruler on Earth. For the purpose of this paper it will suffice to describe briefly the history of the origin of the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. Dates will be given although their absolute exactness cannot be vouched for.

### *The Grand Lamas of Tibet*

Buddhism in Tibet underwent many changes in the course of the centuries, since its first introduction into that country. Probably the two most important changes were due to Atisha and Tsong-kha-pa respectively.

Atisha (Atisa, Tib. Jo-bo-rje, 982-1055) and his favorite disciple Drom-ton (hBrom-ton, 1004-1064) inaugurated in the middle of the 11th century the reformed school Kadam-pa (bKa-gdams-pa). Three and one half centuries later religion had again become corrupt and now it was the famous Tsong-kha-pa who purified Buddhism in Tibet and who inaugurated the Ge-lug-pa (dGe-lugs-pa) school, first known as the New Kadam-pa (bKa-gdams-pa-gsar-ma) school. This occurred at the beginning of the 15th century.

At the age of 50, Tsong-kha-pa (1357-1419) founded the monastery of Ganden (dGa-ldan) and in 1414 he started build-

ing the monastery of Dre-pung (hBras-spungs). He had several famous disciples, of which the three best known were:

1. Ge-dun Trup-pa (dGe-hdun-grubs-pa), 1391-1475, who was a "nephew" of Tsong-kha-pa and succeeded him as Abbot of Dre-pung.

2. Khai-dub-je (mKhas-grub-rje), 1385-1438, the first Panchen Lama.

3. Gyal-tshab rim-po-che (rGyal-tshab), 1364-1432, who succeeded Tsong-kha-pa as first Abbot of Ganden. When he retired in 1431 his place was taken by Khai-dub-je.

E. Schlagintweit, in *Buddhism in Tibet*, p. 153, quoting from "Arbeiten der russ. Mission in Peking" Vol. I, p. 316 reports that:

. . . There is a story relating that Tsong-khapa himself had ordered his two disciples to take upon themselves a mortal form in an uninterrupted series of rebirths, and to watch over the propagation of the Buddhist faith and the maintenance of its purity . . .

Professor Gunther Schulemann makes a similar statement in his *Geschichte der Dalai-Lamas*, p. 182.

Sir Charles Bell in *The Religion of Tibet* writes:

. . . the present system, by which each Grand Lama is reborn in order to take up his life's work again, did not come into force at Ge-dun Trup-pa's death, nor for several years afterwards. But eventually such a successor was recognized in the person of Ge-dun Gya-tso, 'Ocean of Yearning for Righteousness'.

The biography of So-nam Gya-tso, the third of the series, dealing with events some seventy years later, about the year 1542, treats this system as firmly established, with Ge-dun Trup-pa as its origin . . . (p. 109)

. . . In it we are told:

Ge-dun Gya-tso, the omniscient, was aged, and wished to serve as a young monk. It was prophesied that his rebirth would take place from three to



five years after his death. He, therefore, entered the womb of Pal Dzombu-ti the mother. His father's name was De-wa Trak-pa-Nam-gyal. His body showed all the signs of greatness; he was found to possess all the good qualities; and he identified his possessions in his former life. People from all sides flocked to visit him. They were satisfied with his acts and with his speech. He was, accordingly, recognized as the incarnation of Drom-ton, the source of religion. (p. 110)

Sir Charles Bell continues:

A Living Buddha, thus returning to earth, proves his identity by recognizing his rosary, bell, and other religious implements, as well as servants, ponies, etc., that were with him in his previous existence. He is expected to do it, indeed, as a boy of two or three years old, and the belief is universal that he does so.

So-nam showed the usual superhuman proficiency in education, and displayed such miracles as convinced all that Drom-ton, Atisha's chief disciple, was once again with them in the flesh. . . . (ibid.)

From the above it will be seen that the regular uninterrupted Dalai Lama incarnations started with Ge-dun Trup-pa, although the series had been traced back somehow to Drom-ton. Schulemann tells us that the Ming-Annals, in China, report for the first time, around 1460, the appearance of Huo-Fo, i.e., "Living Buddhas," in Tibet. (Op. cit. 187). At that time the first Panchen Lama had already reincarnated in So-nam Chog-lang (bSod-nams Phyogs-glang, 1438-1505), while Ge-dun Trup-pa, the first Dalai Lama was still alive. It was the latter who built the Tashi-lhun-po (bKra-sis-lhun-po) monastery, near Shi-ga-tse, between 1447 and 1453, in honor of his teacher S'esrab-seng-ge (Sch. 186).

The title of "Dalai" Lama was first given to the third, So-nam Gya-tso, by the Mongol Chieftan, Altan Khagan (Sch. 211;

B-RT-115) and posthumously conferred to the 1st and 2nd of the series. The present Dalai Lama, who lives now in India, because of the invasion of his country by Red China, is the 14th of the series.

The finding of a new incarnation is not an easy matter. Years may pass, oracles are consulted, the Panchen Lama or other high incarnation may be called upon to give advice, and parties are sent out to search for the specific incarnation. Sometimes more than one candidate seems to fulfill the requirements. At one occasion the state Oracle at Ne-chung:

. . . pointed out that there are often three rebirths of a high lama, one of his body, one of his speech, and one of his mind. The first was the one required . . . (B-PDL-40)

The belief in the West, that the successor is born on the day the Incarnation dies, is not true:

. . . in several cases the Dalai Lama was not reborn till eighteen months or more after death. (B-PDL-39)

In all cases the new Incarnation must pass a series of difficult tests to prove that he is the true successor. The presence of bodily marks are in some cases also required. Although there is generally a very great interest to find the successor of a deceased Living Buddha, the interest *not to make a mistake* is equally great, since the future of the country and the religion, or of a monastery, in the case of lesser Incarnations, is at stake. The Roman Catholic French missionary, M. Huc had certainly no (Buddhist) axe to grind when describing these tests. Speaking for himself and his companion missionary, M. Gabet, he writes:

. . . Yet we believe that often all this proceeds on both sides with honesty and good faith. From the information we obtained from persons worthy of the greatest credit, it appears certain that all that is said of the Chabérons (Mongolian for a certain class of Incarnations —WBR) must not be ranged amongst

illusion and deception. A purely human philosophy will, undoubtedly, reject such things, or put them, without hesitating, down to the account of Lama imposture. We Catholic missionaries believe that the great liar (Satan—WBR) who once deceived our first parents in the earthly Paradise still pursues his system of falsehood in the world . . . (*Travels in Tartary, Thibet, and China*, Vol. I-176)

In this respect it is also revealing to read what the Jesuit missionary, Ippolito Desideri, had to say about the incarnations of the Dalai Lamas, which he declared must be the work of the Devil. (*An Account of Tibet*, Bk. 3, ch. II pp. 204-205)

#### *The Body of Evidence*

It would be easy to accumulate a large body of evidence in favour of the reality of these extraordinary incarnations. There is no room in this paper to present all the evidence now at my own disposal, but it will suffice to point out my reasons for two important conclusions:

A. *Wilful deception* of the people by the Lamas must be ruled out for the following reasons:

1. There is no uniform design in the finding of the Incarnation.

2. Often those who search for the infant go to very great trouble and inconvenience.

3. Incarnations often occur outside of Tibet, on unfriendly soil, e.g., that of the present Dalai Lama, who was born on territory controlled by the Chinese. The Governor Ma Pufang demanded 100,000 Chinese dollars which the party paid immediately. Thereupon Ma Pufang demanded a further 330,000 dollars which was more than Kyi-tsang, who was in charge of the search party, had at his disposal. A group of rich Mahomedan merchants finally advanced part of this money and also undertook to collect at Lhasa the balance (cf. H-248, B-PDL-398).

4. Sometimes it takes many years to discover the incarnation. At an inn near Ansi,

Mad. David-Neel found there upon her arrival an excited party of Mongolians who had been on their way to Lhasa, to beg advice from the Dalai Lama as to the best way of discovering the *tulku* head of their monastery, whose seat had been unoccupied for more than twenty years. They had just met with the object of their search, Migyur, a native of the far distant Ngari province, in South-western Tibet. It was Migyur who recognized the Lama in charge of the party, and who reminded him of minute details of a pilgrimage made together in his previous life and thereby easily proved his identity with the former *Tulku* (sPrul-sku, Skt. Nirmanakaya, an incarnation in this case—the Mongolian equivalent is Khubilgan). (cf. DN-MMT-128/130)

5. Some Incarnations are never found. . . This is a cause of deep sorrow to the devotees of the *tulku* and still more to the monks of his monastery, which, lacking its worshipful head, does not attract the same number of pious benefactors . . . (ibid. 124)

6. Certain people in power may not be too happy at the discovery of an incarnation, and would not tolerate any fraud. Mad. David-Neel gives an instance of a steward of the estate of a deceased Lama Tulka, who was not making any efforts to find his master's incarnation, but was found out by the latter, when he used imprudently in an inn his master's snuff-box (ibid. 126/8).

7. It is inconceivable that a systematic fraud can be perpetrated in three independent nations (Tibet, Mongolia and China) over a period of many centuries without a single exposure.

B. *Wholesale Self-deception* of the priesthood must be ruled out for the following reasons:

1. Buddhist monks receive a thorough training in logic and in the science of debate, and as Buddha had warned against blind acceptance of any doctrine, even

(Continued on page 85)

## NOTES AND COMMENTS BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY

After a very happy five weeks vacation in the States my return was faced with the Editor's request to meet the deadline with my Notes and Comments. This I find somewhat difficult to comply with, for after weeks of kaleidoscopic happenings, my thoughts are so scattered and diversified that it is a problem as just where to begin and what to write about. Anyway for the present purpose I must perforce give a sketchy outline of the trip and then concentrate on the Olcott Convention which I primarily started out to attend.

I left Chicago by jet plane and arrived in Los Angeles where, under the wing of Boris de Zirkoff, I visited places of theosophical interest and met many personages of Point Loma, the U.L.T., and other groups. I then went to Santa Barbara as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pearson, and with them motored over the mountains to Ojai, and visited Krotona and the Grove where Krishmurti lives, but unfortunately he was away indisposed. The Santa Barbara Lodge arranged a special dinner in my honour and afterwards I addressed a get-together of the members. At the close the president asked me to convey the good wishes of the Lodge to the Canadian Section and their admiration for what our Section had done for Theosophy. Several of the members knew the Toronto Lodge and there was one who had been demitted from our Canyon Lodge; all had very nice things to say about it, a very friendly and appreciative group.

From that beautiful place I went to Santa Cruz to stay with friends of long standing, and visited many places of much interest especially Carmel, which I think is one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen. After a week's stay I went to Belmont, a suburb of San Francisco, where I was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Pierce Spinks. To enumerate the trips and sights I saw from the fabulous city would take

up too much space but I must note the week-end we spent under canvas in the Yosemite State Park with its towering mountains and the famous Redwoods.

And now for the purpose of these Notes I will concentrate on the Olcott Convention. During my term of office I have attended quite a few of these affairs but from every angle this was the most successful. My reception at the opening was very gratifying and as usual all seemed very happy at having the Canadian General Secretary with them. To summarize briefly, the inauguration of the new president was most imposing. Mr. Perkin's report on relinquishing his office was astonishing in its complexity of happenings in the U.S. Section during the past year, and Dr. Smith, who was then installed as the new General Secretary, rose to the occasion and made a most impressive inaugural address. Rukmini Devi, the guest speaker was inimitable both in her addresses and lectures; Sri Sankara Memon and others filled out a programme that kept interest keyed up to a high degree. I was very pleased when at the conclusion of the Resolution Committee Report Dr. Smith intimated to me that a long standing bone of contention between the American Section and me had been finally settled by the decision of the Convention that the title "Theosophical Society in America" had been changed to "The Theosophical Society in the United States of America". This was a popular move also as most of the members appreciated my feelings on the subject especially in view of my oft repeated remark "Was not Canada in America?" The many lectures were extremely good especially the Olcott Foundation Lecture, "A God Closer to Home" by Viva J. Emmons which I hope will be printed in *The Canadian Theosophist*, for it applies so much to every one of us. I was really sorry when the convention closed, usually it is heart warming and spiritually uplifting, but this one seemed elevated to the Nth degree. I feel that Dr. Smith was primarily responsible in his

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**CAPSULE COMMENTS**

Theosophical students are apt to overlook the wide selection of titles on Eastern subjects which are available in inexpensive paper-back editions. Three recent volumes of particular interest have been published by Penguin Books in England. They are available everywhere for well under a dollar each.

Christmas Humphreys' *Buddhism* (A228) was published in 1951 but it has reappeared in a revised edition. Like *Buddhist Scriptures* and *Yoga*, it is over two hundred and fifty pages in length, but in addition *Buddhism* has a large number of sepia plates to illustrate the text. Humphreys' approach is an introductory one; he presents the standard life of the Buddha, the basic teachings and a brief history of Buddhist thought. There is a good chapter on Zen. His style is semi-philosophical and his distinctions are clear. *Buddhism* makes for painless reading and its clear outline makes it admirable for a quick review of the subject.

*Buddhist Scriptures* (L88) is for the more knowledgeable. The editor-translator, Edward Conze, presents about sixty selections from the Buddhist canon ranging from one page to a dozen in length. Conze has written a good introduction and short pre-faces for each selection presented. The individual scriptures are well chosen and seem to illustrate the point which Conze intends them to. The range is catholic. The translations are in colloquial English but they have a distinct poetical quality about them.

Ernest Wood's *Yoga* (A448) is the most recent of the three and for the general reader is a good introduction to the subject of Yoga and the various Yoga systems. There are thirteen chapters, a few line illustrations and a generous supply of quotations and cross references.

*Buddhism, Buddhist Scriptures* and *Yoga* come complete with glossaries, indices, in-

handling of the event—he has a magnetic personality and an undoubted fitness for the office he has assumed. My parting words to the assembly seemed to make a marked impression, and at the close Dr. Smith asked me to convey the greetings and best wishes of the Convention to the Canadian Section; this was carried with enthusiasm. These sentiments I now convey to you all and I can assure you that our cousins south of the line hold us in the highest esteem.  
 E.L.T.

troductions and reading lists. The three authors are scholars and noted authorities in their fields. The volumes make excellent and inexpensive gift items, particularly for those who might shy away from a book bearing the Theosophical label. J.R.C.

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### THE RECORDING ANGEL

There is an angel  
    whose spine  
is without wings.  
Instead  
    the leaves of a book  
flutter across his back.  
When summoned  
    he bows and kneels  
with his back to the Host.  
His many pages  
    flutter independently.  
Each describes  
a different way  
    the world may end.  
But never  
even in eternity  
    could a world end  
in so many different ways.  
So each man is forced  
    to sample one.  
Each leaf falls  
singly.  
    Prophets and sibyls  
catch them  
from the hand  
    which pulls them loose.  
But they are many  
incalculable as the leaves  
    of all trees  
and the waves of all seas.

—John Robert Colombo

### THE EXTRAORDINARY INCARNATIONS IN TIBET

(Continued from page 82)

when uttered by Himself, there is much independent thinking even among the monks of the same monastery. A typical monk is an individualist and a non-conformist (which explains their courageous opposition to communism), and their meditations are primarily a self-examination. Such a training does not lead to self-deception, but precisely to the contrary, to a critical and analytical attitude of mind.

2. No amount of self-deception could be maintained for any length of time in the face of facts, and certainly not a self-deception on such a large scale and extended over so many generations and over a good part of a continent.

3. If it were a case of wholesale self-deception, the infants chosen to succeed in the high positions would constitute a random cross-section of the population, and would not at all be fit for the arduous and difficult tasks pertaining to their high office. No amount of training could make out of a common peasant boy a 13th Dalai Lama, and yet the parents of the latter were ordinary peasants and his ancestors had been peasants from generation to generation (B-PDL-43). Also no amount of training could make a saint out of an ordinary boy, and yet the Panchen Lamas are famous for their saintly character, which so much impressed all those who had to deal with them. Bogle was for many months the guest of the sixth Panchen Lama (Pan-chen Blo-bzang dPal-Idan yeses, 1737-1780). Of him he writes:

... His disposition is open, candid, and generous . . . I endeavoured to find out in his character, those defects which are inseparable from humanity, but he is so universally beloved that I had no success, and not a man could find in his heart to speak ill of him (Markham-84) . . . About three thousand gylongs (ordained monks—WBR) . . . were ranked

next the palace. As the Lama passed they bent half forwards, and followed him with their eyes. But there was a look of veneration mixed with joy in their countenances which pleased me beyond anything. . . One catches affection by sympathy, and I could not help, in some measure, feeling the same emotions with the Lama's votaries (Markham-95).

Of the ninth Panchen Lama (Pan-chen sGe-legs rNam-rgyal, 1883-1937) there is an enthusiastic description from the pen of Sven Hedin (Transhimalaja, I-292).

### *Metaphysical Aspects*

In Buddhist Philosophy causality reigns supreme and, therefore, the most extraordinary events must fit into the existing scheme of things and must obey the Laws of Nature, known and unknown. It is, therefore, legitimate to ask for an explanation of these extraordinary incarnations. It stands to reason that such an explanation involves that of rebirth of common people. The latter is a controversial subject and as it transcends the observational powers of the physical senses, a training in metaphysics is required for dealing with it successfully. The Buddhist literature on the nature and process of rebirth, which is at my disposal, is very meager and unsatisfactory. The Bardo Thodol (Bar-do Thos-grol) translated in "*The Tibetan Book of the Dead*" by W. Y. Evans-Wentz, is quite misleading and useless for our purpose. The Upanishads and the texts pertaining to the Hindu Schools of Philosophy are more revealing, but even these need interpretation. This requires a careful and very lengthy study of many texts and commentaries and as a prerequisite a thorough understanding of the psychic, mental, and spiritual nature of a human being.

Here I must limit myself to state only a few salient points, the essence of both Buddhist and Hindu mystical experience, reinforced by that of other peoples:

1. Death means merely the separation of

an indwelling entity, consisting of a subtle kind of matter, from its vehicle, the gross body.

2. This subtle entity is a mind-body (*manas, citta*), the Ego, which passes gradually into a spiritual condition, which could be called "heaven" (*svarga* of the Hindus, *sukhavati* of the Buddhists).

3. Even in this "heaven" there is a continual change, a process of spiritualization consisting of a transition from the concrete (*rupa*) to the abstract (*arupa*), during which there is a gradual exhaustion of the spiritual impulses accumulated while living in the body. This lasts a very long time, many centuries at the shortest, and up to *kalpas* in special cases, because the subtle energies, associated with the *rupa* and *arupa* states dissipate very, very slowly.

4. Once these energies are fully spent, the residual karma, through the latent mental impressions (*vasana*), draws the Ego back to life on earth. It acquires a physical body for gathering new experiences, for obtaining a deeper understanding of Life, and for settling some of the old karmic accounts.

Although the above is a very brief and incomplete description of the normal course between two incarnations of a human being, it serves to draw attention to:

a. The *long interval* which, as a rule, there is between two embodiments of a particular Ego, and

b. The *complete transformation* occurring during the interval, as a result of which the concrete memories of the previous life are all changed into their abstract equivalents, so that

c. The *memories of a previous life* are inaccessible to the new personality, resulting in a complete oblivion of all events preceding the rebirth.

This explains why ordinary human beings do not and cannot remember concrete events of their former lives, and why Bodhisattvas, who deliberately sacrifice the period of heavenly bliss in order to continue their work on earth for the good of

all beings, do not suffer this complete oblivion.

Only those trained to move about and act consciously in their subtle body can exercise the power to forego the enjoyment of sukhavati and to choose the place for an almost immediate rebirth. In Tibet there are a number of such personages and there is hardly a traveler in that country who has not met one of them. Of course, these *Tulkus* are not necessarily of equal learning, wisdom, or holiness, and one must not forget that a continuous association with their physical body often hinders if not prevents the exercise of extraordinary powers by their inner Egos.

The fact of the occurrence of Extraordinary Incarnations is of great importance to the West, since the circumstances associated with their birth constitute an eloquent proof of the reality of the doctrine of reincarnation.

#### Appendix

A. Keys to Books referred to in the text:

SCD—Tibetan-English Dictionary, by Sarat Chandra Das, Calcutta, 1902.

Sch—Geschichte der Dalai-Lamas, by Gunther Schulemann, Leipzig, 1958.

B-RT—The Religion of Tibet, by Sir Charles Bell, Oxford, 1931.

B-PDL—Portrait of the Dalai Lama, by Sir Charles Bell, London, 1946.

H—Sieben Jahre in Tibet, by Heinrich Harrer, Vienna, 1952.

DN-MMT—Magic and Mystery in Tibet, by Alexandra David-Neel, New York, 1932.

Markham—Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet and of the Journey of Thomas Manning to Lhasa, by Clements R. Markham, London, 1879.

B. Other Books referred to in the text:

An Account of Tibet—The Travels of Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia, S.J. 1712-1727, Edited by Filippo de Filippi, London, 1937.

Travels in Tartary, Thibet, and China, during the years 1844-5-6 by M. Huc, 2 Volumes, London, 2nd edition, no date.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead, or The After-Death Experiences on the *Bardo* plane, according to Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering, by W. Y. Evans-Wentz, London, 1936.

Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, Edited by G. P. Malalasekera—Volume of Speciment Articles, Ceylon, 1957.

Buddhism in Tibet, by Emil Schlagintweit, Leipzig & London, 1863.

Transhimalaja, Entdeckungen and Abenteuer in Tibet, 2 Volumes, by Sven Hedin, Leipzig, 1913.

## TEACHERS

BY RICHARD HEINEMANN

A saying familiar to all of us is: "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear".

This has a literal meaning, but its literal sense is only a fragment that conceals a deeper truth than it discloses. Indeed its external meaning, like those of many other occult statements, can be in itself a trap for the unwary.

How many students of occultism are quite sure that they are ready, at least for

the beginning of their inner development? They ponder the saying that the teacher will appear, and wonder why he is taking so long in coming.

Let us ask such people: Are you quite sure your teacher has not appeared already? Are you sure you can recognize him? By what sign will you know him? And what lesson do you suppose he will come to offer you?

Let us pause for a moment to emphasize

the word "offer". When we are ready to learn something, the lesson is offered. We may or may not accept it, and more commonly than not we must pay the price for the conditions under which the lesson is offered, regardless of whether we make any good use of it. The greatest extravagance in the life of any person is the waste of opportunities to learn and develop.

However, let us start from the point that we are expecting a teacher who will lead us along some pathway of inner development. We are waiting, perhaps a bit impatiently, for the dramatic appearance of some glamorous being who will announce himself as the master we have been expecting. And while we wait and anticipate the appearance of this exotic being, we may very easily fail to notice or recognize the teacher who has been sent to us.

Our teachers often come in strange guises. It is easier to recognize them if instead of looking for teachers, we look for lessons. A more general and much less misleading statement of the matter we are considering is: "When the student is ready, the lesson will appear."

When we put the statement in this general form, the personality or identity of the teacher becomes unimportant. It is the lesson that matters. We can learn to think, not in terms of "Send me a teacher!" but terms of "Send me a lesson!" There is a difference of whole stages of inner development between these two requests.

One can long for a teacher when his real wish runs no deeper than the desire to be considered important enough to merit the attention of some exalted personage. There are many of us who could, within limits, appreciate a visit from some glamorous being (preferably one who could appear suddenly in a blaze of light), but who would have no interest in learning the kinds of lessons such a teacher might offer. People of this type often can be recognized by their answers to questions concerning what they are ready to learn from the teacher when he comes. Asking oneself such

questions can be a revealing and profitable experience.

There is a certain sincerity implicit in asking for a lesson, particularly if one does not specify or limit the form in which it is to arrive. When we are ready to learn gentleness by loving those who mistreat us, to learn strength by being patient, to learn wisdom by considering the rights of others (and especially their rights to make their own decisions, even if these be wrong, selfish or short-sighted decisions), we shall make real strides on the path of inner development. But to learn these things, we may not really need a teacher at all. The lessons that come to us through spontaneous insights into the nature of our problems are more truly learned, and more deeply understood, than any lessons that could be pointed out through the intervention of even the most glamorous teacher.

This is not to say that a teacher has no function, or that lessons a pupil cannot learn alone cannot be learned at all. The art of effective teaching is based on a perception of the proper time to let the student work on a problem alone.

From this it follows that if in reality we are making satisfactory progress, that may be in itself a reason for the teacher not to appear. Under such conditions the appearance of a teacher might only distract us, and the more dazzling the personality of the teacher, the more likely this would be the major result. Glamour can be a dangerous trap for the unwary. If we are in this world on serious business, it matters little whether we learn our lessons in a palace or a pig pen.

If the lesson is important rather than the teacher, why should we expect or demand that the teacher sent to us must be flawless or glamorous? Can we learn only from the most advanced and exotic teachers? The ancient mariner learned his lesson from a dead albatross.

In a relationship between two unequal beings, usually the more advanced of the pair learns more from the less advanced



than he is able to teach in return. In a relationship between a boy and a dog, the boy learns more from the dog than the dog from the boy. This revolves around the relative abilities of the boy and the dog with respect to learning. For similar seasons, in an unequal relationship between two people, the one with the greatest capacity for learning is the one who learns most. To him that hath shall be given—especially in the matter of understanding.

It is written in history that Robert Bruce learned enough from a spider to win the freedom of Scotland. What the spider learned from Robert Bruce has not been recorded.

An intelligent and deeply perceptive wife can learn far more from an unimaginative husband than she can teach him, though she be the most skillful of teachers. This of course raises the question: In such a relationship, which one really is the teacher and which is the pupil? The answer is implicit in our earlier recognition of a teacher in the person of a dead albatross.

In this last statement, the word "person" is not misused. It derives from the Greek word signifying a mask. The dead albatross served as a mask through which, in the language of symbolism (which is the basic language of all art), the lessons for which the pupil was ready could come to him. The dead albatross had a personality which interacted with that of the ancient mariner. Are we to suppose that this personality of the dead bird was a lifeless personality? It was the most real and living force in the life of the man who lived with it.

Some students of the occult might see in this an interaction between a pupil who was ready and an external teacher who did not appear in his own person, but used the dead albatross as the agency for his work. We can alternatively explain the personality of the dead bird as a projection of a portion or phase of the personality or psychological life of the ancient mariner himself.

The basic struggles of life are only mirrored in the external world: the realities

reflected in symbolic external battles are the struggles between phases of one personality—between groups of ideas in a single man's mind, or between intellectual judgments and emotions, or between desires and principles, or whatever the nature of the internal division might be. One phase of the man's psychological nature gains control, at least long enough to commit the man to an action, or course of actions, or a way of life. The opposing thoughts and feelings (especially if they be of a higher nature), although temporarily overpowered, identify themselves with any shameful or undesirable results of the action, and form the basis for an interaction within the man's own nature that is reflected outwardly as an interaction between this man and the results or victims of his action. From this viewpoint the interaction of the mariner with the dead albatross was not different in principle from the type of interaction he might have had with a living person who had been injured by his actions. The man's own psychological nature had something to say to him, and was forced to project a portion of itself into an external form (or mask) to deliver the message.

A teacher of any kind can be the agency for conveying only those lessons the pupil is prepared to learn. If the learning is not to be limited to the acquisition of objective information, it implies an interaction between the personality of the pupil and that of the teacher, or of some arrangement of difficulties or conditions that in effect represents an extension of the teacher's personality. This requires and is based on an interaction taking place between phases or parts of the psychological nature of the pupil himself, as a necessary condition for his growth and development.

A teacher may or may not lecture to us. He may or may not provide us with new information (which under some conditions might only distract and confuse us). His primary business in his capacity as a teacher is to provide us with the conditions,

materials and difficulties necessary for the interactions through which we can gain skill or strength, or insights into the meanings of our problems. The selection and arrangement of materials and problems is not only an essential part of the teacher's work, but is also an expression of his personality, involving his own concepts, his distinctions between the important and unimportant, and his judgments as to what the student can comprehend and is ready to learn.

From one point of view, a teacher is any person who has something to teach us. Necessarily, it must be something we are capable of learning, and this requires that we must be prepared for it. If a period of preparation is required, it must take the form of some combined internal and external interaction. Essential for this is an external person, being, object, or set of conditions that can provide the external component of this interaction.

If we are to learn compassion, the one best qualified to teach it to us may not be the glamorous being enwrapped in a halo of light, but the self-seeking sharpster who takes advantage of us, the ruthless and arrogant bumpkin who mistreats us, or the person whose limitations and stupidity seem to waste our time or frustrate our ambitions. With what assurance can we say that these are not the teachers who have been sent to us?

When the pupil is ready, what is he ready for? The primary relationship is between the pupil and the lesson. An interaction is required between the pupil and the materials and relationships that provide the means for learning of the lesson. An external teacher may or may not be required: but if a teacher is required, it is not necessarily the head-master of the school who must come in his own person to teach it to us. If he does come to teach us we can be grateful: but can we not be equally grateful to anyone else who will take the trouble to teach us the same lesson?

If we cannot, it is evidence that we are

more interested in the personality (or personageality) of the teacher than with the lesson to be learned: and if this is true, we scarcely are ready to learn from any teacher, let alone to receive personal instruction from the head-master. Indeed, if we are willing to learn only from some exalted personage, that in itself is a very weighty reason for such a personage to let us alone. By just avoiding us, he is doing us the best service he can render under such circumstances.

In such a case our first task is to learn to value a lesson for its own sake, and to bless its source regardless of whence it comes. When we are not too proud to learn from the least of our companions; when we have mastered the art of being grateful to an "enemy" for the lesson he has beaten into our consciousness with a club, we shall have made at least a beginning in acquiring the qualities of a true student, and this is an end far more to be desired than the mere acquisition of a relationship with a particular teacher.

A true student will always find a way to learn. If one door of opportunity is closed, his very readiness will force open another. Moreover, it is unwise in the extreme for any teacher to refuse such a pupil, for it is likely to be his own opportunities he is wasting, rather than those of the prospective student. The student will find another opening, but the one who refuses him may not be so fortunate. The open door belongs to the ready student; the closed door belongs to the person who has closed it.

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"It is among our commonest experiences that the determination of physical life or death depends upon the will. Some people snatch themselves by the force of determination from the very jaws of death, while others succumb to insignificant maladies. What a man does with his body, he can do with his Psyche." H. P. Blavatsky

# MAN'S GREATER SELF

BY H. T. EDGE, M.A.

Every man, whatever his beliefs or professed beliefs, is compelled to fulfil the laws of his own being, just as much as the animals and plants and even the chemical elements and compounds fulfil the laws of their own being. And the law of a Man's being compels him to speculate and aspire, to search restlessly for knowledge and self-realization.

And surely the greatest of the mysteries upon which he desires knowledge is the question, "What am I?" Nor can any man above the level of a clodhopper avoid speculating on this question at least sometimes.

The personality of a man is a very small thing compared with the vastness of its surroundings; a mere flash on the rolling screen of time, a mere point both in time and space, so that the great majority of personalities are born and die without the world ever knowing of their bare existence and without leaving the faintest memory behind. Yet we feel that we are something more than this; the very power to speculate on the question at all seems to prove that we are greater than our personality.

Every man is a partaker in the universal life, just as much as an animal, a tree, or a stone; and if he is nothing in himself, he is great enough in his family and kinship. The question arises, How is each man related to that universal life? Does he for ever lose all share in it when the time comes for him to execute the natural function of dying? And did he have no share in the universal life before that equally natural, yet mysterious, event called "birth"?

Theosophy answers the intuitions of the heart by declaring that the Soul existed before birth and exists after death. But what is the Soul? It is the real "I". For that which we habitually call "I" is but a phantasmagoria at best, an uncertain, shift-

ing thing, that knows not what it is, whence it came, or whither it goes. It cannot be the real Self; it thirsts after a knowledge which it cannot reach.

It is evident that the self in man is of a dual character; it is compact of ignorance and knowledge. If it were entirely ignorant, man would be like the animals, who do not speculate about their nature and origin; or he would be an idiot. Therefore man has in him the germ of knowledge. But he has not knowledge itself; it is there as a seed, as a possibility.

Man cannot be entirely mortal or entirely immortal. One part of his self must be temporary, belonging to his period of life on earth, but the other part must be superior to this and must survive death and be independent of corporeal existence and its limitations of time and space.

Eastern philosophy speaks of the real Self of man as the "Knower." We all have this Knower in ourselves; we are conscious of something deep within that knows and to which we vainly strive to reach. But we are also painfully conscious that we are restricted to the use of an as yet imperfect mental faculty.

It is a commonplace that man can enlarge his sense of life by sharing in the life of others—not on a thieving principle, of course, but on the usual give-and-take principle of mutual intercourse. And the converse of this is equally familiar; namely, that a man, in proportion as he becomes selfish and self-centered, contracts his sphere of conscious life. It is a fact that in proportion as we thus expand the sphere of our life by moving away from the center of selfishness, so do we begin to share in the universal life of which we are a part. To this extent we have actually achieved immortality, for immortality is not merely

a question of after death—it can have but little to do with what we call “time.”

Such reflections as the above are getting to be more common today, for the race-consciousness is deepening and men are everywhere moving on toward a new level of attainment. But there is great need for an arranging and methodizing of these reflections; men need something that can interpret to them their own intuitions. And this is where Theosophy proves so helpful.

There are everywhere people who are just ready and waiting for Theosophy, but have never heard of it, or else have been put off by meeting with some travesty of Theosophy. It is right that everybody should know of the existence of the original teachings of Theosophy, which H. P. Blavatsky brought to the attention of the world in 1875, and which are still taught and promulgated in the Theosophical Society. It is all the more important in view of the regrettable fact that various futile doctrines are being promulgated under the name of Theosophy, thus misleading inquirers and keeping them from that which would help them.

The teachings of Theosophy are not new, but are as old as man himself. It teaches the Path of Self-Knowledge—the Great Quest that has always engaged the attention of man. But Self-Knowledge does not consist in listening to the lectures or reading the books of some self-appointed teacher or adept, who claims mysterious knowledge and offers to show us how to develop our psychic powers, etc. Neither does it consist in isolated self-contemplation. The book of life has to be studied among living men, and no man can know himself except by seeing himself reflected in the mirror of other men. This is why the Path of Self-Knowledge, as taught by Theosophy, involves a life of active and useful endeavor. To overcome the limitations of personality we must get away from self, and that can only be done by becoming interested in something impersonal.

One of an ancient teachings taught by Theosophy, is that Knowledge comes from unselfishness. This was the teaching of Jesus, as it was also of the other World-Saviors. It was the teaching of Plato and his school, who held that the Soul was a Divine prisoner in the body, and that it possessed innate Knowledge, which was obscured by incarnation. In short, this is a universal teaching—one of the fundamental truths. But Theosophy renders this teaching more serviceable and practical.

The teachings of Jesus, that Knowledge comes from unselfishness, has been overlaid by dogma and stale custom until it has lost its force, and few if any really believe that they will attain Knowledge by practising the teachings of their religion.

The answer to our original question, “What am I?” might run as follows: “Something very great and glorious, beyond your utmost expectations.” But how to realize it? We cannot jump to Self-knowledge at a bound, but we can start on the way, and we shall meet encouragement at every step.

Such a teaching as that ancient one of Reincarnation can do much to remove from men’s minds the obstacles that stand in the way of their realizing their possibilities. For want of this ancient truth, we have the most unsatisfactory ideas as to the nature and destiny of man, and are accustomed to view every problem in the light of a single earthly existence. But what if the mind of man had been accustomed for unnumbered generations to think of itself as an eternal existence, and to regard the present life as only an episode in a great drama? Then the teachings of Theosophy would come far easier than they do to people who have been born and bred in ignorance of the nature and destiny of man; then the facts of life as we find them would not seem to contradict our beliefs.

Theosophy may thus claim to be a reasonable interpretation of the facts of life, and its appeal can rest on the conviction

which it brings to our reason, and not upon dogmatic authority. Man's instinct to act unselfishly is explained by the fact that his real Self is not shut up in his personality; his unselfish acts may be described as acts performed in the interest of his real Self. It is in the feeling of oneness with his fellow men that prompts him to act so. In the same way a man of fine feeling will not wantonly destroy a flower or play the vandal in Nature's domain, because he instinctively feels the unity of the life in which he shares.

The question, to what extent can we develop the sense of oneness and of immortality, is but a question of degree. A selfish man can become more and more selfish until his sphere contracts to an unendurable degree of narrowness; and on the other hand it is possible to enlarge our sphere and increase the scope of our conscious existence by attaching our interests to things impersonal and universal. It is therefore evident that the self can grow large or small within certain recognized limits, and there is a reason for fixing the limits. The idea that man is an imprisoned God becomes easier to understand, for we see how great is the power of self-delusion. The *awakening to knowledge* is a phrase that fitly describes the aspiration which man feels; he knows that he is under delusion, he knows that the delusion cannot last for ever. At death, the "great release," veils will be removed; but it is man's destiny to remove those evils while on earth—in this or a future incarnation. Who shall say how often this has been achieved before?.

We are all destined by our nature to seek satisfaction in personal delights, and to find it not; and thus we are ultimately driven to seek it where alone it can be found, and duty becomes the law of our life.

Man fails to understand the contradictions and frustrations of life because he imagines that it is his personality that is leading the life; whereas it is the Soul, the real

Self, that is leading the life, and its purposes are wiser and more far-reaching than those which the deluded mind entertains. Following desires, we pursue purposes that are not in conformity with the purpose of the Soul; and so we meet frustration. But we should try to understand the purposes of the Soul and to fall in with them. We should say: "Thus have I willed."

The practical summing-up of these somewhat discursive reflections is this: that any man can from this moment face about and take a new attitude towards life, an attitude of greater confidence in himself, greater confidence in the good that is in him. If he has been brought up in the atmosphere of religious or scientific pessimism, he can step out from that atmosphere. He can know that within him lies a power ready to unfold if encouraged, a power that will bring light and the power to be of use. And in thus seeking to render his life more worthy he will find the Theosophical teachings very helpful; and in any case they are only offered on approval.

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## THE THREE TRUTHS

The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them.

*The Idyll of the White Lotus*

# FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

BY R. G. KATSUNOFF

## Transmutation (I)

### One Virtue only: Love

Nietzsche in discussing the problem of vice and virtue urges us to rise above the lower self and transmute our vices into virtues. In fact, he feels that the possession of One Dominant Virtue is the secret of success in the task of transmutation.

We are told that the Alchemists of the Middle Ages worked hard to find out a method whereby they could change common metals into gold. Man's duty in life must be that he become a spiritual Alchemist. We must transmute our low inclinations and vices into virtues and thus "be born from above".

The Poet-Philosopher wishes us to look at life optimistically. The Power which is the origin and the end of existence is all-loving and all-wise. That Power has placed us in this life and has ordered us to "rule over the earth"—which is, to become masters over ourselves. If so, Nietzsche advises us, that we do not get over-worried or despaired, if we hear "the wild dogs in our cellar" become vocal, for out of these we are to prepare for ourselves Forces, which will lift us up to the very gates of Heaven. To reach this goal, however, we must fight and fight hard. The Superman is the all-victorious Fighter, and we are that Superman.

True virtue is born from within, and while it must be an earth-produced grace, we must see to it, that it has wings. Our virtues must not chain us to earthly views, nor should they compel us to submit to the measurements of "the common herd". "Don't speak of them to anyone!" advises Nietzsche . . . Just choose your virtues—choose them because you like them, not because some outside Force demands it. We are to stand on our own feet; we are

to be our own Masters: our own Creators of values we must become. More than that: in the search for these virtues, we should be selfless. We are to cultivate virtues because of our love for them and not because Heaven may be their prize. Thus they bring forth fruit and multiply; thus they become a source of joy. In fact, the writer holds that the way to cross the Bridge of Existence more lightly is by acquiring one paramount virtue—steady and strong; the rest of spiritual graces come of themselves. And how true! Also, the path, which assures victory, is one: the Path of Meditation (prayer) and of good-will (love-in-action).

No philosophy of life or theology is satisfactory unless it deals reasonably with the question of the origin and the purpose of "evil". In Nietzsche's opinion—and quite rightly—the devil is one of God's servants, or as the ancients called him—he is "Deus Inversus".

Nietzsche says:

"My Brother:

"Once you were laden with vices and you called them 'bad'; but now you have only your virtues: they grew out of your vices.

"In the end, all your vices became virtues, and all your devils turned to angels.

"Once there were wild dogs in your cellar, but in the end, they changed to birds and to lovely songsters.

"Out of your poisons you prepared for yourself a balm; you looked well after your Cow—sorrow, and now you enjoy the sweetness of its milk. No evil comes out of you anymore, but that which grows of the struggle between your virtues.

"My Brother,

"If you are lucky, you will have but one virtue — not more: thus you will cross the bridge more lightly."

(Translation by R.G.K.)

The Wanderer and the Climber  
of Mountains (2)

A stranger Wanderer —this climber of mountains. Strange indeed in our days when most of us are chained to the earth — thinking only of comfort and ease. "I am a Wanderer and a Climber of Mountains and I cannot stay put for long" said Zarathustra. Quite so, for holy dissatisfaction makes him eternally restless and drives him on in search of new heights. In the Poem following, Zarathustra stands before his last trial (initiation) after which he is to gain his crown.

Who is the Wanderer? — Nietzsche's eternal Self. It is "the Eternal Jew" in us — the Thinker, who survives life after life, and keeps on till the Day of Graduation: till wisdom and perfection are attained. To the "awakened" wanderer things don't just "happen" any more. There are laws — immutable laws — and he sees them. The fearless Climber says: "Let come what may!" He is not afraid of anything, for he knows — whatever comes, it is to his eternal good. The joys and the sorrows of life assist his climbing, and that is all that matters. The Laws governing the mountaineering are: the Repeated Coming into physical existence and the Reaping of what one sows. Only that "which has been his very own" could come back to him. "It only returns, it just comes back at last in the Process of "living himself over again" . . . Reincarnation and Karma plainly stated.

And the majestic way in which Zarathustra meets his grandest hour! There is no turning away for him — there is no bridge behind his back. He perceives through his darkest hour the crown of life awaiting him, and he presses on.

"And as Zarathustra began to climb the High Mountain, he thought on the way of the many lonesome wanderings he had done from his youth on and how many mountains and tops he had conquered.

"I am a Wanderer and a Climber of mountains, he said to his heart: the plains do not appeal to me and it seems I cannot stay put for long . . .

"Whatever fate may come to me in life —it is a wandering and a climbing of mountains: after all, man lives only himself over again.

"The time has gone, when things just happen to me; and what could ever happen to me now, but it is not mine very own already.

"It only returns, it just comes home at last — my own Self and what of it lingered in the far off land and was broken under various conditions and happenings.

"And one thing more I know: I stand before my very last top and before that which has been preserved for me for the longest time. Ah, now I must climb my hardest road. Ah, now I begin my most lonesome wandering.

"But he, who is like me, he turns not away from such an hour — the hour, which says to him: Now at last you tread your path to greatness. The highest top and the abyssal deep, they are now linked in one.

"You tread your path to greatness. What till now was your latest danger, has become your latest refuge.

"You tread your path to greatness. This must be your greatest courage, namely that there is no way any more behind you."

(Translation by R.G.K.)

"A high development of the intellectual faculties does not imply spiritual and true life. The presence in one of a highly developed human, intellectual soul (the fifth principle, or Manas) is quite compatible with the absence of Buddhi, or the spiritual soul. Unless the former evolves from and develops under the beneficent and vivifying rays of the latter, it will remain forever but a direct progeny of the terrestrial, lower principles, sterile in spiritual perceptions; a magnificent, luxurious sepulchre, full of the dry bones of decaying matter within. Many of our greatest scientists are but animate corpses—they have no spiritual sight because their spirits have left them, or rather, cannot reach them.

H.P.B., *Lucifer*, Oct. 1893.

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