

BUDDHIST SERMONS
ON
CHRISTIAN TEXTS

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Introduction

One of the chief reasons why it is necessary to interpret Christian intuitions by the Mahayana concepts, and not *vice-versa*, is that Buddhism, in China and Japan, has realized how inexpressive, how crude, how treacherous words are. We may lay side by side utterances from the Bible and from the Sutras, and see the identity of experience that originated them. But formally, verbally, they may involve contradictions of an apparently clear-cut, logical nature. Only a mind free from this intellectual bondage, yet exactly conscious of what it is doing in overstepping the laws of thought, is capable of holding fast to conflicting facts, of grasping the inner essence of a paradox without making the fatal attempt to "vocalize" the so-called "truth" that reconciles the contradiction. The mistake which so many sages have made, the illusion which Zen alone is ever on its guard against, is that of supposing that there is such a thing as error as opposed to the truth. Even in the above sentence, this same mistake is apparently made, yet only apparently, for it is impossible in words, as opposed to experience, to avoid making the mistake as we

warn ourselves against it. The moon must be pointed at ; the finger is inevitable, and consequently the mistaking of it for the moon itself.

In regard to words, we go through three stages. First, words and facts are presumed to correspond. But once expressed, the truth seems somehow dead, unmoving, and we enter the second, in which our minds leap out beyond the words into another realm, wordless but not silent. Last of all, the words themselves once more regain their value and power. We recognize the life that is in the words, the significance that the finger itself has apart from its pointing at the moon.

The same thing applies when we compare the anthropomorphism and symbolism of Christianity with the airy transparency, not to say elusiveness of Zen. Once we have "seen through" such things as the transcendence of the Deity, the contradictions of the Trinity, the fall of Adam and his redemption by Christ, we can perceive their own intrinsic value. In Buddhism too, of course, we have a pantheon of gods, the mystic Kwannon and the symbolical Fudô, but these do not come home to our business and bosoms as do the Ancient Worthies of the Old Testament and the miraculous elements of the New.

The progress of religious thought in Christianity and Buddhism has been from one point of view entirely opposite. Indian spirituality and hyperbole was modified by Chinese and Japanese practicality. Jewish warmth and earthiness was influenced by Greek clarity and abstraction. In fact Greek culture has proved a mixed blessing to Europe. Abstract concepts have been the most useful and at the same time the most dangerous of all human inventions.

The only power which can perceive the essential that lies beneath these diverse elements of coarseness and subtlety, personalization and etheriality is that of poetry, but abstractions are also necessary, otherwise we are apt to miss in not expressing it, what unifies all the diverse phenomena. We must avoid the two extremes of the merely "poetical" life of registering moments of vision as they come and go, and the merely "religious" life of other-worldly contemplation. We must live the true poetical-religious life in which we not only mark the flashes of insight but endeavour to perpetuate and increase them; we strive to make every action, to see everything suffered or done as significant, not only to ourselves but to the flow of life in the world. In Christian language, our daily, hourly life is to mean something to ourselves and to God. We are to share with Him in the task of sweeping rooms

and breaking bread, doing for Him what could not be done without us, for in us He moves and lives and has His being.

The title of the present book is interesting, but rather misleading, because the texts are not interpreted according to orthodox Buddhist doctrines, (whatever they may be), but according to the principle laid down by Emerson in *Self-Reliance* :

Speak what you think now in hard words, tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradicts everything you said today.

SERMONS

Blessed are they that mourn, for they
shall be comforted.

Matthew 5, 4

If life is a good thing, if it is better that the universe exist rather than not, (and this is the whole problem and the only problem), mourning is good, rejoicing, its inevitable counterpart, is good. If there is rejoicing, there is mourning, if there is mourning, there is rejoicing. When we take the individual case, a certain person, in that place, at that point of time, the mother with her dead child, nothing is clear, all is dark, and silence and tears are our only offering. But when we look over vast tracts of time and place there is a painful sense of meaning, that is, of Comfort in the absolute sense. However slight it may be, it is this realization that enables us to continue living.

As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

1 Peter I, 8

This does not mean that when we are in pain or grieving we look round and find something to be happy about, whether in the present or in the distant future. It means that pain and grief have in them something essential, something eternal and divine, a depth and yet a closeness which brings us so near to life that the spirit of life which is also the spirit of joy, the joy of living, stirs within us. And the depth of the one determines the depth of the other :

As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.¹

But the "depth" means not the mere intensity alone, but the "of Christ" nature, the Buddha nature in its sufferings. Wordsworth says in *Michael*;

There is a comfort in the strength of love;
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
Would overset the brain, or break the heart.

1. *Romans V, 3.*

Thou shalt worship no other God : for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God.

Exodus III, 14

In Zen this is expressed quite otherwise :

If there is the slightest trace of this and that
The Mind is lost in a maze of complexity.

纔有是非， 紛然失心。 (信心銘)

But the more the expression changes, the more the meaning remains the same, or rather, the more vivid and alive it is. If the word "jealous" seems more of a hindrance than a help, consider fire and ice ; these are jealous and merciless things. The "maze of complexity" is polytheism.

Looking for that blessed hope.....the
glorious appearing of 'the gréat God, and
our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Titus 11, 15

Ultimate ends are always preposterous, whether it is the Western Paradise, or the golden streets of Heaven, or the Buddhas on their Lotuses. Perfection and bliss, universal attainment of Buddhahood,—what a terrible prospect! And yet it is this very prospect that keeps the whole thing going. In fact the “going” is this movement from one blank, void inanity to another. Under the category of time, therefore, without which we are incapable of thinking, nothing is comprehensible, all is paradoxical. Religion, morality, progress, all destroy themselves in their consummation. Not only eternity, but thought itself can “tease us out of thought”, and this glorious hope of salvation is seen as an illusion even by the temporal eye. So we say,

My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are
my ways your ways. ¹

The truth is that it is not the “far-off divine event,” (which shall never come, for the far can never be near) but the looking which matters, which alone matters, a looking which is now and here, that is, timeless and placeless, though its object may be past, present, or future, in

1. *Isaiah LV, 8.*

one place or another, according to the character or mood of him who looks. This "looking" is the glorious appearing. He who looks sees God ; God sees in him. This is Buddhahood, for with a look we are saved, lost again in a moment when we cease from looking at that which is non-existent, never-to-be-attained.

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Hebrews XI, 16

Faith means the courage to gamble and the strength to fail in staking your comfort and happiness, such as it is, upon the possibility of attaining heaven here and now. Life is one fear after another. To gain peace of mind, the pearl of great price, we must get rid of every wish and will for even life itself. Thus only can we please the divinity within and without us. When we say, "to please God", we are saying something most profound in (scientifically) inadequate and (to the unpoetic mind) misleading words. Milton says,

Silence was pleased,

and if you understand this, you understand Paul's words. If you do not, no one can explain either to you.

They constrained Him, saying, Abide with us.

Luke XXIV, 29

On the one hand, all that is good comes naturally and spontaneously, and we are to

Catch the wingèd moment as it flies.

On the other hand, some effort, some violence of mind is necessary, so that

Tasks in hours of insight willed

Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

We force others to be free. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And yet the words of St. Luke give us no feeling of compulsion, but of love and yearning only.

God hath concluded them all in unbelief,
that He might have mercy upon all.

Romans XI, 32

Without disbelief, there is no belief; no God, no Devil; no hate, no love; no cruelty, no mercy. But the "God" who concluded all in unbelief, in sin and shame, is not the God of our fathers, known of old, or rather, he-she-it is that and much more, everything more, all that exists and that does not exist. Take it or leave it, the world is so, and all our tears cannot wipe out a word of it.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it
with all thy might.

Ecclesiastes IX, 10

“To do” includes also what is more difficult, “to be done to”. To accept, with all one’s might, all that happens, to be silent and inactive, to be the servant and stand and wait,—when this is done properly we have the highest form of activity.

Walking is Zen, sitting is Zen; whether speaking or silent, moving or quiescent, the Real Self is at peace.¹

行亦禪坐亦禪，語默動靜體安然。

Doing nothing at all with all our might, busied about many things, yet knowing that they are of no importance whatever,—this is the immovable wisdom, 不動智。

1. See page 85.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that 'whoso believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John III, 16

God so loved the world

Everything in the world loves itself and every other thing. The love of some things is so violent, like that of Othello, or so subtle, like that of Iago, that it needs great courage to perceive it. But it is the same everywhere, the stream that laps the sand-banks, the axe that makes the oak shudder, the shadow that loves us and will not let us go, — all these feel the love of God for each other, an attraction that works through repulsion, that kills everything it makes alive, whose only law is perfect freedom, and whose one steadfast and immutable principle is change. Mother and child, murderer and murderee, the ice of winter and warm spring winds, the yeast and the flour, the bullet and the lungs, Christ and the Pharisees, — if we do not see these things as the love of God, how shall we love God or be loved of Him?

That he gave his only-begotten Son

God gives himself completely to us, to all things, though He is not received by all equally. In every flower, in every dust-filled corner of neglected closets, He is the only-be-

gotten Son, born again and again,

that the Universe may for ever renew its youth.

Nothing is hidden, nothing is revealed. When we see the autumn moon, when we hear the words

Let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow
me, ²

we know ourselves, we shine with the moon and stagger with the Saviour. In this, the Son is given. It is love that makes the world go round, but it is the knowing of it, love in its self-consciousness that is the giving of the Son by the Father, the *Will* in the love that makes it really human at last.

That whosoever believeth on him

God gives you this table, this unique, never-to-be-repeated, only-begotten table; do you *believe* in it? Do you *believe* it has four legs and an oblong top, that it supports your elbows, that it will float on water and burn you alive, that it will stand imperturbable while love and hate, wisdom and folly flow round it? Do you *believe* all this, or do you only think it, suppose it, agree indifferently to it?

Should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The days and hours, above all, the moments we waste in time, when we might be living in eternal, timeless time!

1. *Marcus Aurelius*, I II, 25.

2. *Matthew XI* 1, 24.

If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

1 Corinthians XV, 14

Resurrection is the dramatic representation of our desire for personal immortality in time, but this irrepressible hope is but a symbol of yet another, a deeper instinct for a time-less life. For the average, the normal man, timelessness is a thin, unenvisageable notion; he must think of it as an eternity of time. Even then, it is too abstract, too impersonal, too far-off. Man, a man must have died and been raised again from the dead. And for those yet weaker in faith or imagination, it must be a bodily resurrection; they must put their hands into the wound in his side. The raising of Lazarus: how childish, how absurd! Yet there is something about it that satisfies a deep-seated want, as did the fairy-tales of our youth, that still do please us with their echoes from a land of far away and long ago. Truth or fiction,—it makes no difference. With our faculty of willing suspension of disbelief we can get what our souls must have at all costs from fact or from fancy. Indeed, the very impossibility and logical absurdity may, in spite of ourselves, inspire us with the abundant life that we thirst for. *Credo quia absurdum.*

Pray without ceasing.

1 Thessalonians V, 17

“Breathe without ceasing”, “Eat without ceasing”, would be more practicable advice. A life of perpetual prayer, of nothing but poetry would surely be insupportable. Religion and beauty are peaks of being whose air we can breathe only momentarily. All museums and art-galleries show us this. Of love Byron says,

And love itself have rest.

Yet Wordsworth's desire is that of our text, to live

Beneath your more habitual sway.

Marcus Aurelius says, “Live with the Gods.” It can be done.

All power is given unto Me in Heaven and
in Earth.

Matthew XXVIII, 18

Power to win and power to lose; power to reign and
power to suffer; a power which is pure self-knowledge.
This is a state which those happy souls

Who do thy work and know it not, ¹

in spite of and because of their unconscious harmony with
the Way, can hardly reach. Nor can the "religious" people,
that odious tribe, those unfortunates whom Christ did not
die to save; they see something they cannot attain to: hence
their affectation and cynicism, their hypocrisy and sadism.

He that believeth in the Son of God hath
the testimony of God in himself.

1 John V, 10

Whether it be the Brandenburg Concertos or the Essays of Emerson, the death of Socrates or the landscapes of Sesshū, we know it without any proof, without any evidence, for the expression is no different from *it*, and is identical with ourselves. It is thus clearer than our own existence, closer than any physical sensation.

It is God which worketh in you both to
will and to do of His good pleasure.

Philippians II, 13

If God both wills and works all that we do, what on earth is left for us? Just that nothing at all which is so hard to do. When the cat catches a sparrow, we look at something else. When the baby cries, we change the diaper. At such times, occasionally, we feel God willing (the sparrow to be eaten, and us to look away) and working (with the safety-pins) in us.

They that know Thy Name will put their
trust in Thee.

Psalm IX, 10

There is a quotation in *Zen in English Literature* which
must be re-quoted here :

His travelling-companions were two strangers,
two silent ladies, middle-aged. The train stopped
at Nuneaton. The two ladies exchanged a glance.
One of them sighed and said, "Poor Eliza ! She
had reason to remember Nuneaton ! " ¹

This is "knowing" the name of a place called Nuneaton.
Poor Eliza, whoever she was, knew Nuneaton ; to the day
of her death she trusted in the pain and joy, hope and
despair that she found when she knew that name.

1. Max Beerbohm.

As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

2 Corinthians VI, 10

This does not mean joyful about one thing but sad about another, powerless in one place but potent elsewhere, poor in worldly goods but rich in spiritual things. This would not be worth saying or hearing. It means being bitterly joyful about the same thing, powerless to do anything else but dictate the activity of the universe, possessing a thing completely by virtue of our self-annihilation. In other words, it is a transcendent state, that of God himself; it is living with the Gods.

My strength is made perfect in weakness.

2' Corinthians XII, 9

The more we assert unity, the more the separateness and diversity of things is apparent. The more we proclaim differences, my strength, your weakness, the more the sameness and interpenetration of all things is manifest. The weaker we are, the stronger God is in us. When that weakness is complete, the strength is infinite. Perfection of annihilation is perfection of being.

He giveth power to the faint,
And them that have no might he increaseth in
strength.

Even the youths shall be faint and weary,
And the young men shall utterly fail;
But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew
their strength. ¹

1. *Isaiah XL, 29-31.*

I will not let thee go unless thou bless
me.

Genesis XXXII, 26

Every event of our lives is to be greeted thus. The death of children, imprisonment for sodomy, being left a fortune, praise and censure, gain and loss, - all must give us their own p  culiar blessing.

All that we behold
Is full of blessings.¹

Though this is the loftiest idealism, it is also common sense that is really common. Everyone recognizes that making mistakes is the one thing that teaches us.

I am the Vine, ye are the Branches.

John XV, 5

No analogy surpasses this. I am the whole, you are the parts. The "I" is as personal as the "Ye"; the "Ye" is as soul-less and devoid of ego as the "I". If we go farther and speak of the stem, the roots, the flowers and fruit, everything is spoiled, and from the realm of the organic we have descended to that of the mechanical.

1. *Tintern Abbey*.

I beseech thee, show me Thy glory. And
He said, Thou canst not see My Face : for
there shall no Man see me, and live.

Exodus XXXIII, 18

A sword cannot cut itself, an eye cannot see itself. No
one can know what life is ; it is a mystery of mysteries

No man hath seen God at any time. ¹

But this is only because we think about it. Cut off all
intellection as intellection ; only live fully, and,

The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom
of the Father, he hath declared Him. ¹

We shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as
He is. ²

Every eye shall see Him. ³

Life is known by living it.

1. *John I, 18.*

2. *1 John III, 2.*

3. *Revelation I, 7.*

Fear not, for I have redeemed thee.

Isaiah XLIII, 1

What is it that we fear, or rather, what is it that we do not fear? Suffering that teaches us, the death of loved ones that matures us, our own death that perfects and completes what was once begun. Who or what can redeem us, give us back our native innocence, the time when we looked neither before nor after, when we did not pine for the impossible?

We can lose our fear only if we feel deeply that the universe within and without us loves us deeply, not shallowly and sentimentally, not us as us, but us as branches of the vine, as leaves and blossoms that the wind loves to sweep away, that the waters love to engulf and the mountains to overwhelm. This is the love we are to have towards God, and he will love us exactly in the proportion that we love him, and with the same quality. In Christ, the young hero, we catch a glimpse of this fearlessness which is one with love as an eager, self-abandoning, self-giving joy. But the last word is not with the New Testament, but with the Old :

‘Though he slay me, yet will I trust him,’¹

that is, trust him to slay me.

1. *Job XIII, 18.*

I am black but comely.

Canticles ¹1, 5

We swing from one opinion to the other, backwards and forwards. The universe is not as we would have made it, yet it has a certain wanton charm, a lawless homogeneity that takes our serious fancy. Buddhists declare this to be a world of suffering, of the misery of fulfilled desires, of too much and too little of everything. Yet it is all we have. The problem of all practical philosophy, all lived religion is whether the comeliness of the asymmetrical thusness of things outweighs the blackness of the useless suffering of the individual. This can be answered only by the man who has endured, like Buddha and Christ, the utmost of personal and vicarious agony. Theirs is knowledge; for us there is at best faith in them.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John XV, 18-20

This is true enough in a way, - but the way is false. There is a spirit of aloofness and a persecution mania in it that points to shallowness of vision. There is no good and evil, persecutor and persecuted, God and Devil; all people are all these things, only human beings who get in one another's way and jostle and shove in their efforts to see that true and good and beautiful which alone can delight their souls. No man can love darkness more than light. However dark his temple of worship, it is the dim flame that feeds his ghostly life. Of all the erring multitudes it is not so much "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," as "Father, they do what they know, just as we do; increase thou our knowledge".

In the multitude of words there wanteth
not sin.

Psalm X, 19

Why is it that it is in the multitude of words, not deeds, that there is sin? Because deeds are living. "In the beginning was the Deed", and there is no sin in it. It is the primordial stuff of life, the active thusness of things. But it is words, it is thoughts that make action good or bad, ugly or beautiful, true or false. And it is in the *multitude* of them that sin lies, in the unnatural, incestuous multiplying of thoughts and feelings about things, the discoloration of objects, the divided will. Therefore when we are reviled, we revile not again; when we suffer, we threaten not, but commit ourselves to

Him that judgeth righteously,

to that Power which instantly and always rewards our silence with its silent approbation.

1. *Peter II, 23.*

The meek will He guide in judgement.

Psalm XXV, 9

Pride cannot co-exist with a realization of the impermanence of all things, in the sense that ourself is deeply felt and experienced as a non-ego, a no-thing. Pride is the one and only deadly sin, in that it sets up a hard, dead, unchanging core of self-existence in a world whose nature is fluid and yielding where it seems most fixed and immovable. Meekness is the essence of the iron that strikes, the flint that is struck, the spark that rises upwards. Meek in denunciation, gentle in refusal, mild in condemnation, and we manifest clearly Whose judgement it is with which we judge.

Teach me thy way, O Lord.

Psalm XXVII, 11

This is the only kind of prayer permissible. Even the "Lord's Prayer", with its modest request for the necessities of life, still looks towards the dubitable future and seeks to influence what is within the power of accident. This is a part of legitimate human hope rather than of prayer, but "Teach me thy way" is a prayer for bread which teaches us the Way, and it is a prayer for no bread, which not less teaches us the Way.

Which is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?

Matthew IX, 5

The former is of course more difficult. There is a story of a Zen monk and a fakeer who were on a journey together. They came to a river and the fakeer began walking across the water. The Zen monk called him back and said, "You have not learned yet how to cross a river; let us look for a shallow place to wade across it". Even if Christ could have performed miracles, he should not have done so.

Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew XI, 28

Jesus wept at the death of a friend; he was troubled in spirit at the thought of his own agonizing and shameful end. He himself laboured and was heavy laden, and we too regret the irrevocable past, endure the pain and grief of the present, fear the inevitable suffering and death that await us. But "Come unto me" was spoken, not by Jesus, but by Christ. Meekness and lowliness of spirit, a realization of the emptiness of all things, ourselves included, gives rest to our souls. But this is not something abstract; it is the meekness and lowliness of Jesus with his continual prayer to God and compassion on the multitude that arises from our Buddha nature, from our Christ-nature. That is to say, Jesus who wept and groaned, and Christ who gives us rest of heart are one person, one Person, one Imperson.

Who is he that cometh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?

Canticles V, 10

There has never yet been a writer, let alone a poet, who could love nature in its cruelty as well as its beauty. How can it be done? Are we to enjoy watching the cat play with the mouse, the slaughterman pole-axing his victims, leaves that overshadow and kill leaves even of the same tree? Yet these are much more "natural" than sunsets and the song of birds. Nature is everywhere an incessant struggle, and whatever man can change, however he may be born again, he cannot change this.

Though he fall he shall not be utterly
cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him
with His hand.

Psalm XXXIII, 24

Whether it is a moral fall or only a fit of depression, there is an underlying steadiness and calm which is never disturbed. This is the ground of our being, the hand of God, possessed by every creature, animate and inanimate. And our growth is a continual simplification of our thoughts and feelings until everything said and done shall be said and done by it, our speech its silence, our activity its rest.

The end of all things is at hand.

1 Peter V, 7

It is not only at hand, but present with us at this moment. The world is now being created, in every bud and blossom; Christ is being born again in every heart. Life goes smoothly on, and miracles are done. Death and destruction overshadow all things, and the whole creation is crucified while we draw a single breath. This does not mean that among the myriad things of the universe some are being born and some are dying. It means that each thing dies as it is born, dies to be reborn, at every moment and in every place.

Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Galatians I, 24

That is to say, Glorify God. The body is the touchable part of the spirit; the spirit the untouchable part of the body. The more instinctive the body, the more physical the mind, the better. We glorify God, not by doing anything beyond our natural capacities, by some exceptional feat of thought or exertion, but by our peaceful yet spirited conduct of ordinary life. The more truly this is done the more we feel that the world is the tangible part of God, God the intangible part of the world. Then our body is found to be God's body, and our spirit His spirit.

They rest not day and night, saying,
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty.

Revelation IV, 8

This is the silence of a myriad whirling suns, the shriek of a knife on a plate, a tale told by an idiot, the yelling of a wounded soldier on the battle-field begging to be put out of his misery. The lapping of waves on the rocks of some far-off island, the farting of the bean-eater, the air-raid siren, — all these praise the Lord God Almighty with no uncertain voice. But almost all men are as deaf to the meaning of these voices as they are to that of a Bach fugue.

As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so
He opened not his mouth.

Acts VIII, 32

The sheep does not complain that the shearing is "unnatural". Nature is all that happens. "What must be", is the oldest wisdom of the world, but in us there is to be no dull sheepish acquiescence, but silent joy as we share, by our so-called "free will", in the creation of inevitability.

Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice. ¹

1. *Philemon IV, 4.*

I love the Lord because He hath heard
my voice and my supplication.

Psalm XXVIII, 6

Very natural and proper,—but what did you ask for? It must be presumed that you were clever enough to pray for the sun to rise in the morning, or to become older every day, that is, you made a virtue of necessity. Otherwise you would be superstitiously congratulating yourself on what was a mere coincidence.

In my flesh shall I see God.

Job XIX, 26

We have five senses, and they are “given us” to perceive God with. We have also a brain; what is this for? It is to *know* that we perceive God through the five senses. In the Communion, God is eaten and drunk. Issa says :

涼しさやこそ極楽の這入口

This coolness !

It is the entrance

To Paradise !

He knoweth our frame ; He remembereth
that we are dust.

Psalm CIII, 14

God's pity for us, — what is the deep, inner meaning of this ? All things, in so far as they are separate things, are so because of some deficiency. Stone is not malleable and will break : this is the pitifulness of stone. Man has but two legs ; the sun cannot stand still ; all things lack permanence ; even God cannot lie, so they say. To remember our own pitifulness and that of others, — this is the old age of wisdom.

I saw no temple for the Lord God
Almighty and the Lamb are the temple.

Revelation XXI, 22

If there is no temple, there is no worshipper; and if there is no worshipper there is no one worshipped, for all three are one thing, — if all that is can be called “a thing”. Temples and cathedrals are necessary for that deeply shallow corporate ritual that is for millions the only (consciously) religious act. Others there are, however, who feel.

Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot
contain Thee;

How much less this house that I have builded ! ¹

Yet for the deeply pious man, churches and chapels are no impediment but rather points of vantage, waves uplifting. And for those who live by Zen, every place is hallowed ground, every day a good day, every act is worship, waking or sleeping, dead or alive,

God being with us when we know it not.

1. *1 Kings VIII, 27.*

Whither shall I go from Thy spirit ? or
whither shall I flee from Thy presence ? If I
ascend up into Heaven, Thou art there :
if I make my bed in Hell, behold, Thou
art there.

Psalm CXXXIX, 9

God is not here, in sin and ignorance : poetry is not to
be found in dust-bins nor art in cess-pools ; there are ves-
sels of honour and vessels of dishonour, — it is said. But
this is wrong. God is not only in heaven, but in the sewer.
How can we call vessels which Christ himself used,
“vessels of dishonour” ? The sun shines as cheerfully and
poetically on a dunghill as on a diamond. Religion and
poetry and art are like truth in this at least : they are
commensurate with existence. The world of grace fills and
overflows the world of nature, and we must say at last,
wherever we are,

Surely the Lord is in this place ; and I knew
it not. ¹

1. *Genesis XXVIII, 16.*

Who can separate us from the love of Christ?

Romans 8, 35

This is such a platitude and yet so profound, so obvious and yet so little believed, that one hardly knows what to say about it. What can separate us from the love of Christ? All that we think and feel and do is the life of Christ, and He is love. All our sin, our fancied isolation, is his suffering and our misery. All our union with things, both through the eye and through the mind, is his vision and our delight. The love of Christ is so much closer than any of us suppose. He is not behind nature egging it on to manifest himself but before it leading us into it. Because of his love of us, he himself makes himself nothing, that we may be everything. But this "love" includes death and disease, heart-break and madness. This is the "love that will not let me go."

We love Him because He first loved us.

1 John IV, 19

Ikkyû has a somewhat similar thought :

The figure of the Real Man

Standing there, ---

Just a glimpse of him,

And we are in love !

本来の面目坊が立姿

ひとめ見しより恋とこそなれ

Paul finds Christ as personal as we are; Ikkyû finds the Buddha no more personal than we. In Paul the idea of reciprocity is somewhat astonishingly expressed, but Paul was, after all, a poet. In Ikkyû the words are shallower and more fanciful, because the idea is too profound for expression, since the love is in reality, as Coventry Patmore says, "A female vanity,"¹ a kind of self-love, or rather, Self-Love, that is felt in the self.

O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!

Psalm CIII, 1

This should be the motto of every teacher, Sunday-school teacher, art teacher, music teacher, of every father and mother, because when the children of men read Shakespeare, and listen to Mozart, and look at Chinese landscape painting, this "praise", this gratitude, this warmth of soul alone justifies the ways of God to men, the long agony of the centuries, the grisly history of the world.

Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Romans XII, 15

This means rejoicing with those divine elements that enter into all joy however degraded. It means mourning with those divine elements that enter into all sorrow however unjustified or mistaken. Rejoicing and weeping are like breathing in and breathing out; both are breathing, both are the life of the soul, the *Anima*.

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.

Matthew VI, 28

“Consider”, “grow” are the two poles of thought in this verse. “Consider” can mean “just look at” as Peter Bell did at the primrose. It can mean “think about” as a botanist or as a moralist. It can mean “feel about”, overlay with various emotions. It can and should mean *interpenetrate*, so that their life and ours is indistinguishable. The lilies look and think and feel, — but as flowers would if they could. We bloom with the sincere colour, and are still yet aspiring. We grow and the lilies consider, — so we say, but there are no such things as poles or axes, only the turning of the earth in infinite space.

Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

Hebrews XIII, 14

This verse seems to say that the present is of only factitious value, and that there is some future state of eternal and absolute nature to which we are bound. But the text does not mean this. It says that the river of life, ever the same yet never the same, moves always towards the sea. Our inner destiny draws us forwards out of the noon of today into the dawn of tomorrow. Our life is neither in the present nor in the future, — and yet we live.

No one cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

John XIV, 6

Superficially speaking we may say that John has dramatized and transfigured Jesus into Christ in such passages as "I am the Light of the World", putting words and modes of expression into his mouth which he *should* have used. But considered more deeply, such declarations, like all inspired utterances, are emanations from our common Buddha nature, and *as such* are received by Catholic, Protestant and Freethinker alike.

The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests,* but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.

Matthew VIII, 20

Not a doctrine that can be asserted, not a principle to live by, no man to reverence or God to adore. Adrift on the ocean of life for a few years, then darkness and silence. Even the pillow we lay our heads on is swiftly falling to dust, the head itself wrinkling and decaying in the most peaceful slumber. This is so, and it is good so. Our souls are not ours, let alone our heads. We own nothing, there is nothing to own and nobody to own it, and when we realize this, not as a doctrine but in all our *instinctive* activities, we have our hole, our nest; our headlessness is laid to rest on that non-existent pillow. Only when this is so can we understand Paul's words in their real meaning:

All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. ¹

What need then have we of beliefs, of friends or a friendly universe?

1. *1 Corinthians III, 22, 23.*

We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

2 Corinthians III, 18

In the very sound of the words alone, "all", "with open face", "as in a glass", "from glory to glory", is expressed our unity with all things, nothing separating us in time or place from all other human beings, our life and love one with the life and love of God. Yet this is not a static condition. We change and are changed with the four seasons, dissolve and are dissolved in the sea of being, move and are moved with the motion of the spheres. All this, and more is heard when we hear Paul's words, but we cannot say that the sound of the words is more important than the sense, not because this is not true, but because people will not believe us. *But they believe the sound of our words.*

Who shall lay anything to the charge of
God's elect?

Romans VIII. 33

Every man is assumed to be innocent until he is proved guilty, and this seems to adumbrate some fundamental and original state of innocence. Thoreau says :

I know of no redeeming qualities in me but a sincere love for some things, and when I am re-proved, I have to fall back on this ground. ¹

This ground, this sincere love of some things, is that which makes a person or thing what it is. To grumble at a giraffe because its neck is long, or at a murderer because his victim died, —is not this the height of effrontery?

1. *Journals*, 1842.

Herein is love, not that we loved God,
but that He loved us.

I John IV, 9

"I love my wife, I love my children, I love my dog and my cats,"—this we understand, and require no explanation; but "I love God,"—what does this mean? It must be confessed that it means very little, some vague feeling of gratitude for being alive, some respect for omnipotence. But as to love is everything and to be loved is nothing, so it is God's love of us that makes him God. However much we sin he forgives us, grieving at the pain and suffering we inevitably bring on ourselves by a Law that is above God himself.

Our citizenship is in Heaven.

Philippians III, 20

It is interesting to compare this with a *dôka* of Ikkyû :

When asked, "What country are you from ?

Where is your native place ?"

Answer, "I am a man

Of Original Activity."

國 いづくさとはいかにと人とはゞ

本來無爲のものゝこたへよ

However great the differences between these two statements, one thing at least is common, that we do not really belong to the particular country in which we were (accidentally) born.

Peter followed Him afar off.

Matthew XXVI, 28

This is what we all do, and it is not altogether reprehensible, because it is human nature to avoid suffering, to avoid the truth itself when, as usual, it is painful. This "human nature", which is made the fatal objection to socialism and every idealistic system, is also the great objection to Christianity and Buddhism. How to be both blessed and happy is what nobody can tell us.

Him that cometh unto Me I will in no
wise cast out.

John VI, 37

When we come to the fire, it burns us; when we come
to the knife, it cuts us. When we come to death,

Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yea, beds for all who come.

Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.

Hebrews XII, 6

This does not mean that God gives an extra dose of
trouble to those whom he for some strange reason specially
favours. The poet rightly says,

How odd
Of God
To choose
The Jews.

But the fact is that those people whom God loves, that is,
those who have been given a great sensitivity to and a
deep understanding of life, must suffer; or rather, this
sensitive understanding of life is suffering. "Loving" and
"chastening" are the same thing.

My strength is made perfect in weakness.¹

2 Corinthians XII, 9

Imperfection has in it a deeper meaning than perfection, growth than maturity, because it has movement, movement towards some end that is never attained, but always will be, shall be. The very name "Unfinished Symphony" endues it with a secret power more subtle than the symmetry and finality of perfect masterpieces. The wilful irregularities of Korean pottery, the asymmetry of Japanese flower arrangements, the blank spaces of Chinese landscapes, the brevity of haiku, and the ellipses of poetical language generally, illustrate the principle that each thing is capable of every possible use, may be an instrument of life or death, goodness or badness, is itself All Things. Thus its relativity is the only guarantee of its absoluteness; its finiteness and evanescence are essential for its infinity and eternity.

1. See page 18.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken
me ?¹

Matthew XXVII, 46

Are not the sparrows also "forsaken" by God when the cat has them between its paws ? Does not God abandon the flies on the fly-paper ? Saviours of mankind murdered, artists and poets strangled at birth, masterpieces burned in manuscript, whole civilizations hurled into oblivion, all forsaken of God. Why ? There is no reason for it, no problem, no need to justify the ways of God to man. God says, with Dr. Johnson, to all our whimpering and doubting,

Why is a fox's tail bushy, why is a cow's tail
long ? *I will not be put to the question !*

1. See also page 78.

Whatsoever things are true.....think on these things.

Philippians IV, 8

Why? Because

such as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the habitual character of thy mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts. ¹

And what are these eternal principles, indubitable truths of universal validity? There is only one, and that is that there are none. But *things* are true, true to themselves and us. Let them go their way. Go with them on the Way. Your own body for example, with all its functions of, so-called honour and dishonour; St. Theresa says :

Christ has no body on earth but yours, no feet but yours; yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world, yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now.

Everything is full of blessings. Think on everything, and thus will our souls be dyed with things, with all things, with truth.

1. Marcus Aurelius.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it
with all th might.

Ecclesiastes IX, 10

Kiozawa Manshi¹ says of his profession,

My work was given me by Heaven. If I do not respect
and love it, I shame the work given by Heaven.

我なり職業は天与の任務。之を愛重せざる
は天与を辱むるものなり。

This is true of every action we perform, whether it be
ploughing or farting, singing or stealing. What is wrong
is not crime, but punishment; not man's vileness, but man's
inhumanity to man; not the sinner, but our contempt for
him; not our sufferings, but our self-pity, all that is inter-
posed by thought or emotion between hand and work.

The well-known schoolboy howler illustrates the same
point, the necessity of the *completeness* of the co-operation
with the inevitable, that is, what is going on at the present
moment :

The Duke of Marlborough was a great general who
always commenced a battle with the fixed determi-
nation to win or lose.

1. 清沢満之, died in the 36th year of Meiji.

Truth in the inward parts.

Psalm LI, 6

Telling lies with words or with silence is of little account compared with this inward truth. To deceive others is difficult; to deceive oneself is easy. And the higher our ideals the bigger liars, inwardly, we are. Poets and politicians, ministers of religion and moralists are condemned above all by their humourlessness. How refreshing it is to come across a passage like the following:

Thank heavens, the sun has gone in, and I don't have to go out and enjoy it. ¹

1. Pearsall Smith, *Afterthoughts*.

Ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Matthew X, 31

This, like Paul's assertion concerning the ox, ¹ betrays the limitation of the doctrine of the transcendence of God. God is transcendent, but he is also, and equally, immanent. This was a truth perceived by all the ancient religions, and re-discovered by poets of modern times in Europe and America, but never forgotten in the Far East. Spengler says :

The unlimited multitude of antique gods—, every tree, every spring, every house, nay, every part of a house is a god — means that every tangible thing is an *independent* existence, and therefore that none is functionally subordinate to any other. ²

1. *1 Corinthians IX, 9.*

2. *The Decline of the West, Nature Knowledge, VI.*

Who when he was reviled reviled not
again but committed himself to Him
that judgeth righteously.

2 Peter 11, 22-3

The fruit of the spirit is meekness. The fruit of the spirit is also fierceness, but this fierceness is the energy with which we commit ourselves meekly to that nameless person who is not a person who judges righteously because he follows the nature of each thing, which is the nature of all things. It is the meekness of the hurricane and the fierceness of the blooming cherry-blossoms, and when we have both, we too judge righteously, that is, not at all.

If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.

2 Timothy II, 12

Suffering and reigning seem such different things that when we say that they are one thing, and that one without the other is impossible, we are saying something fanciful and paradoxical. In the realm of the intellect, we assert and understand,

Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven,
but in the realm of poetry we know something that cannot be said or understood, that losing is winning, that endurance is power, that in so far as we share in the suffering of Christ, we share in his conquest of suffering; his submission to destiny, and its consequent subjugation; his doing the will of God, and his unity with the Godhead; his suffering in time, and timeless reign.

Mortify.....your members.

Colossians III, 5

Even monkeys over-eat, eschew vitamins and mineral salts, pick out the crumb and leave the crust. This is due to a greediness so deep and ancient that it must be something good, something Good. Excess is often not so much for the pleasure proposed as to get rid of the pain of desire. But to escape from the power of things, is to give up the things themselves, to cease living, for just as

Without human beings there are no Buddhas,¹
so without things there are no human beings, for these three are one. Further, since

We are members one of another,²

if we mortify our members we are killing other creatures and ourselves into the bargain. Thus here as on every subject, reason leads us to dilemma and contradiction that only life can and does solve, the golden mean where both mortification and self-indulgence are laid aside and forgotten.

1. *Rokusôdangyô*.

2. *Ephesians IV, 25*.

Our Father which art in Heaven

Matthew VI, 9

The truth is that God is unfatherly and is not in heaven. There is nothing merciful and forgiving about him.

天 地 不 仁

Heaven and Earth are inhuman.

God has not the fatherliness of an earwig. If you can call the sun fatherly, God may be called Our Father; otherwise it is a misuse of words. But it is to this use, to Rôshi's "Heaven and Earth", that Jesus was gradually tending; "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"¹

Hallowed be thy name

Undiluted reverence, a symphony without an allegro, no comic relief whatever ultimately wearies. Blessed and praised be that majesty and power and glory, the lightness and delicacy and whimsicality of Nature. The very phrase, "Hallowed be thy name" is itself a joke, for as Eckhart says, "Gott ist namenlos."

Thy Kingdom come

Why should we pray for it to come when it is already

1. *John XVIII, 11.*

here and "among you"? Just because it is here and among us. In the same way we are to pray for the birth of Christ, his eternal birth, for "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." ¹

Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.

The will of God is done everywhere and at all times, but we alone of all earth's creatures do not feel it to be so. This feeling is so unmistakable and direct that we cannot call it illusion. We are in ourselves powerless, yet we have the self-power to open or close ourselves to the ingress or egress of other-power.

Give us this day our daily bread

To bring into existence a creature with a digestive apparatus involves, in some vague way, a kind of moral duty to supply it with food, but since our Father does not allow us even this as a right, let alone as in love or kindness, we ask just as we might ask for a thousand dollars, or as a drowning man clutches at a straw, — because it is human to do so.

1. *Hebrews XIII, 8.*

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them
that trespass against us

This we may ask with no reservations, and as fervently as may be, because it is for ever granted everywhere. All our experience teaches us that it is the forgiver, not the forgiven, who receives the forgiveness.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken
me ? ¹

Matthew XXVII, 46

The greatest poet, the greatest moral teacher and religious teacher is dying the death for crimes against God and man. He is dying alone; his words will be forgotten; his followers, dispersed and disillusioned, are in any case ununderstanding, and what is worse, misunderstanding. The world is dark with false ignorance and useless knowledge, and the Light of the World is being extinguished. Christ could not realize that though God had forsaken him, Chance had not, that his life and its teaching would live on because of the very stupidity and weakness of his disciples. And had the authorities rounded up the few cowards that were hiding in their homes, Europe would now be either Mahomedan or Buddhist.

1. See also page 48.

Your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians III, 3

Our true self is our Buddha nature, and this is the Nature of all things. The timeless, spaceless, unqualifiable, uncreated Buddha and the historic Buddha can be differentiated but are not separable. As individuals we have no contact one with another. It is only through the realization of our common human divinity that we become what we are already, sons, not servants, one with all that exists. This is expressed in the simple and beautiful word "hid". Sometimes, as we wander through the world, the sounds and silence, sunshine and shadow, near and far, birds and trees and sky and human beings are perceived to be one life. The suchness of things is revealed, all differences are hidden from us, and the illusion of separation and separateness has disappeared.

He saved others, himself he cannot save.

Matthew XXVII, 42

This was and is a perfectly just criticism of the miracles of Christ. To heal the sick and raise the dead, and yet not to lift a finger for one's own comfort or protection is a ridiculously inconsistent attitude. But it is precisely this kind of contradiction in Christ and Don Quixote which endears them to us. Without imperfection, without a feeling of the evanescent and indeterminate, we cannot grasp the infinite and eternal. Those who strive to show that Christ never sinned, never looked up to a greater than he, are murderers :

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. ¹

1. *Luke XXIII, 34.*

I am He that liveth and was dead; and
behold, I am alive for evermore.

Revelation I, 18

Who "I" is, and when and where and why he died, or whether he really died at all is not the concern of the poetry, that is, the "truth" of these words. The verse begins with the timeless "I am he who liveth," the suchness of things, the Buddha nature, then goes back to the timeful, the illusory "I was dead", and leads us gently on to where time trembles "for evermore" through eternity, that timeless region where time also sojourns.

If ye know that He is righteous, ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him.

1 John II, 29

In this one sentence, all the dogmas of Christendom and Buddhism are broken down irremediably. But the first clause is all-important. If you know instinctively what was righteous and what was not righteous about Him, you laugh with joy when you hear the Buddha nature speaking its silent but unmistakable words, realizing that this "its" and that "Him" are one thing, just as "ye know" is one thing, though speech divides it into pronoun and verb.

He was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities.

Isaiah³ LIII, 5

Unless "he" and we are in the profoundest and truest sense one person, our sins and "his" voluntary sufferings are poles apart, for it is not possible that one man should suffer for another, except in the immorality of legal fiction.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

Revelation II, 20

This is a kind of ghost story or detective problem, for he that knocks without is already within, and though the room is empty, there is a feasting going on, for the clatter of dishes and smacking of lips is clearly audible in the 48 Preludes and Fugues and the symphonies of Mozart.

Beloved, let us love one another ; for love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

1 John IV, 7

Buddhism fears above all things attachment, but Christianity, much more profoundly, is afraid only of weakness of attachment. Hamlet and Othello are great, because of the depth and persistence of their attachment. The alleged object of attachment is indifferent, whether it be Mrs. Gamp's gin-bottle, or "the disciple whom Jesus loved".

It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.

Luke XII, 32

Who wants it anyway? And consider the responsibility of running the whole system of nature, with rape and murder, betrayal and suicide your own doing, not to speak of the million-year plan of the survival of the fittest throughout the universe. The truth is that people do not want to be saved, to "go to heaven", to become "joint heirs with Christ"; it is too awful a prospect.

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him.

Genesis 1, 27

All things were created in the image of God, but man more so than any other, for we can see in him, for the first time clearly, the deep internal contradiction, the *reductio ad absurdum* of the universe. Where only "Love" was seen, the Love that moves the sun and the other stars, and moves the jaws of the spider as it sucks its victims' blood, now "love" appears. Pity and self-sacrifice, a turning away the eyes from ferocity and pain, have introduced that discord which makes the original harmony seem a simple and easy thing.

The time is short ; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as though not abusing it ; for the fashion of this world passeth away.

1 Corinthians 7, 29-31

In the *Kongôkyô*, we read :

“Subutai, what think you ? Is the Nyorai to be seen as a body-form or not?” “No, World-honoured One, the Nyorai is not to be seen as a body-form. Why is this ? Because according to the teaching of the Nyorai, body-form is a non-body-form.” The Buddha said to Subutai, “All form is illusion. If all form is seen as no-form, the Nyorai will be seen.”

須菩提，於意三何。可以身相見如來世尊，不可以身相得見如來。何以故，如來所說身相即非身相。佛告須得，凡所有皆是虛妄。若見諸相非相即見如來。

When we know that “the time is short”, when death is

imminent, a matter of moments, we marry, we laugh and cry, we purchase things and go about our daily life just as others do, but as though we did none of these things, not in a dream, but realizing (that is, doing everything in such a way) that the doer and the done are not divided into this and that, I and the action, you and I, short and long, today and tomorrow.

We, according to His promise, look for
New Heavens and a New Earth, wherein
dwelleth righteousness.

2 Peter III, 13

This looking forward to the next moment, this "something evermore about to be", which we fancy into the distant future, is the temporal aspect of things. Eternity is seen as if in the future, instead of in the present. But actually,

The one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves,

is already here, and occurs every time we think an enlightened thought.

In him dwelleth all the fulness of the
Godhead bodily:

Colossians II, 9

Sometimes we realize (make real) this; when we are about to swat a fly or mosquito, and feel a sudden compunction. But the next thought, like all second thoughts, is a thought of folly, and we think of the mosquito or fly,

“Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?”¹

It is expedient to you that I go away.

John XVI, 7

Christ must go in order that the Holy Ghost may come. As we grow, what we apprehend by experience becomes vaguer, not that it is more diffuse or weaker, but that it is less expressible, does not *demand* expression so urgently, has more of the quality of wind and less of matter in it. Instead of this or that action, what moves us is the manner of the action, the way it has its being. How the lily grows, the life itself, is of greater import than its beauty.

1. *John VI, 42.*

You yourselves have learned of God to love one another.

1 Thessalonians IV, 9

How is it possible for us to learn by our love of God to love human beings? It seems like putting the cart before the horse. But when we remember how water loves the drowning man, how treacle loves the spoon, how the earth loves the falling apple, how the knife loves to cut and the flesh to be cut, we realize the truth of Paul's words.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

1 Corinthians XV, 19

The thought of death, that is, annihilation in time, is the most painful of all our painful thoughts. The chariot hurrying near makes all the people miserable all the time. And yet there is another hope (and this also in Christ) in the timeless life which does not belong to this life or any other life, past or future. But the strangest thing of all is that just as time is necessary for eternity, and there is no eternity without it, so this misery of the hope in Christ in this life only is essential for the timeless life we live in *Hamlet* and the *St. Matthew Passion*.

First the blade, then the ear, after that
the full corn in the ear.

Mark IV, 28

It is precisely those things which are most logical,
most purely cause-and-effect, most scientific, which are
most miraculous, because we can never know why this
particular cause has this particular effect, why the mind
sees the things in this order and relation, and no other.
All we know is that there is an exquisite satisfaction in it.
Buson says :

白露やいばらのとけに一つづつ

White dew

On the bramble,

A drop on each thorn.

Religion and science are for the moment united.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John I, 9

The sense of sin is a strange thing, sadism towards others, masochism for oneself; a sense of failure and negative self-feeling; an apprehension of some mysterious danger, and impending punishment. Why should confession absolve us from all this?

From the Zen point of view, what is wrong is *to think* it is sin, or rather, what was wrong was to "think" at all, to think that I am I and You are You, that your loss is my gain, and so on. This was the sin, not all the foolish things that happened as a result of it. Confession is really a way of returning to the original "thoughtless" condition by regurgitating all the muck and filth of dichotomous thinking and feeling. And so the one confessed to feels no kind of superiority over the confessee, but shares in his or her return to purity and health.

A bruised reed shall He not break.

Isaiah XLII, 3

Blake says the same thing but more vehemently, surpassing even the Hebrews in passion :

And can He who smiles on all
 Hear the wren with sorrows small,
 Hear the small bird's grief and care,
 Hear the woes that infants bear,
 And not sit both night and day,
 Wiping all our tears away?
 O no! never can it be!
 Never, never, can it be!

Such flat contradictions of fact are indeed shattering this world, and creating it nearer to the heart's desire.

The Lord Omnipotent reigneth.

Revelation XIX, 6

When I was young, it was not uncommon, in the religious circles I was compelled to frequent, to debate the question whether God could tell a lie. If he could, he was not all-good; if he could not, he was not all-powerful—this was the dilemma. The fact remains, however, as St. John remarks, that the Lord Omnipotent reigneth, and we are all his obedient or (apparently) disobedient subjects. Somehow or other, God's will is done at all times and in all places.

Though we feel something of the old tribal fear expressed in the words of our text, we turn with relief to an omnipotence of a different character, such as that in the following lines from Emerson's *Worship*:

This is he who, felled by foes,
Sprung harmless up, refreshed by blows.

This is Jove, who, deaf to prayers,
Floods with blessings unawares.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ;. but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer.

Isaiah LIV, 7

The littleness of the wrath, and the everlastingness of the kindness are well contrasted, but they are not different so much in quantity as in quality. The wrath is in time, and the kindness is beyond time. Under the category of time we question, rightly enough, the goodness of God ; no one can justify the ways of God to men. But in eternity, out of time, there is mercy, there is kindness. And strange to say, we are redeemed into eternity by that very wrath, that cruelty of God in time.

We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.

1 John V, 19

Sometimes, when we look at people at the slot-machines, when we read the newspapers, when people pretend to laugh at something that is not really funny, when the next-door neighbour puts on a popular record, when we read the advertisements for whiskey,—sometimes, “we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.”

Beloved, believe not every spirit.

1 John IV, 1

Just as we must believe all the funny creatures in the Zoo, so we must believe all the funny creatures that go to look at them. Every spirit must be believed,—militarism, pacifism, communism, feudalism, all of them. Iago must be believed no less than Othello, Regan and Goneril no less than Cordelia. “Every error is an image of truth.”

O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me.

Psalm CXXXIX, 1

We analyze and psycho-analyze ourselves, find every motive suspect, every impulse selfish, every thought impure. Even when I do unalloyed good, is this not for my own sake, my own sense of well-being and satisfaction? Debunking others is fine sport, but what shall we do when we have debunked ourselves, and nothing remains?

My grandmother once came home from church and kept smiling to herself. On being asked by her children why she was smiling, she said, "At church the people were all singing, 'O to be nothing, nothing,' *and they were nothing all the time!*"

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

Matthew XXII, 46

You are buried alive underground. You will die of starvation and thirst in a week's time. God has forsaken you. You are not going to heaven when you draw your last shuddering breath. You will be nothing, for ever. This last week of your not very important life will be entirely meaningless, just feverishly painful thoughts and the stupor of exhaustion.

Can you explain this away? No, nobody can!

He that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Psalms CXXI, 3

See how the toast burns when you forget it; how the clock stops when you don't wind it up. All is change and decay, nothing is constant; but there is "something" that never sleeps, that is immortal and omnipotent. It is beyond all conception, all expression, all proof. yet when we are in painful or joyful union with "it", we feel and know that

Underneath are the everlasting arms. ¹

1. *Deuteronomy XXXIII, 27.*

APPENDIX

PARALLEL PASSAGES FROM THE CHRISTIAN MYSTICS AND ZEN WRITINGS

The Christian mystics of the Middle Ages, keeping as they did within the rather elastic bounds of orthodox teaching, show a remarkable similarity of life and inspiration to those of Zen monks, and it is possible to parallel all the deepest intuitions of both groups. Even the constant assertions by the mystics of the "invincible otherness" of the soul in its deification, where the transmutation within the Divine Essence cannot and does not involve identity, correspond to the Zen experience of interpenetration and inexistence without loss of one's own separate personality, and with the haiku poets' becoming the thing contemplated, yet speaking with the voice of a man. The following passages from the religious mystics of the later middle ages, are juxtaposed to corresponding passages from Buddhist writings, particularly those of Zen. It should never be forgotten, however, that not one of these is verbally true, but is *poetically* so; much more the identity of intuition that may be discerned in each pair.

The Christian writers include the German mystical poet Angelus Silesius (Johann Scheffler) 1624 - 1677; the theologian Dionysius the Areopagite of the 5th century;

Doctor John Tauler, 1290-1361, Dominican monk and theologian; the Dutch priest, Jan van Ruysbroeck, 1293 - 1381; Meister Eckhart, 1250? - 1328?, German mystical philosopher; St. Francis of Sales, 1567-1622, Bishop of Geneva; St. John of the Cross, 1543-1591, Spanish theologian and poet; the German mystic, Henry Suso, d. 1365, one of the "Friends of God."

The Zen writings are the following:

The Platform Sutra,¹ concerning Enō, 637-713, the 6th patriarch of Zen in China.

The Hekiganroku,² poetical comments by Secchō,³ 980-1052 A.D., on cases taken mostly from the history of the Zen masters, (*The Transmission of the Lamp*,) edited by Engo,⁵; it was first printed in 1125.

The Song of Enlightenment,⁶ a verse exposition of Zen, by Yōka Daishi,⁷ d. 713, one of the chief disciples of Enō.

The Zenrinkushū,⁸ a collection of short lines, couplets, and verses from the sutras and classical Chinese writings.

The Shinjinmei,⁹ a short poem by Sōsan,¹⁰ d. 606, 3rd patriarch of Zen.

1. 六祖壇經.

2. 碧巖錄.

3. 雪竇.

4. 傳燈錄.

5. 圓悟.

6. 證道歌.

7. 永嘉大師.

8. 禪林句集.

9. 信心銘.

10. 僧璨.

For the soul courageously resolved on passing interiorly and exteriorly beyond the limits of its own nature, enters illimitably within the supernatural, which has no measure, but contains all measure eminently within itself.

馬大師，与百大行次，見野鴨子飛過。大師云，是什麼。丈云，野鴨子。大師云。什麼處去也。丈云，飛過去也。大師遂扭百丈鼻頭，大作忽痛聲。大師云，何曾飛去。（碧，五十三）

While Baso and Hyakujō were out walking, they saw some wild ducks that flew overhead and disappeared. Baso said, "What are they?" Hyakujō said, "Wild ducks". Baso said, "Where have they gone?" Hyakujō answered, "They have flown away". Baso took hold of Hyakujō's nose and wrenched it round. Hyakujō screamed out with the pain. Baso said, "What do you mean by saying they have flown away?"²

Ilekiganroku, 53

1. St. John of the Cross, *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*.
2. Flying away, flying here; flying away, flown away — at the moment of the anguish of his nose he perceived that these things also are only a means, *hōben*, which we mistake for reality. He must "pass beyond the limits of his own nature."

In every soul, even that of the greatest sinner in the world, God dwells, and is substantially present. ¹

若提般若之智，世人本自有之…愚人智人佛性本
無差別。

(六祖壇經，二)

Every man in the world has the Wisdom of Enlightenment……As far as the Buddha nature is concerned, there is no distinction between a sage and a sinner.

Rokusôdangyô, 2

Thou shalt apprehend God without image, without semblance, and without means. But for me to know God thus, without means, I must be very He, He very me. ²

叮嚀損君德，

無言固有功。

(禪林句集)

Many words ³ injure virtue;

Wordlessness is essentially effective.

Zenrinkushû

1. *Ascent of Mt. Carmel.*

2. Eckhart.

3. Words, like every means, obscure in defining.

My very dear child, we must quiet our activity of mind. ¹

何名坐禪，此法門中無障無礙，外於一切善惡境界，
心含不起名爲禪。 (六祖壇經，五)

“Zazen”, in our sect, means absolute freedom, not to be disturbed ² by any good or evil circumstances.

Rokusôdangyô, 5

God is a common light and a common splendour, enlightening heaven and earth, and every man each according to his need and worth. ³

本性是佛，離性無別佛。
(六祖壇經，二)

Our own true nature is Buddha; apart from this nature there is no Buddha.

Rokusôdangyô, 2

1. Francois de Sales to St. Chantal.
2. Our faith (in goodness, in badness) is not disturbed.
3. John of Ruysbroeck, *Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage*.

The reason of this safety has been clearly shown : for usually the soul¹ never errs, except under the influence of its desires, or tastes, or reflections, or understanding, or affections.²

……道吾云， 如人夜半背手摸枕头， ……吾曰，
通身是手眼。

(碧, 八十九)

……Dôgo answered, "It is like reaching back for the pillow in the middle of the night".³ ……Dôgo said, "The whole body is hands and eyes".

Hekiganroku, 89

The substance of the soul, though it is not the substance of God, because inconvertible into Him, yet being united to Him and absorbed in Him, is by participation God.⁴

會一成三難。會三成一易, (禪林句集)

To see all things as one is easy ;

To see all things as different is difficult.

Zenrinkushû

1. The intuitive faculty.
2. St. John of the Cross, *The Dark Night of the Soul*.
3. The (wooden pillow has slipped from under the head.
We are half-asleep, unreflective, child-like, acting instinctively.
4. St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*.

Then, delivered from the worlds of sense and of intellect, the soul enters into the mysterious darkness of holy ignorance, and renouncing all dealings with knowledge, it loses itself in Him who can neither be seen nor apprehended. ¹

維摩請問文殊師利，何等是若薩入不二法門。文殊曰，如我意者，於一切法，無言無說，無示無識，離諸問答。 (碧，八十四)

Vimilakirti asked Manjusri, "What is this 'Bodhisattva's no two doors of entrance'?" Manjusri replied, "My view is that it is something wordless, inexplicable, indescribable, unthinkable, detached from all questions and answers".

Hekiganroku, 84

Who does not seek and find and receive God at home, or in the street, will never receive him rightly in church, that is certain. ²

行亦禪坐亦禪
語默動靜體安然。 (證道歌)

Walking is Zen, sitting is Zen,
Speaking, silence, activity, quietness, — the
Essence is at rest.

Shôdôka

1. Dionysius, *Mystical Theology*, chapter 1, 3.

2. Tauler, *Predigen, Sonntag n. Trin.*

The Second Coming takes place daily, often and many times, in every loving heart, with new graces and with new gifts, as each is able to receive them.¹

風從八月涼，
月自七月明。（禪林句集）

The wind is cool from September ;
The moon is bright from August.²
Zenrinkushū

And therefore we must all found our lives upon a fathomless abyss.³

雲門示衆云，乾坤之內，宇宙之間，中有一寶，祕在形山。拈燈籠向佛殿裏，將三門來燈籠上。
(碧，六十二)

Unmon said to his monks : "Within the universe, in Heaven and Earth, there is a Treasure. It dwells in the mountain of the body. You take a lamp into the Temple hall; put the Great Gate on top of it !"

Ilekiganroku, 62

1. *Adornment of the Spriritual Marriage.*

2. Just as in the far distant past, yearly the coming of the cool breeze and the bright moon takes place.

3. *The Sparkling Stone.*

For where He comes, there He is; and where He is, there He comes.....And everything in which He is, is in Him; for He never goes out of Himself. And this is why the spirit in its essence possesses God as God does the spirit; for it lives in God and God in it. ¹

一切郎一， 一郎一切。 去來自由， 心體無滯。
卽是般若。

(六祖壇經， 二)

All in one, and one in All. When the Mind comes as it wills, goes as it wills, freely, this is the state of Prajna. ²

Rokusôdangyô, 2

For God gives, in one gift, Him elf and His gifts; and the spirit gives, at each introversion, itself and all its works. ¹

一塵含萬象， 一念具三千。

(禪林句集)

One speck of dust contains all things;
One thought includes three thousand thoughts.

Zenrinkushû

-
1. *Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage.*
 2. *Wisdom.*

For to comprehend and to understand God above all similitudes, such as He is in Himself, is to be God with God, without intermediary, and without any otherness that can be a hindrance or an intermediary. ¹

外道問佛，不問有言，不問無言。世尊良久。外道，讚嘆云，世尊大慈大悲，開我迷雲，令我得入。外道去後，阿難問佛，外道有何所證，而言得入。佛云，如世良馬，見鞭影而行。

（碧，六五）

A non-Buddhist said to Buddha, "I do not ask for that which is, or that which is not." Buddha was silent a short time. The man said in admiration, "O World-honoured One, full of grace and mercy, you have dissolved the clouds of my illusion: I have entered into possession". He then departed. Ananda asked Buddha, "What was it that he perceived that made him enlightened?" Buddha replied, "It is like a fine horse that *moves when he sees only the shadow of the whip.*"

Ickiganrokû, 65

1. *Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage.*

And through the Eternal Birth, all creatures have come forth in eternity, before they were created in time, so God has seen and known them in Himself, according to distinction, in living ideas and in an otherness from Himself; but not as something other in all ways, for all that is in God is God. ¹

僧問雲門，如何是超佛超祖之談。門云，餬餅。
(碧，一七十七)

A monk asked Unmon, "What is the word that goes beyond all Buddhas and all Patriarchs?" Unmon answered, "A sesame bun". ²

That which is wayless is above reason, not without it,
And it perceives all things without wonder.
Wonder is far beneath it,
And the life of contemplation is without wonder. ³

到得歸來無別事，廬山烟雨浙江潮。(禪林句集)

I went there and came back; it was nothing special, —
Mount Ro wreathed in mist, Sekkô at high tide. ⁴

Zenrinkushû

-
1. *Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage.*
 2. A sesame bun is in God, and is God.
 3. *The Twelve Béguines.*
 4. When we "live with the gods", with nature, with Bach, with Euripides, with Sotôba, it is "nothing special."

Here in time we make holiday because the eternal birth which God the Father bore and bears unceasingly in eternity is now born in time, in human nature. St. Augustine says this birth is always happening. But if it happen not in me, what does it profit me ? What matters is that it shall happen in me. ¹

不向自己會，向什麼處會。（禪林句集）

If you do not get it from yourself,
Where will you go for it ?

Mark this : in eternity, all creatures are God in God ; and there, there is no fundamental difference between them ; save that which we are in God, they are the same life, the same being, the same power : they are the same one, and nothing less. ²

古松談般若，
幽鳥弄真如。

（禪林句集）

The old pine-tree manifests Bodhi ;

The solitary bird tells of the Thusness of things.

Zenrinkushû

1. Eckhart.

2. Suso, *The Book of Truth*.

A man should under all circumstances turn himself inwards.....Enter into thyself, sink back into the Ground of thy soul. ¹

若能心中自見真，有真即是成佛因。
不見自性外覓佛，起心總是大癡人。
(六祖壇經，十)

Perceiving the truth within our own minds,
We are enabled to become Buddha.
If we do not perceive it inside ourselves,
But seek it outside, we are great fools.

Rokusôdangyô, 10

I ask to be rid of God, — that is, that God, by his grace, would bring me into the Essence—that Essence which is above God³ and above distinction.⁴

二由一有，一亦莫守。(信心銘)

The two exist because of the One,
But hold not even to this One!

1. Tauler, *Predigen*, Sonntag nach Weinachter.

2. Compare: 不是打殺人，被人打殺必。(禪林句集)

If you do not kill him, you will be killed by him.

3. The One.

4. The two.

昭和二十七年七月一日印刷

昭和二十七年七月十五日発行

Y 160

BUDDHIST SERMONS
ON CHRISTIAN TEXTS.

(聖書〇句〇仏教的な解釈)

著 者 R. H. B L Y T H

発 行 者 長 宗 美 知 江
東京都文京区高田豊川町三七

印 刷 所 株式会社 厚 徳 社
東京都文京区高田豊川町三七

発 行 所 株式会社 國 土 社
東京都文京区高田豊川町三七
電話東京九〇六三二番
電報九段(33)1665・4463

K O K U D O S H A

37 TAKADA-TOYOKAWACHO
BUNKYOKU TOKYO

定 價 160 圓

