

A Master of Wisdom on Higher Metaphysics



*Contents and key concepts*¹

Selections from The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett.

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¹ Frontispiece by James White, Neo Wave Series 2.

Selections from The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett.

The supreme energy resides in the Buddhi: latent when wedded to Atman alone; active and irresistible when galvanized by the essence of Manas.

And to begin with let him¹ rid himself of the *māyā* that any man living can set up “claims” upon Adepts. He may create irresistible attractions and compel their attention, but they will be spiritual, not mental or intellectual. And this bit of advice applies and is directed to several British theosophists, and it may be well for them to know it. Once separated from the common influences of Society, nothing draws us to any outsider save his evolving spirituality. He may be a Bacon or an Aristotle in knowledge, and still not even make his current felt a feather’s weight by us, if his power is confined to the Manas. The supreme energy resides in the Buddhi; latent — when wedded to *Atman* alone, active and irresistible when galvanized by the *essence* of “Manas” and when none of the dross of the latter commingles with that pure essence to weigh it down by its finite nature. *Manas*, pure and simple, is of a lower degree, and of the earth earthly: and so your greatest men count but as nonentities in the arena where greatness is measured by the standard of spiritual development. When the ancient founders of your philosophical schools came East,² to acquire the lore of our predecessors, they filed no claims, except the single one of a sincere and *unselfish* hunger for the truth. If any now aspire to found new schools of science and philosophy the same plan will win — *if the seekers have in them the elements of success.*³

Healing requires perfect benevolence, untainted even by latent selfishness.

There is no reason why you should *not* “attempt mesmeric cures” by the help, not of your locket but the power of your own will. Without this latter in energetic function, no locket will do much good. The hair in it is in itself but an “accumulator” of the energy of him who grew it, and can no more cure of itself than stored electricity can turn a wheel until liberated and conducted to the objective point. Set your will in motion and you at once draw upon the person upon whose head it (the hair not the will) grew, through the psychic current whichever runs between himself and his severed tress. To heal diseases it is not indispensable, however desirable, that the psychopathist should be absolutely pure; there are many in Europe and elsewhere who are not. If the healing be done under the impulse of perfect benevolence, unmixed with

¹ [Professor Sir William Crookes, OM, FRS, 1832–1919, English chemist and physicist.]

² [*i.e.*, Pythagoras]

³ *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111) p. 336; 3rd Combined ed.

any latent selfishness, the philanthropist sets up a current which runs like a fine thrill through the *sixth* condition of matter, and is felt by him whom you summon to your help, if not at that moment engaged in some work which compels him to be repellent to all extraneous influences. The possession of a lock of any adept's hair is of course a decided advantage, as a better tempered sword is to the soldier in battle; but the measure of its actual help to the psychopathist will be in ratio with the degree of will power he cites in himself, and the degree of psychic purity in his motive. The talisman and his *Buddhi* are in sympathy.¹

The unreformed Western mind cannot grasp the essence of Buddhistic exegesis.

Now that you are at the centre of modern Buddhistic exegesis, in personal relations with some of the clever commentators (from whom the holy Devas deliver us!) I shall draw your attention to a few things which are really as discreditable to the perceptions of even *non*-initiates, as they are misleading to the general public. The more one reads such speculations as those of Messrs. Rhys Davids, Lillie, etc. — the less can one bring oneself to believe that the unregenerate Western mind can ever get at the core of our abstruse doctrines. Yet hopeless as their cases may be, it would appear well worth the trouble of testing the intuitions of your London members — of some of them, at any rate — by half expounding through you one or two mysteries and leaving them to complete the chain themselves. Shall we take Mr. Rhys Davids as our first subject, and show that, indirectly as he has done it yet it is himself who strengthened the absurd ideas of Mr. Lillie, who fancies to have proved belief in a personal God in ancient Buddhism. Mr. Rhys Davids' *Buddhism* is full of the sparkle of our most important esotericism; but always, as it would seem, beyond not only his reach but apparently even his powers of intellectual perception. To avoid "absurd metaphysics" and its *inventions*, he creates unnecessary difficulties and falls headlong into inextricable confusion. He is like the Cape Settlers who lived over diamond mines without suspecting it. I shall only instance the definition of "Avalokiteshvara" on pp. 202 and 203. There, we find the author saying that which to any occultist seems a palpable absurdity:

The name Avalokiteshvara, which means "the Lord who looks down from on high," is a purely metaphysical invention. The curious use of the past particle passive *avalokita* in an active sense is clearly evident from the translations into Tibetan and Chinese.

The twin faces of Avalokiteshvara.

Parabrahman and Jivatman
Passive and Active
Divine Self or Lordliness seen by self
Universal and Individualised 7 th Principle
Unmanifested Father and manifested Son

¹ *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111) pp. 336-37; 3rd Combined ed.

Now saying that it means “the Lord who looks down from on high,” or, as he kindly explains further — “the Spirit of the Buddhas present in the church,” is to completely reverse the sense. It is equivalent to saying “Mr. Sinnett looks down from on high (his *Fragments of Occult Truth*) on the British Theos. Society,” whereas it is the latter that looks up to Mr. Sinnett, or rather to his *Fragments* as the (in their case only *possible*) expression and culmination of the knowledge sought for. This is no idle simile and defines the exact situation. In short, *Avalokita Ishvar* literally interpreted means “the Lord that *is seen*,” “Ishvara” implying moreover, rather the adjective than the noun, *lordly*, self-existent *lordliness*, *not* Lord. It is, when correctly interpreted, in one sense “the *divine Self* perceived or seen by *Self*,” the *Atman* or seventh principle ridded of its *māyāvic* distinction from its Universal Source — which *becomes the object of perception for, and by the individuality centred in* Buddhi, the sixth principle, something that happens only in the highest state of *Samadhi*. This is applying it to the microcosm. In the other sense Avalokiteshvara implies the seventh *Universal Principle*, as the object perceived by the Universal *Buddhi*, “Mind” or Intelligence which is the synthetic aggregation of all the Dhyāni Chohans, as of all other intelligences whether great or small, that ever were, are or will be. Nor is it the “Spirit of Buddhas present in the Church,” but the Omnipresent Universal Spirit in the temple of nature — in one case; and the seventh Principle — the *Atman* in the temple — man — in the other. Mr. Rhys Davids might have at least remembered the (to him) familiar simile made by the Christian Adept, the Kabbalistic Paul: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, *and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*”¹ — and thus avoided to have made a mess of the name. Though as a grammarian he detected the use of the “past participle passive,” yet he shows himself far from an inspired “Panini” in overlooking the true cause and saving his grammar by raising the hue and cry against metaphysics. And yet he quotes Beal’s *Catena* as his authority for the invention when, in truth, this work is perhaps the only one in English that gives an *approximately* correct explanation of the word, at any rate, on page 374. “*Self-manifested*” — How? it is asked. “Speech or *Vāch* was regarded as the Son or the manifestation of the *Eternal Self*, and was adored under the name of Avalokiteshvara, the manifested God.” This shows as clearly as can be that Avalokiteshvara is both the *un-manifested Father* and the manifested *Son*, the latter proceeding from, and identical with, the other; namely, the *Parabrahm* and *Jivātman*, the Universal and the individualized seventh Principle, — the Passive and the Active, the latter the *Word*, Logos, the Verb. Call it by whatever name, only let these unfortunate, deluded Christians know that the real *Christ* of every Christian is the *Vāch*, the “mystical Voice,” while the man *Jeshu* was but a mortal like any of us, an adept more by his inherent purity and ignorance of real Evil than by what he had learned with his initiated Rabbis and the already (at that period) fast degenerating Egyptian Hierophants and priests. A great mistake is also made by Beal who says:

This name [Avalokiteshvara] in Chinese took the form of Kuan-shih-yin, and the Divinity worshipped under that name (generally regarded as a female).²

¹ [1 *Corinthians* iii, 16]

² [See 2nd ed. of Samuel Beal’s *Catena of Buddhist Scriptures from the Chinese*, published by Sri Satguru, Delhi, 1989.]

Kuan-shih-yin — or the universally manifested voice is active — *male*; and must not be confounded with *Kwan-yin*, or *Buddhi* the Spiritual Soul (the sixth Pr.) and the vehicle of its “Lord.” It is *Kwan-yin* that is the female principle or the manifested *passive*, manifesting itself “to every creature in the universe, in order to deliver all men from the consequences of sin” — as rendered by Beal, this once quite correctly (383), while *Kuan-shih-yin*, “the Son identical with his Father” is the *absolute activity*, hence — having no direct relation to objects of sense — is *Passivity*.

The blind and guilty Rhys Davids leads the blind and innocent Lillie¹ into the ditch.

What a common *ruse* it is of your Aristotelians! With the sleuth hound’s persistence they track an idea to the very verge of the “impassable chasm,” and then, brought to bay, leave the metaphysicians to take up the trail if they can, or let it be lost. It is but natural that a Christian theologian, a missionary, should act upon this line, since — as easily perceived even in the little I gave out just now — a too correct rendering of our *Avalokiteshvara* and *Kuan-shih-yin* might have very disastrous effects. It would simply amount to showing Christendom the true and undeniable origin of the “awful and *incomprehensible*” mysteries of its Trinity, Transubstantiation, Immaculate Conception, as also whence their ideas of the Father, Son, *Spiritus* and — Mother. It is less easy to shuffle *al piacere*² the cards of Buddhistic chronology than those of Chrishna and Christ. They *cannot* place — however much they would — the birth of our Lord Sangyas Buddha A.D. as they have contrived to place that of Chrishna. But why should an atheist and a materialist like Mr. Rhys Davids so avoid the correct rendering of our dogmas — even when he happens to understand them, — which does not *happen* every day — is something surpassingly curious! In this instance the blind and guilty Rhys Davids leads the blind and innocent Mr. Lillie into the ditch; where the latter, catching at the proffered straw rejoices in the idea that Buddhism teaches in reality — a personal God!!³

Well may you admire and more should you wonder at the marvellous lucidity of that remarkable seeress, who ignorant of Sanskrit or Pali, and thus shut out from their metaphysical treasures, has yet seen a great light shining from behind the dark hills of exoteric religions. How, think you, did the writers of *The Perfect Way*⁴ come to know that Adonai was the Son and not the Father; or that the third Person of the Christian Trinity is — female? Verily, in that work they lay their hands several times upon the keystone of Occultism. Only does the lady — who persists using without an explanation the misleading term “God” in her writings — know how nearly she comes up to our doctrine when saying:

Having for Father Spirit *which is Life* (the endless Circle or Parabrahm) and for Mother the Great Deep, which is Substance (Prakriti in its undifferentiated

¹ [Arthur Lillie was a soldier in the British Army in India. While there, he became a Buddhist but his books on religion were poorly received by scholars.]

² [As you please]

³ *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111) pp. 337-39; 3rd Combined ed.

⁴ [*The Perfect Way; or, the Finding of Christ*, by Anna Kingsford and Edward Maitland. London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1882]

condition) — Adonai possesses the potency of both and wields the *dual* powers of all things?

We would say *triple*, but in the sense as given this will do. Pythagoras had a reason for never using the finite, useless figure — 2, and for altogether discarding it. The ONE, can when manifesting, become only 3. The unmanifested when a simple duality remains passive and concealed. The dual monad (the 7th and 6th principles) has, in order to manifest itself as a *Logos*, the “Kuan-shih-yin,” to first become a *triad* (7th, 6th, and half of the 5th); then, on the bosom of the “Great Deep,” attracting within itself the *One Circle*, form out of it the perfect Square, thus “squaring the circle” — the greatest of all the mysteries, friend — and inscribing within the latter the WORD (the Ineffable Name) — otherwise the duality could never tarry as such, and would have to be reabsorbed into the ONE. The “Deep” is *Space* — both male and female. “*Purush* (as Brahma) breathes in the Eternity; when ‘he’ *in*-breathes, Prakriti (as manifested Substance) disappears in his bosom; when ‘he’ *out*-breathes she reappears as *Ma-ya*,” says the shloka. The One reality is *Mūlaprakriti* (undifferentiated Substance) — the “Rootless root,” the . . . But we have to stop, lest there should remain but little to tell for your own intuitions.¹

God Geometrises.²

Well may the Geometer of the R.S.³ not know that the apparent absurdity of attempting to square the circle covers a mystery ineffable. It would hardly be found among the foundation stones of Mr. Roden Noel’s speculations upon the “pneumatical body . . . of our Lord,” nor among the *débris* of Mr. Farmer’s *A New Basis of Belief in Immortality*; and to many such metaphysical minds it would be worse than useless to divulge the fact that the Unmanifested Circle — the *Father*, or *Absolute Life* — is non-existent outside the Triangle and Perfect Square, and is only manifested in the *Son*; and that it is when reversing the action and returning to its absolute state of Unity, and the square expands once more into the Circle, that “the *Son* returns to the bosom of the *Father*.” There it remains until called back by his *Mother*, the “Great Deep,” to remanifest as a *triad* — the *Son* partaking at once of the Essence of the *Father* and of that of the *Mother* — the active Substance, *Prakriti* in its differentiated condition. “My *Mother* — (Sophia, the manifested Wisdom) — took me,” says Jesus in a Gnostic treatise; and he asks his disciples to tarry *till he comes*. . . . The true “Word” may only be found by tracing the mystery of the passage inward and outward of the Eternal Life, through the states typified in these three geometric figures.⁴

Only the unshackled Spirit shall see the things of the Spirit without a veil.

The criticism of “A Student of Occultism” (whose wits are sharpened by the mountain air of his home) and the answer of “S.T.K. . . . Chary”⁵ (June *Theosophist*) upon a

¹ *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111) p. 341; 3rd Combined ed.

² [See “Keys to the Mystery Language,” in our Theosophy and Theosophists Series. — ED. PHIL.]

³ [Royal Society]

⁴ *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111) pp. 341-42; 3rd Combined ed.

⁵ [High Chela to one of the Teachers]

part of your annular and circular expositions need not annoy or disturb in any way your philosophic calm. As our Pondicherry *chela* significantly says, neither you nor any other man across the threshold has had or ever will have the “complete theory” of Evolution taught him; or get it unless he guesses it for himself. If anyone can unravel it from such tangled threads as are given him, very well; and a fine proof it would indeed be of his or her spiritual insight. Some — have come *very near it*. But yet there is always with the best of them just enough error, — colouring and misconception; the shadow of *Manas* projecting across the field of *Buddhi* — to prove the eternal law that only the unshackled Spirit shall see the things of the Spirit without a veil. No untaught amateur could ever rival the proficient in this branch of research; yet the world’s real Revelators have been few, and its pseudo-Saviours legion; and fortunate it is if their half-glimpses of the light are not, like Islam, enforced at the sword’s point, or like Christian Theology, amid blazing faggots and in torture chambers. Your *Fragments* contain some — still very few — errors, due solely to your two preceptors of Adyar, one of whom *would not*, and the other *could not* tell you all. The rest could not be called mistakes — rather incomplete explanations. These are due, partly to your own imperfect education in your last theme — I mean the ever-threatening *obscurations* — partly to the poor vehicles of language at our disposal, and in part again, to the reserve imposed upon us by rule. Yet, all things considered, they are few and trivial; while as to those noticed by “A Student, etc.” (the Marcus Aurelius of Shimla) in your No. VII, it will be pleasant for you to know that every one of them, however now seeming to you contradictory, can (and if it should seem necessary *shall*) be easily reconciled with facts. The trouble is that

- (a) you cannot be given the real figures and difference in the Rounds, and
- (b) that you do not open doors enough for explorers.

The bright Luminary of the B.T.S. and the Intelligences that surround her (embodied I mean) may help you to see the flaws: at all events Try. “Nothing was ever lost by trying.” You share with all beginners the tendency to draw too absolutely strong inferences from partly caught hints, and to dogmatize thereupon as though the last word had been spoken. You will correct this in due time. You may misunderstand us, are more than likely to do so, for our language must always be more or less that of parable and suggestion, when treading upon forbidden ground; we have our own peculiar modes of expression and what lies behind the fence of words is even more important than what you read. But still — TRY. Perhaps if Mr. S. Moses could know just what was meant by what was said to him, and about his Intelligences, he would find all *strictly true*. As he is a man of interior growth, his day may come and his reconciliation with “the Occultists” be complete. Who knows?¹

¹ *Mahatma Letter* 59 (111) pp. 342-43; 3rd Combined ed.

Arthur Lillie's Sarcophagus of old theories and exploded speculations.

Book review by Madame Blavatsky.

First published in *Lucifer*, Vol. I (1), September 1887, pp. 71-75. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (LITERARY JOTTINGS) VIII pp. 30-31.

Buddhism in Christendom, or Jesus the Essene, by Arthur Lillie¹ — A queer and rather thickish volume, of a presumably scientific character, by an amateur Orientalist.

Contents: Familiar theories, built on two sacred and time-honoured names, which the author enshrines between garlands of modern gossip and libels on his critics, past and present. A true literary sarcophagus inhuming the decayed bodies of very old, if occasionally correct, theories jumbled up together with exploded speculations.

The volume — title and symbology — is pregnant with the atmosphere of the sacred poetry attached to the names of Gautama the Buddha, and “Jesus the Essene.” To find it sprinkled with the heavy drops of personal spite, is like gazing at an unclean fly fallen into the communion-wine of a chalice. One can but wonder and ask oneself, what shall be the next move in literature? Is it a new “Sacred Book of the East,” in which one will find the evidence by Policeman Endacott against Miss Cass welcomed and accepted as an historical fact?² Or shall it be the Pentecostal tongues of fire examined in the light of the latest improved kerosene lamp?

But a well-informed chronicler at our elbow reports that the author of *Buddhism in Christendom, or Jesus the Essene*, is a strong medium who sits daily for spiritual development. This would account for the wonderfully mixed character of the contents of the volume referred to. It must be so, since it reads just as such a joint production would. It is a curious mixture of “spirit” inspiration, [31] passages bodily taken from the reports of the Society “for *Spookical* Research,” as that misguided body was dubbed — for once wittily — by the *Saturday Review*,³ and various other little defamatory trifles besides. The “spirit guides” are proverbially revengeful and not al-

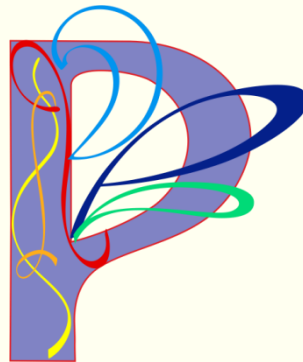
¹ [London: K. Paul, Trench, 1887]

² [Elizabeth Langley (née Cass), 1863–1956, English seamstress and dress designer whose mistaken arrest for prostitution in 1887 became a minor cause célèbre. On the 28th June 1887 Cass went out in the late evening to do some shopping at Jay's Shop at 243–253 Regent Street, a respected retailer of silk and millinery, holding a Royal Warrant. The week had seen Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, and London was thronged with people enjoying a month of record sunshine. Jay's was closed, and the pavement was full of people. As she pushed her way through the crowd on Oxford Street to go home, she was suddenly arrested by PC DR 42 Endacott, of Tottenham Court Road Police Station. She was taken to the police station and charged with solicitation and prostitution, and the next morning she appeared at Great Marlborough Street Police Court before Robert Milnes Newton, one of two Stipendiary Magistrates. PC Endacott gave evidence of the arrest and testified that he had seen her three times before in Regent Street late at night soliciting for prostitution.]

³ [62, No 1620, November 1886, pp. 648-51. *The Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art* was a London weekly newspaper established by A.J.B. Beresford Hope in 1855.]

ways wise in their generation. A former work by the same medium having been three or four years ago somewhat painfully mangled by a real Sanskrit and Buddhist scholar in India, the “Spirit Angel” falls foul now of his critics. The wandering Spook tries to run amuck among them, without even perceiving, the poor, good soul, that he only blots and disfigures with the corrosive venom of his spite the two noble and sacred characters whom his medium-author undertakes to interpret, before ever he has learned to understand them. . . .

This places *Lucifer* under the disagreeable necessity of reviewing the pretentious work at length in one of its future numbers. As the same mistakes and blunders occur in *Buddhism in Christendom* as in *Buddha and Early Buddhism*,¹ the magazine must make it its duty, if not altogether its pleasure, to check the volume of 1883 by that of 1887.



¹ [Also by Arthur Lillie, with numerous illustrations drawn on the wood by the author. London: Trübner, 1881]

Suggested reading for students.



From The Masters Speak Series.

- EARLY FRAGMENTS OF ESOTERIC COSMOGONY
- MAHA CHOCHAN'S VIEW ON THE TS
- MAHATMA LETTER NO. 10
- MAHATMAS AND THEIR BODIES
- MASTER KH DEFENDS MADAME BLAVATSKY
- MASTER KH ET ALII ON INGRATITUDE
- MASTER KH ON THE DIVINE SELF SEEN BY SELF
- MASTER KH ON THE PANORAMIC VISION AT DEATH
- MASTER M ON ATMAN AND BRAVE SOLDIERS
- MASTER M ON THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES
- ON DEATH AND RECOLLECTION OF OUR PREVIOUS LIVES
- PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM A MASTER OF WISDOM
- THE EUROPEAN HISTORY IS ENTIRELY AT SEA
- THE INFLUENCE OF GEOMAGNETISM ON WEATHER AND MAN
- THE MIGHTY POTENCY AND NOBLE AIM OF THE PROGRESSIVE MIND
- THE OLDEST ARMENIAN MONASTERY

